

Luke 8:22-25 – Purpose in the storms of life

- I hope you are all doing well this week
 - Its good news about the lockdown ending isn't it
 - But I am sure many of you now have questions about what to do for Christmas
 - To ease one burden from you. Jonny suggested last week that we would be working through Luke until 2025 but don't worry this is in fact our penultimate sermon in this series
 - We will be staying in Luke for an advent style series and going back to chapters 1-3, but we are reaching the conclusion on this one
- The reason our series is drawing to an end is that Luke has a major shift in chapter 9
 - As Luke puts in v51 Jesus 'set out resolutely for Jerusalem'
 - Where he would die on the cross.
- So, as we come to the end of this first half of Luke it's good to remember what Luke's purpose of writing was
 - Luke was a trained doctor who studied the life of Jesus and then wrote this account.
 - He was connected to the disciples, but he wasn't one himself.
 - His careful study actually makes Luke's gospel the most chronological.
 - Luke's purpose of writing was to give a careful account of Jesus life
 - In this first half Luke gives an account of who Jesus truly is and that is what we have been looking at
 - In the second half Luke switches to the purpose of why Jesus came
 - To die on the cross to forgive our sins
- Our passage today is one of the last that has the purpose of showing us who Jesus truly is.
 - It shows us that Jesus is fully man but also fully God
- Having shown us that, this passage then teaches us how to deal with the storms of life.
- A bit of background to this story.
 - Here we are today on the shore of Lake Galilee.
 - Just previously Jesus has been busy healing, teaching, doing miracles.
 - And the disciples have been busy alongside Him supporting Jesus.
 - They would have all been tired
 - The gospel of Mark (4:35-41) tells us that this event happens at the end of a day
 - Jesus at the end of a day tells His disciples to get in a boat and cross to the other side
 - Must have been a bad thought to the already tired disciples

- Little did they know it was about to get much worse.
- Many of us probably don't know much about lake Galilee so let me fill you in a bit
 - It roughly 12 miles wide by 6 miles wide so a big lake
 - It sits 600ft below sea level and is surrounded by mountains
 - This leads to regular sudden storms on the lake as cold air drops and warm air rises particularly in the evening time.
 - These storms are fierce and unpredictable and still happen today
 - One moment it is perfectly calm and the next you are in the middle of a big storm
 - This storm then could have just been a normal act of nature or it could have been sent by Satan to try and stop Jesus and the disciples.
 - Either way it would have been a scary storm
- Let's also remember who the disciples were
 - Several of Jesus disciples were seasoned fishermen – they were used to handling boats and sailing
 - Nearly all of them were from around the region of Galilee so they all would have known about the storms on the lake
 - But even with local knowledge and years of sailing experience they were terrified and thought they were going to die
 - This was some storm.

Jesus is fully man

- Jesus gets tired just like you and I get tired
- During this storm do you see what Jesus is doing?
 - Tired, exhausted even, after all the teaching, healing and miracles He has done, He has taken the opportunity to have a sleep.
 - During this fierce storm Jesus is asleep
- Jesus had been mobbed by huge crowds for a long time and it had worn him out.
 - But God doesn't get tired. Isaiah 40:28
 - No Jesus took on flesh and became fully man just like you and me
 - He humbly laid aside His divinity.
 - Jesus isn't like superman.
 - Looks like an ordinary man on the surface but indestructible and never gets tired underneath.
 - Jesus was fully human and had to be to be our saviour.

Jesus is totally God

- Do you know the creation story?
 - How is the world made?
 - God speaks at it happens
- Here Jesus speaks to the wind and waves and they obey.
 - They recognise the voice of their maker and do what they are told.
 - Psalm 65:7, 89:9, 106:7-9

- I am sure we have all seen a lake or the sea on a windy day.
 - The waves crashing around in the sea or the violent ripples being washed across a lake.
 - What happens when the wind stops?
 - The waves take hours to settle down.
 - What happens here when Jesus speaks?
 - Jesus rebukes the wind and the waves
 - He tells them off
 - The wind stops immediately but the waves also stop, and the lake is totally calm.
 - That is the power of Jesus as he is fully God
- Jesus has demonstrated His power and authority in His teaching and healing. People knew Him as a miracle worker, demon caster, and great teacher
 - He has also already made His claim to being God through bringing back to life the dead and by forgiving sins – something only God can do
 - Now here He displays that He is God incarnate by His control of nature.
- The disciples see this and are afraid.
 - They are in a boat with God.
 - They ask the question we have seen pop up several times already
 - Who is this?
 - We already thought He was powerful, but this is the next level.
- So, we see in this passage the humanity of Jesus and the divinity of Jesus sit hand in hand.
 - If he wasn't fully human, he wouldn't have felt tired
 - If he wasn't fully God, the wind and waves would have ignored him
- Knowing that then leads us to see how we deal with the storms of life.

How to respond to a storm

- The disciples were terrified and probably for a long time resisted the temptation to wake Jesus but eventually they give in and wake Him up.
 - The boat is filling with water and they think they are going to drown.
- Jesus rebuke to the disciples of where is your faith may seem a little harsh
 - I would be scared on a sinking boat and their fear was certainly natural.
 - But they had been with Jesus whilst He healed the centurions servant from a distance, whilst he raised the widows son from the dead so why not trust in Jesus now.
 - They had heard Jesus give John a message that he truly was the promised messiah but yet they now doubted.
 - Jesus was the promised messiah, and a storm wasn't going to stop Him.
- Fear took the place of reason and logic and their experience went out the window.
 - Amidst the storm they let fear rule them.
 - The safest place in the world at that moment was in that boat with Jesus but they couldn't see it.

- Fear is a powerful demolisher of logic.
 - They believed Jesus to be the promised Messiah, but they were surprised that he had power over nature.
- Like the disciples when the storms of life hit us, and fear invades, so often the doubts quickly follow.
 - We confess Jesus as Lord and saviour and know that He cares for us, loves us and provides for our every need but in the storm all that goes out the window and we fear that He has forgotten us in our circumstances.
- No matter our situation we can trust that God is always in control – Psalm 89:8-9
- Jesus had told them they were going to the other side and that should have encouraged and comforted them in the storms.
 - The disciples looked around and saw danger, looked within and found fear. What they failed to do was look up by faith and see God.
 - Faith is not believing in spite of circumstances; it is obeying in spite of feelings and consequences.
 - God is faithful and will always provide for our need and get us through the storm – Deuteronomy 31:6
 - We just need to have faith in Him and keep trusting when we feel like giving up on God.
- Crisis, like this storm come out of nowhere, and it is good for us to always do as the disciples did, and go find the Master,
 - to go to Jesus in prayer
 - to go to Jesus in Scripture
 - to go to Jesus in song
 - to go to Jesus requesting help.
- The disciples did the only thing that they could do, go to Jesus
 - what is interesting is that they didn't go to Jesus until they had exhausted all of their own efforts.
- And so many of us live so much of our lives in that same trap.
 - Out of nowhere, comes a great storm.
 - We work ourselves until the point of being at the end,
 - and then in desperation, we call out to Jesus. He comes to help, to serve, to be with us.
 - I would just encourage you, it's not something I am always good at as I rely on my strength first, but we should go to Jesus first, and we should ask the one who created the world, and rules the world to help us.

Maybe you are in a storm today and you don't yet know God – put your trust in Him
 If you are in the midst of a storm, then keep your eyes fixed upon Jesus.

Jude is a book full of warning, but it closes with supreme confidence in God. Dangerous times should make us trust in a mighty God. Jude v24&25