



Servants of Christ

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Devotion for Week of July 12th 2020 ----- Be Still

Mark 4:38 Jesus was in the stern, sleeping on a cushion. The disciples woke him and said to him, 'Teacher, don't you care if we drown?'

39 He got up, rebuked the wind and said to the waves, 'Peace! Be still!' Then the wind died down and it was completely calm.

40 He said to his disciples, 'Why are you so afraid? Do you still have no faith?'

41 They were terrified and asked each other, 'Who is this? Even the wind and the waves obey him!'

The words "Peace" and "Be still" are only two words in the original Greek. They are also not the usual words Jesus uses. This 'peace' is not the peace associated with harmony. And Jesus only uses this 'be still' to command demons. Literally the 'be still' means to 'muzzle yourself' or 'gaggle yourself.' The idea is that the storm is an out-of-control force that just needs to shut up. And Jesus is just the force to bring it in line.

These words could be commands but they probably are not. The voice is either "the storm has been muzzled" or "has muzzled itself." This means the peace and the stilling have already occurred even before Jesus said a word. This is a common understanding in scripture:

John 16:33 'I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world.'

Or a passage often read at memorial services: Revelation 21: 6 He said to me: 'It is done. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End...

I know a disabled man whose wife is in the hospital with heart failure. This lady travelled all over Canada and US singing gospel music. Both she and her sister had 'perfect pitch' and could play anything on any instrument after hearing it once. And now her heart is only working at 25%. The language her husband uses follows Jesus' in this passage: 'this disease has been conquered by Jesus Christ'; 'this disease is an evil force that needs to put on a muzzle.' At first I felt the pain and the feeling of being overwhelmed. But then I thought, 'This guy has it right. He is trying to live in the kingdom of heaven where God has already overcome all things.' I need to live more in that kingdom.

Here is a reflection:

Fear. Anxiety. Everything seems unknown.

Be still.

I don't want my kids in school. Who will teach them?

Be still.

Am I safe at the grocery store? Did that man just cough?

Be still.

Closures. Out of work again. Money.

Be still.

He who was seated on the throne said, 'I am making everything new!'

Learning new things. Connecting in new ways. Re-evaluating priorities.

Peace. Be still.

Testing increased. A vaccine is already being mass-produced.

Peace. Be still.

Fewer deaths because medical staff are learning more every day.

Peace. Be still.

One day at a time. Cannot control everything. Love is what matters most.

Peace. Be still.

Then the wind died down and it was completely calm. Who is he?

Jesus the Christ who has already brought peace and overcome the world.