



Part 49: Jesus' Calm in the Chaos

Matthew 8:23-27

Jesus calls us to surrender and trust all areas of our lives to God's all surpassing authority and way.

I. Follow Me: Matthew 8:18-23

- "...follow you wherever you go" – Jesus knows the intentions of his heart and these are just empty words. This disciple was not willing to make the sacrifice of being on the road with Jesus.
- "Lord, first let me go and bury my father." But Jesus told him, "Follow me, and let the dead bury their own dead." – seems harsh. The man's father was most likely not dead and this was an expression to delay and procrastinate Jesus' call on his life.
- Matthew 8:23 – "...disciples followed him." In contrast to the two disciples with their excuses, these disciples follow Jesus.
- Echo – Matthew 4:19 – Jesus chose them versus them choosing a rabi. Jesus chose the unlikely – fisherman, a tax collector, and even a political radical to follow Him.
- Our following of Jesus is not to merely be associated with Jesus or to just call out to him when we are hurting. As we see from Jesus' conversation with the two disciples who did not follow, following Jesus can sometimes mean discomfort and sacrifice. Jesus calls us beyond empty words and platitudes to truly following Him...even through a furious storm.

II. The Storm: Matthew 8:23-27 and Rembrandt

A. Rembrandt's depiction in his 1633 painting – Christ in the Storm on the Sea of Galilee.

- The boat taking on water

- There is hope on the horizon with clear skies

B. Four of the twelve disciples were fishermen – harden men. This had to be a furious storm and yet Jesus was sleeping. They are freaking out – 3 Greek words: κύριε σῶσον ἀπολλύμεθα

C. Lord, Save Us, We're gonna die!

III. Jesus Response

A. V. 20, "Foxes have dens and birds have nests, but the Son of Man has no place to lay his head." We now see Jesus asleep and at peace. He can "lay his head" in the storm. He can find His home even in the chaos. And then "...he got up and rebuked the winds and the waves, and it was completely calm." Mark 4:39, "Quiet, Be still!"

"Creation recognizes its creator." – Jerome (early church father)

B. Jesus' growing authority:

- Matthew 7:29, Authority to teach
- Matthew 8:9, Authority to heal
- Matthew 8:27, Authority over nature
- Matthew 8:32, Authority over the demonic
- Matthew 9:6, Authority to forgive sins

C. As the depiction of Jesus' authority grows, we do not see the disciples' faith growing with it.

IV. The disciples' response

- They're freaking out! Their faith is not growing with Jesus' growing authority.
- Matthew 8:26, "You of little faith, why are you so afraid!"
- It might appear that Jesus is being harsh with them, they are taking on water and are about to drown. And the disciples even go to Jesus for help, isn't that some faith? Scholars argued that it is not fear that Jesus is condemning, it is excessive fear, it is being overcome by fear and not trusting.
- In Mark 4, Luke 8, Jesus says "Let us go over to the other side of the lake." They forgot to trust what Jesus had said. Jesus was teaching them what it means to truly follow Him.

"Faith is not a passive acceptance of truths, a weak resignation that "just believes". Faith is depicted in the Gospels as a courageous confidence that Jesus is equal to the occasion." – Dale Bruner

- Disciples journey of faith (Matthew); first being called by Jesus, seeing Jesus heal the sick, preach the sermon on the mount, heal the man with leprosy, heal the centurion's servant and many others. And now their faith is being challenged to believe that Jesus is more than a teacher or prophet but God over all things.

- This is often like our own faith journeys. In God's mercy He meets us in our own felt needs as an invitation to Him so that we might ultimately surrender and put our faith in Jesus. Often as we surrender and make Jesus our Lord and King, we might give him some things but not everything. We might give him our worship and time but want to keep a hold of our money or maybe our kids or our health.

V. Main Take Away

A. Jesus calls us to surrender and trust all areas of our lives to God's all surpassing authority and way.

B. All areas of our lives. Following Jesus is not vending machine Christianity where we pick and choose what we like about Jesus and how we will follow. If Jesus is Lord and King in our lives, He reigns over all parts of our lives, He desires that we surrender all parts of our lives in obedience to him. Not as a kill joy but as the one who knows all things and desires us to experience the fullness of life.

C. Surrender how we spend our money, surrender how we use our time (binging on Netflix and zombie scrolling on Instagram), surrender how we treat our friends, surrender how we manage our employees, surrender how we respond to the poor, surrender our sexuality to Jesus...all things.

D. We don't surrender because of fear. We fear losing control and have the illusion that we are in control. We sometimes don't realize what we are still grabbing ahold of until we walk through our own storm and loss.

E. i.e. Horatio Spafford, "It is Well with My Soul"

Discussion Questions:

1. Did you learn anything new about this Matthew 8:23-27 passage?
2. When you hear Jesus say, "follow me," what comes to your mind?
3. What have been some storms in your life? How did you see Jesus in the storm? Did you find his calm in the chaos?
4. What has your journey of surrender and trust in Jesus looked like? Has there been anything difficult to surrender to Jesus?
5. How can we pray for you to surrender and trust all areas of your life to God's surpassing authority and way?