

Luke 8:22-25

Who Then Is This?

The Summit Church, BCC

MPT: In every storm and in every trial of our lives, there is an opportunity for us to wonder, again with the disciples, concerning the identity, authority, and majesty of Jesus.¹

MPS: “Who then is this?” Every storm in your life is an opportunity to answer this question. How you answer that question will determine your perspective in the storm. // Jesus--God incarnate-- is our sympathetic and sovereign Savior worthy of our praise.

INTRODUCTION

Continuing in series this weekend. Turn to **Luke 8**...

While you're turning there...[honor campus staff: Lenker, Matt Baker, Matt Johnson, Rachel Flores, Alex Loflin, Joey, Kyle, Kaimy]

Luke 8 we're gonna look at a very familiar passage today...

Jesus has been traveling around **casting** out demons, **calling** disciples to follow him, **curing** sick people...**he's been busy**. Let's pick up in verse 22...**[STAND]**

22One day he got into a boat with his disciples, and he said to them, “Let us go across to the other side of the lake.”

The ‘lake’ here is the **Sea of Galilee**...it's ~13 miles long and ~7 miles wide. Big ‘ol lake.

So they set out, **23**and as they sailed he fell asleep. And a windstorm came down on the lake,

This is a BIG storm. In the other gospels ‘windstorm’ is translated as “hurricane” and “seismic mega-storm.”

v23 and they were filling with water and were in danger. **24**And they went and woke him, saying, “Master, Master, we are perishing!” And he awoke and rebuked the wind and the raging waves, and they ceased, and there was a calm. **25**He said to them, “Where is your faith?” And they were afraid, and they marveled, saying to one another, “Who then is this, that he commands even winds and water, and they obey him?” **[BE SEATED]**

The question I want us to consider to consider today is the same question presented to us at the end of this story: **Who Then Is This?**

- All three accounts of this story leave this question unanswered...I believe it's because the point is that **you must personally answer it for yourself**. “Who then is this? Who do you say is this man Jesus?”

There is **no more important question** you will ask yourself in your entire life than that question.

- **Who you believe Jesus to be** is *the most important* question you will ever wrestle with in your life.

What I want to show you is that **every storm in your life is an opportunity to answer that question again**.

- We tend to think that **belief in Jesus is a one time event**. Now that's true as it pertains to *salvation*; but it's who we believe Jesus to be in life's *situations* that *actually* show who we believe him to be.

Each storm you encounter in life is a new opportunity to examine who you truly believe Jesus to be. It's easy to have faith when everything is going well--when our **bills are paid**. When the **grades are good**. When our **kids are behaving**. When that **stimulus check hits the account**, amen?!

¹ Alistair Begg, [Jesus Calms the Storm](#)

- It's easy for me to **say Jesus is loving and kind**...it's much more difficult for me to **believe Jesus is loving and kind** when things in my life seem to be falling apart.

See, the true test of faith doesn't happen when the **sunshine of God's grace** is shining upon you, but rather during times of **dark clouds when God seems nowhere to be found**. When...

- ...the diagnosis comes.
- ...a friend betrays you.
- ...the bills keep piling up.
- ...a family issue arises.
- ...a marriage ends in divorce.

IOW, the true test of our faith happens in **storms**, not in **comfort**.

- *Who then is this?* How you answer that question will determine your **perspective** in the midst of the storm, because **it reveals where you are truly placing your faith**.

When it comes to working out there's something called **testing week (1RM)** . . . It's the time you figure out if all the hard work has paid off. That's the time **the work is revealed**. **Strength must be tested before it can be trusted**.

- I've heard the same said about our faith--**faith in Jesus must be tested before it can be trusted**.
- Luke 8 is one of many places in the Bible that teach us how storms serve to test our faith...they help us examine our faith in Jesus; not destroy it.
- Viewed correctly, we see how storms are for our **discipleship and development**; not our **destruction**.

Now, before we get too far into this and lest you think, "Wait, wait wait...I came to Jesus to **get out of my storms** cuz I heard Christianity is all about **that easy life**?" I think a lot of people have been sold this bill of goods so I need to **lay the groundwork by making something very clear**: as followers of Jesus we should not be surprised by storms

in our lives. In fact, **following Jesus is a promise that you will have trials**; we should expect **storms to be our norm**.

- **John 16:33**, "I have said these things to you, that in me you may have peace. In the world **you will have tribulation**. ~~But take heart; I have overcome the world.~~"
- **1 Peter 4:12**, "Beloved, **do not be surprised at the fiery trial when it comes upon you to test you, as though something strange were happening to you.**"

You may be surprised **when** storms come, **how** they come, maybe even **where** they come from...but you should not be surprised that storms come...

- ...and you **definitely shouldn't be surprised when they come "suddenly,"** just like this storm. Because **that's how they normally come**, right?
- They **don't give you a warning**. No **heads up**. No **ETA** on when they're arriving; no **notification** on your phone; they don't **shoot you a text** saying, "I'll be there next week."
- Storms are promised, so don't let them surprise you.

But here's some good news: it's a strange part of the Christian life, but **rough waters** in life are often what lead to a **deeper relationship with Jesus** because we get to know him in a way in which we never knew him before.

- **I've been through some stuff** I hope I never experience again, but in a weird way I'm glad I went through it...cuz I know Jesus in ways that I never would've known before (his **provision**, his **presence**, his **protection**, his **promises**, his **love**.)

So who is this Jesus I'm telling you to have faith in? According to Luke 8, here's who Jesus is (I'm gonna go ahead and give you the answer and then we'll unpack it): **Jesus is our sympathetic and sovereign Savior worthy of our praise**.

Let's unpack these **three qualities of Jesus to cling to in the storm**.

1) Jesus is the God who sympathizes with your suffering (vv22-24)

²²One day he got into a boat with his disciples, and he said to them, "Let us go across to the other side of the lake."

There are two things that are obvious but often overlooked here:

1. **Jesus sends them into the storm.**
2. But not only that, **it was their obedience to Jesus that got them into a storm.**
 - a. So often we think just cuz something isn't going our way that it's the result of our **disobedience** or **wrong decision** or **sin**.
 - b. *But what if the very storm you find yourself in is, in fact, because you were obedient to Jesus; not disobedient?*
 - c. One pastor said **faith is not believing in spite of evidence; it's obeying in spite of consequence.**²
(REPEAT)

Again, and I cannot stress this enough, because often what people are promised when they follow Jesus is a life of **happiness** and **blessing**. And so the second something goes wrong all of a sudden their **entire belief system is flipped upside down**...the "good God" they thought they knew all of a sudden doesn't make sense anymore.

- That's not biblical Christianity. That's not what Jesus offers when we follow him.
- Jesus tells us to **deny ourselves** and **take up our cross** and **follow him**. That doesn't sound much like "your best life now" or "blessing and abundance," does it?

Brothers and sisters, I need you to hear this: **Following Jesus does not exempt us from pain.**

Now, as a pastor, it's *really* tempting to tell you, "If you're in a storm right now, just hold on, it'll pass soon!" But I can't say that; I can't promise you that.

- I can't promise the storm of this **pandemic** will pass soon.
- I can't promise you the storm of your **sickness**...the storm of your **cancer**...the storm of your **disease** will pass.
- I can't promise you the storm at **school**, in your **relationship**, at **work**, in your **finances** is gonna pass...I can't promise any of those will pass soon.

But here's what I *can* promise you on the basis of the Word of God--that no matter what **wind** or **waves** the world throws at you or me, the **God of creation who has power alone to calm the wind and the waves--his name is Jesus--is right there in the boat with us.** **He will never leave us nor forsake us.** He will see you through the storm. "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: **for thou art with me...**"^{3 4}

- "We are not promised a life **absent of suffering**; we are **promised him in the suffering.**"⁵
- Every single storm you will go through, Jesus is with you.
- In your suffering, he is with you. He is with you. He is with you.
- **Say it: He is with me. Say it again: he is with me.**

Not only is he with you, **he sympathizes with you in your storm.**

- A lot of people think of sympathy mostly like pity. But the root of the word actually comes from the Greek, meaning "feeling with." To sympathize with someone is to **experience what they are experiencing.**
- Jesus sympathizes with you in your **pain**; he experienced what you're experiencing.
- He sympathizes with you in the **betrayal**; he experienced what you're experiencing.
- He sympathizes with you in **experiencing a wayward child**; he experienced what you're experiencing.

³ Psalm 23:4

⁴ Platt, [Only One Person Can Calm the Storm](#)

⁵ Charaia Callabrax

² Geoffrey Studdert-Kennedy

- Summit family, **we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses.**⁶
- When Christ **sends** you, he **stands** by you and he **sympathizes** with you.

He “feels with you” in your **weaknesses** and **storms**.

- See, as God, he knew this storm was coming.
- But as a man, he was just **flat tired**. He’s been **traveling, preaching, healing**. He needs some time away from the crowds...

Pick up at end of v22: **So they set out, ²³and as they sailed he fell asleep. And a windstorm came down on the lake** (So Jesus is sleeping peacefully in the **middle of a storm** which, we have to admit, that has to be some good sleep.) **, and they were filling with water and were in danger.**

I’ve got **two competing emotions** going on when I read this...

On one hand, I’m really encouraged by this. Because **it’s another way that Jesus sympathizes with me**...it’s another way Jesus knows how you feel. **Some of you are worn out**. You go **non-stop**. You’ve got **school, work, kids, responsibilities, finances, practices, small group, church, chores, errands**...the list goes on and on.

- **Jesus knows how you feel**. He’s been there. He’s been **exhausted**. He’s been **hungry** and **thirsty**. He’s been **fatigued**. Jesus in touch with your feelings of **exhaustion** and **weakness** and **he’s embraced that because he has already embraced you**. He **loves you** and he knows exactly how you’re feeling.

But on the other hand, I’m incredibly **disappointed**. Of ALL the times Jesus could’ve slept, why now? To make matters worse, did you know this is the **only time** in Scripture we see Jesus sleeping?

- I mean, he could’ve at least **assigned roles** before he passed out: **“Men, a storm is coming. Peter, you stay on the helm!**

John, make sure that sail is secure! James, get that gear tied down! Hang in there, guys, we’re gonna make it! I’m gonna to take a nap, but I promise everything w/b fine!”

- Nope. When they needed Jesus MOST he was **out**.
- Now **I know** some of you have felt like this--just when you need God the most he’s nowhere to be found. You hear me talking about Jesus being a **sympathetic Savior**, but right now he seems like the most **unsympathetic non-Savior** because **wave after wave** keeps coming in your life.
 - **Pastoral confession:** I’ve found myself more than once over the last two years wondering if God is sleeping on the job.

But here I’m reminded that while Jesus sleeping is a **picture of humanity**, what Jesus is about to do is **evidence of his divinity**.

- That, in fact, his sleep is a sleep of **fearlessness**. It’s a sleep of **divinity**. It’s a sleep of **sovereignty**.

This is what’s so beautiful about Jesus:

- He’s **human enough** to sleep in the storm, but **God enough** to speak to the storm.
- He’s **human enough** to feel my pain, but **God enough** to fix my pain.
- He’s **human enough** to owe the debt of sin, but **God enough** to pay the debt of sin.⁷

In the storms of life we must remember that **Jesus is the God who sympathizes with your weariness**

⁶ Hebrews 4:15

⁷ Robert Madu, [What Do We Do Now?](#)

2) Jesus is the God who is **sovereign** over your storms (23-24)

And a windstorm came down on the lake, and they were filling with water and were in danger. ²⁴And they went and woke him, saying, "Master, Master, we are perishing!"

The disciples **looked around** and saw **danger**, and **looked within** and saw **fear**. Fear as an **emotion** is not a bad thing; fear as **devotion** reveals when we have **misplaced our faith**. The occasion of fear **gives you a choice**: *Will you allow your fear to be the **setting for unbelief**? Or will it become the **setting for faith** in a sovereign and good God?*⁸ Their problem was not the **storm around them** but the **unbelief within them**.

- They'd been following Jesus around, watching him do the unthinkable--performing miracles, raising people from the dead, casting out demons--yet, in this moment, their **faith became fragile**.
- IOW, as **Tony Evans** says, "They heard Jesus' sermons, took notes, said 'amen,' [but then closed the book and went about their day]."
- Let me tell you, Satan doesn't care how much Bible knowledge we know as long as we don't live it out.

That's what's happening in v24, "Master, Master, we are perishing!" . . . the way Matthew records it is, "Save us, Lord; we are perishing."⁹

- This is fascinating because it declares both **Jesus' lordship** (Master, Master; Lord) *and* **their unbelief** (we are perishing!).

Surely you've felt like this before...

- God is **good all the time** (*faith*)...but I'm gonna walk around and **be miserable** (unbelief).
- God's **in control** and **everything happens for a reason** (*faith*)...but I'm gonna silently drown in **doubt** and **despair** (unbelief).
- They go to Jesus in a mixture of **terror + faith**; **panic + trust**.
- They'd seen him do **miracles** before, *but can he stop a storm?!*

Keep in mind, *these* guys are **professional fishermen**--they'd been in their fair share of storms before. But here these fishermen are **terrified**...thinking they're **gonna die**.

- (If you're in an environment with someone who is **an expert in that environment** and they're **frazzled**, *that's* when you should get worried.)

These guys have absolutely **reached the end of their 'know-how,'** and that's when they decide to wake Jesus up.

- (Isn't it funny how it often takes us getting to the end of our 'know-how' before we go running to God? "We often think Christian maturity is needing help less and less. Wrong. Maturity is realizing how dependent we are on Jesus, more and more."¹⁰ Another sermon for another day.)

They go to **wake Jesus up**...Now can we all agree **waking someone up from a nap is always a bad idea**? **How many of you hate getting woken up?** People need to **respect the nap** more.

- The worst part about getting woken up is that the **perpetrator** always follows their **crime** with a **stupid question**--"*Oh, were you asleep?*" *Of course not. I was just **laying horizontal**, with my eyes closed, not talking, breathing loudly, for an **extended period of time**.*

⁸ Eric Saunders, Maclean Bible

⁹ Matt. 8:25

¹⁰ J.A. Medders, *Humble Calvinism*, 80.

v24: **And he awoke and rebuked the wind and the raging waves, and they ceased, and there was a calm.**

Ah, don't miss this...this is so **encouraging**: notice how **it wasn't the storm that woke Jesus up; it was the cry of the saints that did.**

- The raging storm doesn't bother him one bit, but the cries of the **disciples**...the cries of his **followers**...the cries of the **needy**...the cries of his **friends** . . . he stayed sleeping up until the moment their **weak and faithless** voices cried out to him and, BOOM, he's awake.
- While Jesus doesn't **commend the content** of their plea, he does **honor the DIRECTION** of their plea.
- This should be SO encouraging to you, because it means **you don't have to filter your prayers toward God**:
 - Feeling **lost**? Feeling like **God isn't good**? Experiencing **doubt**? **Frustrated** with your lot in life? **Take it to God**. Be **messy** with him. Tell him how you're feeling. You won't hurt his feelings.

The **lie of the enemy** is that when you are in a storm it's because **God does not love you** or because **you've done something wrong**, and **no amount of prayer or crying out to him is gonna make any difference.**

- That is a lie from the pit of hell. Don't let a storm get between you and your Savior who **cares for you** and who **hears you**, even if it's a **weak and faithless plea** for help.
- Cry out to him! And as Satan keeps *raising* storms in your life, you call upon the name of the Lord Jesus--the Sovereign Lord who *lays* them.
- The storm which had arisen **suddenly** is about to be **silenced** by the Savior who rules **supremely**.

- Jesus wakes up, rises, and speaks a word (**I picture a middle-eastern-Gandalf shouting "YOU SHALL NOT PASS!"**) and the sea goes calm in an instant.

We are told over and over in the NT that **Jesus is the one by whom the universe was made**. Jesus is the **Creator of heaven and earth**, and **all of the forces of nature** are underneath Jesus' authority.

- Here we see **complete** and **abrupt** submission to the authority of Jesus. **Jesus is sovereign over storms.**

In this moment **prophecy** and **power** are coming together in the form of Jesus whom we should **praise!**

- **Psalm 89:9**, "O LORD God of hosts, who is mighty as you are. . . **You rule the raging of the sea; when its waves rise, you still them.**"
- **Psalm 65:7 (CSB)**, "You silence the roar of the seas, the roar of their waves, and the tumult of the nations."
- **Psalm 93:4**, "**Mightier than the thunders of many waters, mightier than the waves of the sea, the LORD on high is mighty!**"
- **Psalm 107:29**, "**He made the storm be still, and the waves of the sea were hushed.**"

Tim Keller says it like this: "**Jesus is not calling on a higher power because he is the higher power.**"

- Therefore, along with the **Psalmist** and the prophet **Isaiah**, in my storms I can declare, "When I am afraid, I put my trust in you. In God, whose word I praise, in God I trust; I shall not be afraid. . . for Behold, God is my salvation; I will trust, and will not be afraid; for the LORD GOD is my strength and my song, and he has become my salvation"¹¹

¹¹ Psalm 56:3-4a; Isaiah 12:2

Church, this is our **sympathetic** and **sovereign** Savior. . . who is worthy of our praise.

3) Jesus is the God who is worthy of our praise (25)

The **Hallmark version** of this story would end by **Jesus rebuking the sea** and then **hugging the guys** telling them *“I’ll never leave you nor forsake you.”*

- Instead he **rebukes the sea** and then immediately turns to **rebuke the disciples**.

²⁵He said to them, “Where is your faith?” And they were afraid (SLJ says, “The storm **outside** stopped, but [now **inside**] the disciples were suddenly filled with a different storm.”), and they marveled, saying to one another, “Who then is this, that he commands even winds and water, and they obey him?”

Jesus says, “Where is your faith? Is it in me? If it is, I’m right here. I didn’t go anywhere. I was right there with you. Where is your faith?”

See, another **overlooked detail** in this story occurs back in **v22** when Jesus says: “Let us go across to the other side of the lake.”

- He didn’t say, “Let’s hop in the boat and **see if we can make it to the other side...**”
- He says “Let’s GO to the other side.”
 - **For them this was a promise.**

But the disciples allowed the storm to come **between them** and **their assurance of Jesus’s care for them**.

- Assurance comes from remembering both Jesus’s **promises** and how he has **worked in history**.

- Friends, **don’t forget your history with Jesus** just because a storm has come in your life. Don’t **lay aside his Word** where his promises are found.

So often the times we need to **lay hold of his promises** the most are the times we’re **most tempted to step back from them**.

- The times we **most need to turn to his Word** for **strength** and **help** are often the times we’re **tempted to give up** reading our **Bibles** and **step away from prayer** and **community** and the **church**.¹²
- Brothers/sisters, don’t let your storm come **between you** and your **assurance of Jesus’s love and care and promises for you**.
- Don’t forget your history with him and how his **presence has never left you**. Let his Word and his track record speak for itself. And as you remember let it **fill your heart with faith** knowing **even in the worst of storms, Jesus is with you**.

CONCLUSION (VAMP)

Faith is not believing in spite of **evidence** (*God making my situation turn out perfectly*); it’s obeying in spite of **consequence**--believing that **even if your storm never passes and your boat sinks, he is still worthy of praise**.

That’s the kind of faith we lay hold of **not from this story alone**, but **only if we know the end of the story**.

God sending Jesus to earth was him saying, “Let’s go to the other side.”

- Jesus, **in obedience** to the Father, was **sent into an oncoming storm**.

¹² Alistair Begg, [Jesus Calms the Storm](#)

- Jesus would sail into the waters of **our sin** and **our rebellion** and be met with the **storm of God's wrath**.
- On the cross, the storm raging around him that day was the **storm of crucifixion**, the **storm of death**, and the **storm of abandonment**.
- Yet, **out of love for you**...out of **sympathy** for you...out of a **desire to save you**, Jesus--the **sovereign one** who could've spoken a word and come down from the cross and seen his storm cease in an instant--**allowed himself** to be plunged into the depths of the **sea of death and hell** for you.

What it looked like **on Good Friday** is that the storm had won. **Jesus went down and perished** while it **seemed like God was asleep** in the back of the boat. It seemed like **death** had won. It seemed like the **storm** had overtaken the **Sovereign**. It seemed like **Satan and sin** were too much for the **salvation plan of the Almighty**.

- This is where so many of you are--you feel like you're **stuck in Good Friday**. You've been **waiting on God to get you through the storm** but all you see is **Jesus lying dead in a tomb**. Your life is nothing but **darkness, hopelessness, wind, and waves**.

Friend, what I'm offering you today is not a **Sunday School lesson** where I tell you, "*Jesus fixed that storm and he's gonna fix yours too!*"

I'd love to end by telling you to "*Hold on...God is gonna get you through this storm!*" But, again, I can't promise you that.

- **John the Baptist** wasn't delivered from prison; he was **beheaded**.
- **Peter** didn't become the pastor of a megachurch; he was **crucified** upside down.
- Almost every single close disciple of Jesus ended up dying *because* of their **faith** and **obedience** to Jesus.

So what you need is not a **religious pep talk**, what you need is to be shown how **Jesus is with you** and to have your **heart** and your **eyes** and your **mind** fixed on the **sympathetic, sovereign, loving** Savior,

Jesus Christ, who was **plunged into the sea for you** in order that he may **live eternally with you**.

What you need is a reminder that even when the **path** isn't **smooth**--even during **problems** and **pain**--his **presence** is a promise you can stand on. That where Christ **sends** you, he has already gone **before** you, and he continues to **stand** by you.

Then, whether he decides to **intervene and cure the cancer** or not...whether **the breakup resolves** how you would **desire** and **choose** for it to or not...

- ...whatever it is, **the very storm itself is another opportunity to make this discovery about Jesus: that Jesus Christ is Lord of all...that he loves you...and he is with you until the end of the age.**
- That **his story**, and **your story**, didn't end on Good Friday. Because, we know, **three days later** came **Resurrection Sunday**.
- Maybe **you haven't experienced your Sunday yet**...but lemme tell you, with Christ, **your story ends in resurrection and hope**...maybe not on this side of heaven--**your ship may go down**--but Jesus will be there to meet you in the depths of the sea and you will **rise with him in eternity**.

That's the faith, that's the hope, and that's the assurance Jesus gives...*that's* the **peace that surpasses all understanding**: that whether he **calms your storm** or whether **your boat sinks**, you'll know **peace** that the world can't know...the peace that comes from **trusting in Jesus**:

- the God who **sympathizes** with your suffering
- the one who is **sovereign** over all of life's storms
- the **Savior** who is **worthy** of our praise.

Do you know Jesus like that? If you don't then **today can be the day**. You can trust him today to be your Savior. You can trust him in your **storms** and you can trust him with your **soul**.

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When the storms of life surround me,
And the world seems dark and cold,
When the rain beats down upon me,
And the lightning stabs my soul,

When the raging winds and tempest,
And the harmful clouds of sin,
Whirl around me like an army,
And my faith is wearing thin,
In a whispering distant thunder,
Comes a voice like morning calm:

*“Fear not, I am with you ever,
Till the world shall see its end.*

*I command the winds of heaven,
And the lightning does My will,
I who walked upon the waters,
And who bid the storm be still.
I seek not your destruction,
But to strengthen and make pure;
Keep your faith in Me, believing
I My promises fulfill.”*

He is greater than the thunder,
He is mightier than the storm;
He extends His hand to lift me,
And protect my soul from harm.
He will see me safe to harbor,
To the haven of my rest,
Sheltered by the Rock of Ages,
Held in His almighty arm.¹³

PRAY

Lord, would we see storms in our lives as opportunities to grow closer to you, our sympathetic and sovereign Savior who is worthy of all of our praise.

¹³ Richard W. Adams, *When the Storms of Life Surround Me*, 2006.