

Gleaning In The Fields Of Light

Weathering Our Storms

“A great windstorm arose, and the waves beat into the boat, so that the boat was already being swamped. But he was in the stern, asleep on the cushion; and they woke him up and said to him, ‘Teacher, do you not care that we are perishing?’ He woke up and rebuked the wind, and said to the sea, ‘Peace! Be still!’ Then the wind ceased, and there was dead calm.”

—The Gospel of Mark

By Ken Woodley

I would have been freaking out, too. No question.

Peace one moment, then all you-know-what breaks loose.

My voice would have broken loose, too, joining the panicky chorus of the other disciples in the boat with Jesus.

“Hey!” I would have shouted, shaking Jesus by the shoulders with both hands, “don’t you care that this storm threatens my very existence?!?!”

We’ve all been there, experiencing a sudden difficulty that rises up over the top of our lives and threatens to swamp and sink us like the Galilean storm that threatened Jesus and the disciples.

What I wouldn’t give to be able to sleep through the sudden storms in my life and simply wake up when the passing trouble—whatever it might be—had gone.

How comforting to possess the ability to rebuke the wind and say to the sea—and have the sea listen and obey—“Peace! Be still!”

But then I realize that I do have the ability to at least diminish the wind and bring the storm down into a much more manageable size.

Sort of.

In a way.

I simply need to recall one vital fact.

I just need to remember that in every circumstance I am with Jesus.

I need to remind myself that Jesus is in my boat. Wherever my boat is and no matter the weather.

And if Jesus is in my boat then I cannot sink. Not forever. Because even if I do slip beneath the waves then Jesus will raise me up.

Remembering that, of course, is not always so very easy for me. Anxieties come calling like windy storms thundering over the mountains surrounding the Sea of Galilee and I too often invite them in and make them really comfortable. So very comfortable that they don't want to leave, preferring to stay right where they are and take up residency in my life. I start getting their mail and answering their phone calls.

But—finally—I remember that Jesus is in my boat. And I repeat that to myself: “Jesus is in my boat.” I say that to myself over and over again, like prayer, like a mantra..

And, when I have faith in the truth of the words, I feel a rising sense of peace, a tide of calmness washing over me until it lifts me out of my fears.

I feel the wind dropping and the waves growing smaller and smaller.

Soon enough there is stillness all around.

Even if the waves remain, however, I don't feel them as strongly.

Or fear them as much.

The skies lighten. Birds begin to melodize. I feel pieces of a rainbow assembling within my soul.

The rainbow of Jesus in my boat.

I don't paddle or row and I don't raise a sail. But together we reach the shore and stand on solid ground.

Even when, physically, I haven't moved an inch.

Because the journeys through our biggest storms are within us and the lightning of those storms can't reach as far as the blessed and blessing light of Jesus.

Of that, I am deeply thankful.

