

If you like mysteries, then: *“It was a dark and stormy night,”* should sound familiar to you. That’s how most mysteries begin. Dark and stormy also describes the weather conditions in today’s lesson. The difference - our lesson is a not a story from the mind of a mystery writer. It is a Bible story from the mind of God and the pen of Luke.

Grab your net and hop on board with the disciples. You’re in a small wooden fishing boat, at night, in the middle of the Sea of Galilee. As a fisherman, you’re used to this. And even the storm that sweeps down the mountains with gusting winds and crashing waves wasn’t unusual. You’ve been in this situation before as a fisherman. You’ve ridden out plenty of storms in your day. But this evening and this storm is different. How are you going to respond to this one?

Let’s talk about some of the storms you’re experiencing right now. They’re not on a boat in a storm, but they are storms. And they are your storms.

Sometimes, they’re small ones that annoy us ...

- An issue with a family member or friend that’s unresolved.
- A question you’re afraid to ask. You don’t want the answer.

Other times, they’re powerful ones that shake us up ...

- The coronavirus that impacts our lives every day.
- Will the unemployment checks ever get here?
- Will your furlough at work become permanent?
- The doctor’s report from your most recent visit.

And still other times, these storms come out of nowhere ...

- The trip to the ER.
- Your boss’s request to step into his office.

How do you respond to these storms? The missing ingredient in the hearts of Jesus’ disciples on that dark and stormy night, is the missing ingredient when trying to face storms all by ourselves.

When you have dark and stormy nights: **“REST ASSURED, JESUS CONTROLS EVERY STORM!”** You know this for a fact because:

- 1) He’s always present.** And then you’ll discover: **2) He’s got a rescue plan.**

(1)

It was a busy day for your Lord. If you peaked at his daily planner you would have seen he healed: a leper, the centurion’s servant, Peter’s mother-in-law and a demon possessed man. He’s exhausted and deserves a little R+R. Who could blame him for falling asleep?

To get him away from the crowds, you climb into the boat and head across the sea. There’s no local weather warning: **“Small craft advisory, 15-20 foot waves.”** If there had been one, you wouldn’t have paid attention. You’re a professional fisherman. You ride storms out for a living. But this storm is ready to swallow up you, your buddies and your boat.

How are you going to respond? Having just witnessed Jesus’ power earlier in the day, do you confidently sit back and wonder: *“Can’t wait to see how the Lord’s going to deal with this?”* Or, *“Hey guys, what’s he going to take care of first ... the wind or the waves?”*

Not this time! Fearing for your life, you yell for Jesus, maybe even at him, questioning whether he cares whether you live or die! Up to this point Luke has reported only miracles showing Jesus’ power to heal. You haven’t seen him control the forces of nature yet. Your faith isn’t thinking straight. You weren’t applying all the lessons you had learned previously to this situation.

How about you and how about now? How have you been reacting to your storms? Have you been applying all the lessons you’ve learned previously? Over and over and over again, Jesus promises that he’s always present with you and that you’re not alone:

- As you sit in the hospital waiting room,

- At the kitchen table - trying to figure out how to cope,
- As you lie awake at night, wondering what's coming next.

These are promises you can depend on. But when a storm blows in, does all that get tossed overboard? Rest assured, Jesus controls every storm you're facing, because he's always present.

(2)

In addition to his constant presence, he's always got a rescue plan. Here's his plan for you in this boat, in the middle of this storm on the Sea of Galilee. **He got up and rebuked the wind and the raging waters.** Mark's account tells us that his rebuke was exactly 3 words: **"Quiet! Be Still!"**

Jesus just showed you again that the man in the boat is more than a man. He also possessed God's power because he is God. At creation God spoke the word and it was so, immediately. Here Jesus spoke the word and the **storm subsided and all was calm** - immediately.

The wind and the waves were the first storm that Jesus calmed for you. That was the one around you. The second storm, the one inside you, now draws his undivided attention. Jesus question forces you to face your spiritual weakness: **"Where is your faith?"** He's not reprimanding you for the weak faith you showed in the boat, but the weak faith he still sees after the storm. Luke made a note of how amazed and terrified you were when you asked: **"Who is this? He commands even the winds and the water, and they obey him."**

As your teacher, Jesus taught you that you are constantly under his care and even promises: **"Call upon me in the day of trouble and I will deliver you."** He has a rescue plan. You call him Teacher, but you've failed to trust his teachings. But now, you've learned from this experience. The Lord calmed the storm around you and in you. He had a rescue plan.

There are going to be storms in your life. We're all sinners who live in a sinful world with sinful people. There may be storms in your relationships:

- That perfect husband has some hidden imperfections.
- That beautiful bride has an ugly side you never saw.
- Those children who could do no wrong, suddenly don't know right from wrong.

Or in the spiritual area of your life. You've prayed and God hasn't answered – or at least in the way you wanted. In spite of all the storms you've encountered and all the storm-rebuking Jesus has done in your life, do you still wonder if he's sleeping on the job?

He's always present so he knows and he cares. Maybe his rescue plans aren't quite as dramatic or immediate as what you experienced on the Sea of Galilee, but they rescue and serve his purpose.

If it's stormy weather that keeps your eyes of faith focused on him, then expect storms since he wants you to remain connected to him.

- These storms can build up your reliance on him instead of self.
- These storms can serve as a witness. Your reaction to them sends a powerful message to others about you and your Savior.
- Your rescue from these storms may serve to encourage others who are going through similar storms.

One night a fire forced a boy out his bedroom window and onto the roof of the house. His father stood on the ground with arms outstretched, and yelled: *"Jump! I'll catch you."* The son had to jump to save his life. But all he could see were flames and smoke. He was afraid to leave the roof. His father kept yelling: *"Jump! I'll catch you."* The boy cried: *"Daddy, I can't see you."* The father reassured him: *"But I can see you and that's all that matters."* So the boy, even though he couldn't see his father, jumped. He was saved.

Isn't that a picture of faith? You can't see Jesus, but he can see you. If you have any doubts about that, then remember his sacrifice on the cross for your sins and his power to rise from the dead. **Rest Assured, Jesus Controls Every Storm** in your life!