

Jesus Teaches us How to Take a Nap

Mark 4:35-41
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Some people can fall asleep anywhere, plane, train, car, church pew. Others have trouble falling asleep even at night in a comfortable bed. In our text today Jesus takes sleeping on the go to a whole new level. He is peacefully sleeping on a boat, in a storm, while waves are crashing over his head.

The key of course is that adverb "peacefully," Jesus was at peace because he trusted in His heavenly father to take care of him, therefore the wind and waves did not disturb his rest. Today we are going to learn how to rest peacefully, Although hopefully not right now.

**35 On the same day, when evening had come, He said to them, "Let us cross over to the other side."
36 Now when they had left the multitude, they took Him along in the boat as He was. And other little boats were also with Him. 37 And a great windstorm arose, and the waves beat into the boat, so that it was already filling.**

Psalm 4:8 I will both lie down in peace, and sleep; For You alone, O LORD, make me dwell in safety

How could Jesus sleep? The Psalm reminds us that the key is peace which comes from trusting the Lord. That is the real point of our sermon today, not to actually fall asleep but to find that peace which Jesus demonstrates.

This peace is found not from having the perfect circumstances but from trusting the Lord.

Peace comes from the Lord not from our control

What problems/worries/cares/ troubles/ or sufferings did you bring with you to church today? Are any of them even remotely as dangerous as the situation the disciples were facing? Jesus rebukes the disciples for their lack of faith. If he rebukes them for their lack of faith, what would he say to us considering how petty some of our troubles are?

How often do we make a huge deal out of things that really aren't a sinking boat. Of course, sometimes the boat is filling with water. Sometimes the boat is sinking, and we are treading water in the middle of the sea. But even when problems do get that bad the Lord is in control.

We never have a life which is perfectly calm, without troubles and worries. Peace doesn't come from controlling our circumstance but from trusting the Lord. The waves of filling the boat, but Jesus is in control.

Peace comes from trusting the Lord.

38 But He was in the stern, asleep on a pillow. And they awoke Him and said to Him, "Teacher, do You not care that we are perishing?"

Jesus was asleep, but that doesn't mean he doesn't care. Often when we pray it seems like Jesus is not listening. His lack of response might seem like a lack of care. Jesus reassures his disciples even when it seems like he is asleep he is in control.

Psa 22:2 O My God, I cry in the daytime, but You do not hear; And in the night season, and am not silent.

Just like the disciples, the psalmist is crying out to God, but God doesn't seem interested in responding. Very often we are tempted to think that if God doesn't answer right away, he's not really listening. God reassures us however that this is not the case. A lack of immediate response does not indicate a lack of concern.

Isaiah 49:14-15 14 But Zion said, "The LORD has forsaken me, And my Lord has forgotten me." 15 "Can a woman forget her nursing child, And not have compassion on the son of her womb? Surely they may forget, Yet I will not forget you.

Although the disciples question Jesus's concern, they nevertheless still come to him for help. You notice the Psalmist does the same thing. Even though it is our sin that causes us to think the Lord is not answer, yet Jesus doesn't rebuke us but encourages us to keep coming to him.

When God doesn't respond, Jesus wants us to trust him but also keep bringing it to him. Jesus even tells us the parable of the man who kept knocking.

Peace comes from remembering that a seeming lack of response from God does not equate to a lack of concern, go ahead and keep bringing the worries but trust that Jesus is listening.

39 Then He arose and rebuked the wind, and said to the sea, "Peace, be still!" And the wind ceased and there was a great calm. 40 But He said to them, "Why are you so fearful? How is it that you have no faith?"

Psalm 6:1-2 O LORD, do not rebuke me in Your anger, Nor chasten me in Your hot displeasure. 2 Have mercy on me, O LORD, for I am weak; O LORD, heal me, for my bones are troubled.

Jesus rebukes the wind and the waves. He also rebukes the disciples. Of the two which one obeys his word? Peace comes from listening to God's word.

Jesus' response to the disciples is actually "why do you not yet have faith?"

After everything that they have seen Jesus do, how can you still doubt his power to give aid? We are in Mark chapter 4, by this time they have already seen him, change water into wine, heal the sick and paralyzed, cleanse lepers, cast out demons and many more miracles. How much does it take before the disciples will trust his word?

What about us? How much will it take before we will learn to trust his word? Which is the greater miracle for Jesus to calm the storm or to calm our hearts?

Calming the storm is easy for Jesus because the wind and waves listen to his word, not so much our hearts. Despite our hard heartedness and refusal to listen Jesus greatly desires to give peace to our hearts. How many times does he tell the disciples, "Peace" or "don't worry."

In Psalm 6 David pleads that God would not be angry with us and rebuke us for our weakness and slowness to trust. Jesus hears David and does have mercy on us in our weakness. Yes we should listen to Jesus the first time and trust his promises, but because of our weakness Jesus keeps reassuring us over and over that we do not need to worry. We are safe in his care. He is in control.

Peace comes from listening and trusting God's word.

41 And they feared exceedingly, and said to one another, "Who can this be, that even the wind and the sea obey Him!"

Psa 27:5 For in the time of trouble He shall hide me in His pavilion; In the secret place of His tabernacle He shall hide me; He shall set me high upon a rock.

Even when the storm was done the disciples still didn't have peace because they did not yet understand this basic question, who is Jesus?

Mark wants to teach us that Jesus is Yahweh, the God who sees us and knows us and is with us and has the power to save us. We have peace because of who he is. He is the one who hides us in his pavilion.

In my study of this text the name of our favorite villain came up again, some of you remember Antiochus IV Epiphanes. Antiochus supposedly bragged that he could control the wind of the sea. When he died the Hebrews zealots mocked him for that brag. But now here is Jesus and he does control the wind and the waves. Antiochus claimed to command the wind and waves, Jesus truly does. Antiochus claimed to be God, but Jesus truly is.

Who is this that the wind and waves obey him? A: God. But that is only a partial answer.

One commentator makes the point that the purpose of this account is to teach us that Jesus is God. He is only half right. Mark wants us to understand not just that Jesus is God, but that he is Yahweh, the God who sees us and cares about our troubles. It is not enough that Jesus can calm the storm, it is necessary to understand that he will. It is not enough that he has power, we must also be assured that he will use it for the good of his people.

If the disciples had understood not just his power but his grace and compassion, they would not have been terrified. Peace comes not just from knowing God's power but from knowing his grace that he forgives our sins.

Who can this be? A: The Lord who sees our trouble and works to give us peace

Who is this who listens to our prayers and answers all our troubles? It is Jesus, Yahweh the God who sees us.

Peace comes from knowing Jesus' grace.

Because Jesus is God we have peace. We have peace not by controlling our circumstances but by trusting Jesus. We have peace by knowing that God cares for us even when it doesn't seem like he is answering. We have peace from listening to his word. We have peace because he is Yahweh the God who sees us and knows us and has mercy upon us. Amen