

Gleaning In The Fields Of Light

“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.

The Sea of Galilee is notorious for the ferocity and sudden onslaught of its storms. I’ve read that the surrounding mountains focus the force of the wind in a particularly demonstrative way.

Peace one moment, then all heck 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.

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!”

If only I could be like Jesus, I think to myself, before realizing that I do have the ability shush the wind and end the storm.

Sort of.

In a way. But not in a way that would co-star me with cartoon superheroes who save the world.

I am incapable of being Thor and thundering back at my storms. But I don’t have to be like Jesus, either.

I simply need to recall one vital fact.

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

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. But even if I do sink then Jesus will raise me up.

Remembering that, of course, is not always so very easy for me. Anxieties come calling 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.” Over and over.

And, when I do, I feel a sudden peace. Every single time.

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

Soon enough there is dead calm all around.

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

Or fear them.

The skies lighten. Birds begin to sing. I feel a rainbow inside me.

The rainbow of Jesus in my boat.

Together we reach the shore that I'd been searching for and sailing towards.

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

Because the deepest journeys are way inside me and the storms can't go that far.

