

## ***“Great Calm”***

Sometimes the Lord doesn't jump when we say jump. In the Old Testament reading, He doesn't act the way Job wants Him to act. Job's lost everything. He's wondering what he's done to deserve all that has happened to him. Why would God let this happen? Can Job trust God anymore?

In the Gospel reading Jesus sleeps while the disciples want action. To these disciples in the boat in the midst of the storm – a sleeping Jesus doesn't appear to be worth much. A sleeping Jesus is as good as a dead Jesus to them.

After all, what kind of Savior sleeps while there is a “great windstorm” going on – as the boat fills with water and begins to capsize? Doesn't He care? Isn't He concerned? The disciples are afraid – and so are we.

We've got problems a plenty. Difficulties in life. Our lifeboats are swamped and we can't bail out the water faster than its coming in – and it seems, at times, like we are going down.

And there is Jesus – sound asleep – seemingly without a care in the world. This Jesus doesn't operate the way we want. He fails miserably according to our standards. He just doesn't act like a god should.

Someone go and take Him by the shoulders and give Him a good shake. “Don't you care that we are perishing?”

Now, let me see if I have this right. Take God by the shoulders, shake Him – and accuse Him of not caring about us – not caring if we die?

In spite of His disciples, God in the flesh Jesus arises from His slumber – and tells the winds and the waves to “be muzzled.” “And the wind ceased, and there was a great calm.” From a “great windstorm” to “great calm” – all by the power of His Word.

Then Jesus asks the disciples (and us) the big theological question of the day – “Why are you so afraid? Have you still no faith?” Like Job and the disciples before us – why won't we trust Him to be our God?

How far do you trust Jesus? Will you trust Him when your life is in danger? When it seems like He doesn't care what's happening to you? When He seems to be distracted, not paying attention?

Will you trust Him with your life? With your death? Will you trust a sleeping Jesus – or – is He as worthless as a dead Jesus to you?

The disciples didn't trust this sleeping Jesus. They had to wake Him up. "Don't you care Jesus!" "Don't you care that we might die?" Wake Him up so He can do miraculous things again. Asleep ... He's no good to us.

We are so often tempted to believe that Jesus doesn't care about us – after all – we're attacked repeatedly by Satan, the world, and our sinful flesh. Poor health. Anxiety. The ravages of old age. You name it – it's always something!

Come on, Jesus! Get up off that pillow, roll up your sleeves, and start paying attention to us! Why don't you DO something?

As a matter of fact, He has. He cares very much – so much so, that He spent time in the womb of the Virgin – lives a life full of His own storms – and then slept the sleep of death on the cross.

He, the sinless One – became sin for you. He's taken all your bad – and He gives you all His good. "God made Him who had no sin to be sin so that in Him we have the righteousness of God."

Where in the world is Jesus when you need Him? He is "with you always" – just as He promised. He is right here – where you can find Him working by Word and Sacrament – just as He promised.

Jesus comes here today and speaks to you. HE SPEAKS! Remember His speaking in the boat? "Peace! Be still" – He commanded the wind and waves – and His words did what He said.

Today Jesus stands before you and speaks from the boat called the Church. The Absolution, the Sermon, the Supper – there you hear His words – and Jesus does what He promises.

You are forgiven. You are safe and sound in Him. You are a new creation – the old, full of chaos and death has passed away – the new has come. That is how much He cares for you. Jesus has not just “done something” – He has done everything – everything necessary for your forgiveness, life and salvation – everything so that there might be “a great calm” for you.

“Why are you so afraid?” He asks. Because my life is threatened Jesus! Because my body is wracked by disease, by old age. Because my doctor didn’t give me the news I wanted to hear. Because my children give me fits – my spouse makes me crazy – and my job is disappointing.

How will I pay all my bills? What’s going to happen to my children? Why is our church so lethargic? Our country so polarized? The list of chaotic wind and waves sinking our boats is endless, relentless.

So Jesus asks again, “Why are you so afraid?” The answer is simple, isn’t it? It’s because we don’t trust Jesus – not completely, not with our whole heart. We say that we do – but when push comes to shove – it’s really hard. And it’s so easy to rely on ourselves – to be little gods – taking charge of our lives – being in control.

We’re in good company here. Job and the disciples were just like us – control freaks. The only one in control, however, is Jesus. He was there when the foundations of the earth were laid – when the dry land was separated from the raging seas – when the boundaries of the oceans were made ..... and we, were not.

And He’s still here – in control – in a way that you don’t expect. He dies, and rises from the dead – for you. He baptized you, and is with you always, even in the midst of the storms of trouble. He speaks His Word – so that you will not perish – rescuing you and giving you new life.

In the Ark of His Church He speaks His forgiveness that muzzles the devil, casts away your sin, and brings “a great calm” to faith. He is the Savior who is “for you.” You can trust Him always – even when He seems to be asleep. You can trust Him with your life, and with your death. Amen.

The peace of God which passes all understanding, guards your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus. Amen.