

Many families can look back to that one big family holiday that everyone remembers.

For the family I grew up in, it was our trip up north. We went up as far as Cooktown (which not many people did in the 1970's). And so we took 6-8 weeks as we caravanned up through Central Queensland & the Atherton Tableland, and all the way up to Cooktown.

*But **one** of the highlights of our trip, was when Frosty McLean (cane-farmer at Mackay) (we were staying on the farm with Frosty and Heather because Mum & Dad knew them), and he took us out fishing on the reef, and it was the best fishing I'd ever done...*

For a boy from the bush, I'd never seen fishing like it – even I could catch a fish...

Anyway, while we were out there, a massive storm blew up. It wasn't predicted – it was totally unexpected. And as we were trying to get back into Mackay, (we kids didn't know any better – we just trusted Frosty knew what he was doing), and it was a rough ride getting back into shore.

I only found out in later years that Frosty himself, had never experienced anything like it, and he was right-scared – he didn't know if we were going to make it...

That's the image that comes to my mind every time I read this story of the storm on the lake.

Jesus and His disciples are crossing Lake Galilee. At least 4 of them were professional fisherman (Peter; Andrew; James; & John). And so they knew those waters well. And the boat itself, must’ve been a significant vessel, because there was enough room for all of them (Jesus; Disciples; maybe the women; maybe the owner of the boat & his crew {had to get the boat back}), – so there was enough room for all of them, **and** there was enough room for Jesus to lay down and have a bit of a kip.

And as they were sailing; and Jesus was sleeping, a massive wind-storm came upon the lake. And the boat was being filled with water and they were in danger... And it’s not what we land-lubbers would consider danger – Some of these blokes were professional fishermen – they lived on that lake... And they woke Jesus up, **“Master, Master, we are perishing!”**

This was a massive storm, and the danger was very real...

And [Jesus] awoke and rebuked the wind and [rebuked] the raging waves, and they ceased, and there was a calm.

Can you imagine that: Jesus wakes up and rouses on them:

- **“You there, Wind, stop that nonsense.”**
- **“You waves, settle down there.”....**

and everything’s calm....

The word “fear” isn’t used until now, but now it’s well-placed. When they saw what Jesus did, **that’s** when they were afraid – it’s the sort of fear you have when you come face-to-face with omnipotent power...

and they marvelled, saying to one another, “Who then is this, that he commands even winds and water, and they obey him?”

Throughout the Gospel of Luke, that very question has been building (every time Jesus does an extraordinary miracle, “Who can do that???”). And it will continue to build until we get to Luke 9:20 when Jesus asks His disciples: ²⁰ **“But who do you say that I am?”** And Peter answered, “The Christ of God.”

And all of what we’ve been seeing – the miracles of Jesus; the healings; and the power and authority, is preparing the disciples to see and know that Jesus is indeed, “The Christ of God.”

Even the language that’s being used here – in the Old Testament, it is language that is applied to God.

Jesus **rebuked** the wind & the waves.

Psalm 106:9 (ESV) , it’s talking about God when it says:

⁹ He rebuked the Red Sea, and it became dry, ...

Psalm 89:8–9 (ESV)

⁸ O YHWH God of hosts,
who is mighty as you are, O YHWH,
with your faithfulness all around you?
⁹ You rule the raging of the sea;
when its waves rise, you still them.

Who stills the waves? YHWH God of hosts

Controlling the wind and the waves (at a word of His command) – only God can do that...

And so, after Jesus had stilled the wind and the waves, Jesus said to them, "**Where is your faith?**"

And that's what today's reading is about:

- Recognising who Jesus is; and
- knowing the **power** that Jesus holds over everything:

The Power:

- to save us spiritually;
- over sickness & disease;
- over spiritual forces;
- over the physical world;
- over life and death;

And because we well know, the power that Jesus holds, it's about:

- Faith.

For the Disciples, by now, they’ve seen enough – they should already know that Jesus is the Son of God. And we? – We have even **more** evidence – our Lord Jesus has been raised from the dead... And on this, our faith stands.

Some folk, when they read the Scriptures, they have a lot of trouble believing that these sorts of miracles took place, and they look for natural explanations, like “*It was just a passing storm, and once it passed, everything was calm, so it was just a coincidence that it happened just as Jesus roused on the wind and the waves.*”... It’s as if some people don’t want to believe in a God who has any power – they don’t want to believe in a god who’s going to upset their “natural order” of things...

You know what – I don’t have any trouble at all of believing in these miracles. The biggest miracle, was the incarnation – the biggest miracle, is that God lowered Himself to be born and to live as a human. If Jesus is indeed the Son of God, then:

- why can’t He tell the wind to stop, and it stops;
- why can’t He tell the waves to be still, and a great calm come upon the lake???

It all makes perfect sense...

And if Jesus is God, then why can’t He say today:

- to the dead, “Live”, and they rise;
- to the cancer, “Be gone”, and it disappears;
- to the drought, “Break”, and it rains;
- to the depression, “You have no hold”, and the joy of the Lord takes its place;

- to the sinner, “Your sins are forgiven”, and the burden is lifted;
- to the sick, “Be healed”, and health returns...

It all makes perfect sense. If Jesus is God, that’s all within His power...

But it also makes perfect sense, that if Jesus is God, and I am not God, **His** will, shall be done – not mine... And because God is so much above me, I don’t need to understand His will – I just have to trust His will. And if I have faith/trust in His will, I am going to seek His will, and pray for His will to be done, even if His will is going to be tough on me for a time...

And **this** is where faith comes into it. How big is our faith. Is my faith big enough to trust God in the storms and tempests of life, knowing that His will may even be for us to lose our lives???

You see, God being God, if He has the right to say

- to the dead, “Live”, and they rise;

He also has the right to say to the living:

- You are going to die; but
- Don’t be afraid because I am with you (even in death); and
- on the day of resurrection, you will live again (eternal)

And if He has the right to say

- to the cancer, “Be gone”, and it disappears;

He also has the right to say to the healthy:

- In sickness you will suffer; and

- in this time you will bring me worship and glory; but
- Don’t be afraid, because I am with you; and
- You will be raised to a new body – a body that will never be sick or diseased

And if He has the right to say

- to the drought, “Break”, and it rains;

He also has the right to say to the prosperous:

- I am sending drought and poverty and ruin upon the land; and
- in this time you will feed the hungry; and
- have compassion on those who have nothing; and
- you will learn to trust in me to provide enough for just each day;
- you will give me praise in poverty; but
- Don’t be afraid, because I am with you; and
- You are storing up riches in heaven where moth and rust do not destroy...

How big is our faith?

There’s a lot for us to learn about faith here:

The Disciples must’ve had some level of faith, because when they realised their lives were in peril, and there was nothing the professionals could do about it, they went straight to Jesus: **“Master, Master, we are perishing!”**

And that’s often what we do, (isn’t it?). We’re just doing our thing; And we know that Jesus is with us;

But it’s only when:

- disaster strikes;
- we’re at our wits end

- we realise the peril we’re in that in desperation we call out to God, “Help!”...

And God being God, He can reach out and save us – we know that. Our faith is **big** enough for that...

Our faith **is** big enough to know that God **is** powerful enough to overcome the physical realm – He **is** powerful enough to preserve and even enhance our physical lives, and He’s powerful enough to make things more pleasant... – Our faith is big enough for that isn’t it???

Well, here comes a sarcastic, “Congratulations” – that’s “little-faith”... When the Disciples demonstrated **that** sort of faith, what did Jesus say? **“Where is your faith?”**

Now, those who consider themselves to be super-spiritual might say, *“Well, if they had faith, they would’ve rebuked the wind and the waves themselves, because our words have power.”*

I don’t think so. There were times when Jesus said “You should have done this”, such as when the Disciples couldn’t drive out a demon, but Jesus did, and He said, **“This kind cannot be driven out by anything but prayer and fasting”**...

But here, Jesus **didn’t** tell His disciples, “You should’ve rebuked the wind and the waves yourselves” – all He said was **“Where is your faith?”**

That should cause us to wonder, “What should they have had faith in?” They should’ve had faith in three things:

1.

That Jesus was with them. As Disciples of Jesus, **God** is with us, through every circumstance in life.

- through storm;
- through peril;
- in times of danger;
- through sickness;
- through persecution;
- through suffering,,,,,

God is with us.

Have faith; Have trust; And we can experience peace **in** the storm, because we know that God is with us.

2.

The second thing they should’ve had faith in, is the word of God.

They got into the boat, and Jesus said, “**Let us go across to the other side of the lake.**”

If the Son of God says “We’re going across to the other side of the lake.”, what do you think is going to happen? We’re going to go across to the other side of the lake.

Does that mean that we might sink and drown half-way across??? Of course not!!!

To **not** believe the word of God, is a lack of faith – To be afraid, “We’re going to sink and drown”, is faithlessness because Jesus had already said, “We’re going across to the other side of the lake.”

So, have faith in the word of God, but make sure it **is** the Word of God.

The trouble sets in, when we ourselves, put words in God’s mouth – We might feel that God has said something, but it wasn’t God at all – it was our own desires/hopes... We must not have faith in what we think; or in what we feel God should do – we have faith in the Word of God.

Even though, sometimes the Word of God will promise us things we don’t want. God’s word promises us blessings (sure enough), but it also promises Persecutionsⁱ; Sufferingsⁱⁱ; Homelessnessⁱⁱⁱ; Poverty^{iv}. Not all these will be encountered by all, but those who live Godly lives will endure many of these things...

3.

And so, the third thing the Disciples should’ve had faith in, is the providence of God.

- God knows, before we ask Him, what we need (He knows better than we do), and God is good;
- Sometimes my will, is not God’s will; but
- In faith, we trust that God’s will is best...

Sometimes The Lord **doesn't** take the storm away, in which case, we endure the storm, knowing that Christ is with us through the storm. If God has said that He will get us across to the other side, to the other side He will get us...

There is no greater faith, than to have peace in the midst of the storm.

- God is with us in every circumstance;
- We can trust in the Word of God;
- We can trust in the goodness of God; and
- We trust in the providence of God – God's will (even if it's tough for us now) is always best...

So, that's the main lesson of today's Bible reading,, But in our nation, and in the richer parts of the global community, there is an excessive human arrogance that needs to be addressed, and I believe Today is the day to do it...

The Lord Jesus Christ has power over all things.

He has power:

- over life and death;
- over sickness and disease;
- spirit world;
- And today we're reminded He is the One who has the power over the wind and the waves.

He has power of the physical world; He has power over the spiritual world...

That’s why Disciples of Jesus do not fear the climate-change chorus of doom...

We don’t even need to argue if the climate **is** changing, because we know, who controls the weather/climate? These things are in God’s hand, and I’m glad about that...

It is the pinnacle of human arrogance to believe that humans have an ability to control the weather... And as I see the governments of the world, responding to what they claim to be the “*biggest moral challenge of our time*”; and as I see the fear in children being told by the Godless that if we don’t do something now, the world is doomed.... I don’t get mad – I’m deeply saddened...

The global-warming/climate-change bandwagon, is pretty-much a religion – it’s a religion devoid of God. And it’s the greatest idolatry there is...

Essentially, all idolatry is creating a god of our own design. And years ago, they would have gotten a block of wood, and carved out of that, an image to become their “god of the weather”, and they would yield to that God, and sacrifice their goods to that God, and they would pray to that block of wood, “*Bless us with a good season this year, o my great god of the weather.*”...

And the reason that idolatry is so repugnant to God, is it fails to recognise, YHWH is the God who is in control. There is no other God...

And the **greatest** idolatry is to elevate **ourselves** to the place of God, and claim “**We** control the weather.”...

It is silly and faithless to believe that humans can change the weather. It is just as silly to believe that humans are in control, as what it is to believe block of wood is in control...

Who’s in control of the weather? God is. And yet, there’s a generation out there, who are terrified about a potential rise of sea-levels...

When God spoke to Job about His power and authority, He said:

Job 38:8–11 (ESV)

⁸ “... who shut in the sea with doors
when it burst out from the womb,

⁹ when I made clouds its garment
and thick darkness its swaddling band,

¹⁰ and prescribed limits for it
and set bars and doors,

¹¹ and said, ‘Thus far shall you come, and no farther,
and here shall your proud waves be stayed?’

Who's in control of sea-levels? God is.

Ah, the fear... ... It is a fear however, that Disciples of Jesus should never have...

It's no surprise that the Godless are afraid, because they **don't** have faith in:

- the goodness of God; and
- the power of God; and
- His word, and that He will see us through to the end...

And for them, God is **not** with them (at least in the sense that He is with Disciples of Jesus.)

In Jeremiah 5, God says: (ESV)

²² Do you not fear me? declares YHWH.

Do you not tremble before me?

I placed the sand as the boundary for the sea,
a perpetual barrier that it cannot pass;
though the waves toss, they cannot prevail;
though they roar, they cannot pass over it.

²³ But this people has a stubborn and rebellious
heart;

they have turned aside and gone away.

²⁴ They do not say in their hearts,

'Let us fear YHWH our God,

who gives the rain in its season,

the autumn rain and the spring rain,

and keeps for us, the weeks appointed for the harvest.'

²⁵ Your iniquities have turned these away, and your sins have kept good from you.

That was a word for Israel. But there’s a similar word for our generation.

In the book of the Revelation of Jesus Christ, we’re given an image of when the judgment of God **does** come upon this world:- sickness; disease; pestilence; hail; fire; poison water; natural disasters; weather disasters....

Revelation 9:20–21 (ESV)

²⁰ The rest of mankind, who were not killed by these plagues, did not repent of the works of their hands nor give up worshiping demons and idols of gold and silver and bronze and stone and wood, which cannot see or hear or walk, ²¹ nor did they repent of their murders or their sorceries or their sexual immorality or their thefts.

What’s the purpose of these upheavals? To get people to turn to God and repent. Do they? No. They consume themselves with their idolatry.

And the judgment of God continues:

Revelation 16: (ESV) ⁸ The fourth angel poured out his bowl on the sun, and it was allowed to scorch people

with fire. ⁹ They were scorched by the fierce heat [there’s going to be global-warming alright], and they cursed the name of God who had power over these plagues. They did not repent and give him glory.

We shouldn’t be surprised that people of the world are terrified with the preaching of the climate-change-doomsday-priesthood... because that’s what idolatry does – it claims for itself, power that only belongs to God...

But as a people of faith, we stand apart... We don’t even need to try and disprove climate-change, because whether the climate is changing or not, that’s not the point. Whether weather events are becoming more severe or not, that’s not the point either. The point is, we know “the weather is God’s domain”. And we have faith in our God.

We know:

- God is with us in every circumstance;
- We can trust in the Word of God; and
- We can trust in the providence of God – God’s will (even if it’s tough for us now) is always best...
- And we trust in the goodness of God

And so we pray, come Lord Jesus, Your Kingdom come;

And we **proclaim**:

- the goodness of God; and
- the power of God; and

- the providence of God,,,

And we preach:

- “Repent of idolatry;
- repent of making a God in our own image;
- repent of putting ourselves in the place of God”

And Give **Him** Glory...

Let's pray,

Heavenly Father, we worship You.

You are the God of all power.

Father; Son; and Holy Spirit,

We thank You for the gift of faith.

We thank You that You are with us,
through every storm,
through every trial,

You are with us in sickness and health;

You are with us in life and death;

And we thank You that we need have no fear.

Lord,

we repent of when we have not trusted You.

For You are all Powerful;

You are all loving;

You are indeed Good.

And so Lord, we entrust our whole lives to You.

Fill us with peace,
in the midst of whatever the world would throw at us,
Always trusting that You’ll get us to the other side,

Amen.

ⁱ Mark 10:30

ⁱⁱ Romans 5:3; 2 Corinthians 1:5

ⁱⁱⁱ Luke 9:58

^{iv} Revelation 2:9