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*Reflection Notes*

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22/3/20, Matthew 8: 23-27;14: 22-33 Presence in the Storm *v. **But when he (Peter)saw the wind, he was afraid and beginning to sink, cried out, “Lord save me!”***

Have you ever felt that you are going to drown or afraid that boat will sink at sea?. I have.....and many today wonder how I/we/, the church & wider community will survive or go under.

Peter had tried to follow Jesus walking on water but then when he took eyes off Jesus to look instead at the size of waves, he started to sink, panic, thrash about & then had to be caught & held safe by Jesus. Those details were unique to Matthew’s Gospel but rest is found in parallel a/cts in Mark, Luke & John.

***What kind of man is this?- Just who is this man?*** actions of Jesus shout out just who He really is...The person who not only teaches, *Turn from your sin for God’s Kingdom is at hand, the Messiah is here*; who forgives people their wrongs but who also touches people with healing & gives a fresh start; who has power to still the wind & the waves; who feeds people with His word & feeds the hungry. ***Don’t you get it? – Jesus is God Himself with you***

**2000 years ago**, Jesus stilled a storm that companions feared would cause their wee boat to sink & for them to drown, to give them a glimpse of His divine power. **But where we may ask is He now?**

***Jesus Christ is God Almighty who is alongside- present with us– you & I who cry out to God at times when dark clouds have gathered & my sky has got black, my little boat seems about to sink, & I am very frightened; I’ve cried for help: but the Lord didn’t seem to listen or to care & I’ve had to hang on by the skin of my faith’s teeth until the storm had passed.***

God does not, Super-hero like, intervene under the public gaze to extinguish forest fires with a torrent of rain or push a tsunami back with palm of His hand. Believers = not hermetically sealed from natural disasters or illness or damage. Yet the Lord promises His presence with us Psalm 46: 1-2

**Yet these episodes raise 2 final questions:**

**Of The Absent God:**

It seems to be a very common experience: God can seem very near but more often, far away, or even non-existent; mostly God is “hidden” & sometimes very well hidden indeed. Then I’ve come to see- the Lord was in my boat with us & He seems to be sleeping. Or like Jesus in the 2<sup>nd</sup> incident: up in the hills praying but in moonlight around 4am but also watching as winds get up & disciples struggle to make any progress & then walks on the water & tells them , *Don’t be afraid!* & climbs into the boat there with me wind dies down & it is completely calm.

**Of Calm in the storm**

Jesus asleep in the boat is a symbol of serenity & calm

Not that He doesn't care. Not so much that He calms the storm but that He is there to calm His disciples. That's part of the miracle for me – that **Christ was with them in the boat - & He is in my little boat with me today, with me in the midst of storms & dark nights & He can give me peace - & you too!** May we learn to trust **Him!** MP 115 Do not be afraid (Isaiah 43:1-6)