

Today is Super Bowl Sunday. The Kansas City Chiefs will face off against the Tampa Bay Buccaneers for Super Bowl 55 today. For those fans of these two teams, today is a kind of stormy day. If you are one of those fans, such as Bill Jaeger & Jim Riley, I am talking to you 😊; I would like to appreciate you more for worshipping with us as you remember our Lord on this day before anything else. An anchor holds!

Today we have one of the most beloved stories in the Bible, found in Mark 4:35-41. The story is this: Jesus and His disciples are crossing the Sea of Galilee, and a storm rolls in. The waves threaten to sink the boat. Jesus is asleep. Terrified, the disciples wake Him up and ask if He cares that they might be killed. Jesus gets up and responds to His disciples by saying, “Why are you afraid? Is your faith so small?” Then, He commands the storm, “Quiet! Be still!” And, just like that, the storm abates, and all is calm. This is the summary of today’s story.

There are a few different ways we could interpret this story. However, due to the limited time we have today, I will say just one thing—The storm is not the main point of the story.

Storms threaten to sink our faith. These are not every day inconveniences like a flat tire or a hassle at work. Storms are the difficulties that cause us to question God’s goodness. Prolonged illness, the death of a loved one, a loss of purpose, a marriage destroyed—and it seems like God is asleep. If He really cared, if He really understood, then surely, He would stop this from happening. We pray for healing and relief, for an opportunity, for reconciliation, for anything that will make the storm pass.

What I see in this story, however, is that the storm is not the main point. The storm is real and terrifying—the disciples believe that they will not survive—but the point is not about surviving the storm. The point is about who is in the boat with them. Yes, Jesus can calm the storms of our lives. That is so true, and I myself have been encouraged by this knowledge. But Jesus didn’t come to calm storms; He came to save us. Jesus didn’t come to give us a comfortable life, but He came to defeat death and give us eternal life.

“But Sunny,” some of you might say, “what about ‘casting my cares’ on God? Doesn’t He care that I am suffering?” Yes, of course, He does. But let’s look carefully at that idea.

1 Peter 5:6-7 says, “*Humble yourselves, therefore, under God’s mighty hand, that he may lift you up in due time. Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you*” (NIV).

We often talk enough of “casting our anxieties on him,” but how much do we hear about “humbling ourselves under His mighty hand?” The two things are linked in this passage. Casting our cares on Him, according to these verses, is not simply a desire to avoid unpleasant circumstances, but rather a submission to whatever circumstances, simply because God is with us on “the boat,” sailing through the storms of life.

Please know that I am not trying to diminish anyone’s suffering, nor would I suggest that we cannot cry out to Jesus about the storms in our lives. He does, after all, get up and calm the storm in today’s story. It’s not that Jesus doesn’t care about our problem, but it’s just that our problem is not going to sink the boat because our Lord is with us.

Yes, the storm can make us anxious, afraid, hurt, and discouraged. But, please know that God can use the storm to make us fearless, secure, and steadfast. So, let us take courage. Fear not. Our Emmanuel God is with us and for us. With this faith, we partake in the communion prepared before us today.

*Consecration of the Lord’s Table!*