

Peace, Be Still!

He woke up and rebuked the wind, and said to the sea, "Peace! Be still!" Then the wind ceased, and there was a dead calm. Mark 4:39 NRSV

Karen Fair told a story about her three-year-old daughter, Abby, who was having trouble sleeping through the night. She kept waking up because she was afraid. Each time Karen tucked her into bed again, she would remind her that Jesus was with her and that He would keep her safe.

The sleepless nights continued, with Abby seeking comfort in her parents' bedroom. Frustrated by her child's behavior, Karen asked her daughter if she had prayed for Jesus to take her fear away and help her fall asleep. "Oh yes," Abby assured her. "He told me to come and get you!"

When evening came after teaching by the lakeside, Jesus said to his disciples, "Let's go over to the other side." They did and suddenly a furious squall came up. The waves broke over the boat, so that it was nearly swamped. Jesus was in the back of the boat asleep on a cushion. The disciples woke him and said to him, "Teacher, don't you care if we drown?"

I wonder how often we feel as though Jesus is asleep at the wheel and unconcerned with our well-being when we find ourselves in the middle of a storm? When hardship comes our way, are we like the disciples who ask, "Jesus, do you not care that we are perishing?" "Jesus, where are you when I need you?" Our expectation of help may be for something as tangible as "take an oar and row" or "grab a bucket and bail", yet we plead with Jesus to do something – do something to get us out of this mess!" And so often Jesus responds, not necessarily as we expect, but with what we need most rather than what we asked for. Jesus give us His Peace.

Sometimes the intent of Jesus' words. "Peace. Be still" is not clear. Is he commanding the wind and the waves or the people in the boat? "Peace" is exactly what we need when we are overtaken with the anxiety of circumstance. Hearing Jesus and seeing the wind cease and the dead calm of the sea, had to be awe inspiring and calming. Jesus doesn't tell us to be unafraid. He tells us we are not alone; Jesus is in the boat with us. He is with us when all is well with our lives and also in our times of trouble.

So, when we are afraid let's hear the voice of the Christ say, "Peace! Be Still.", and remember that He is as close to us as a mother's arms are to her frightened child.

Prayer: Lord Jesus, come and give us your peace. Amen.

Christ be with you, always,

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