

MASTER, DON'T YOU CARE?
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Sometimes, our problems are so severe it seems no one has ever been in the same boat. The disciples in **Mark 4:35-41** would understand. But Jesus had said, "Let us pass over unto the other side." Then, as He does with us, He got in the same boat they were in. They took Him just as He was, not expecting Him to change before allowing Him in their lives. We change, not God. But in the storm of that day, their ship had taken all it could without actually going under. That is when they woke Him and asked for us all, "Master, we are about to die here. Don't you care?"

Because it seemed God was not aware of their problem, they assumed He did not care. So He rose, rebuked the wind and sea, and said, "Peace, be still." The wind ceased, and there was a great calm. Imagine the incredible power necessary to have canceled out the staggering forces involved with the storm. Note His next words to them. "Why are ye so fearful? How is it that ye have no faith?" He was amazed at both their fear and their lack of faith. Their response was a fearful question. "What manner of man is this?" The power He had demonstrated frightened them.

When people ask how things are going, we usually tell them "Fine!" or "Good!" The truth is sometimes we are barely hanging by a thread. We lie, because the alternative would be to let others know of our desperation and risk finding out they really don't care. Sometimes we are not even sure we, our marriage, our jobs, or our families will still exist when the crisis has passed. So we cry out in desperation, "My life is full. I can't handle any more trouble. God! Do you even care what is happening in my life? I am about to go under. Do you even care that I am about to die?" The men in that boat were His disciples, the ones who walked with Him and saw His power daily. Even they asked Him if He cared about the struggle they were going through. Did He?

David would have thought so. In **Chapter 139 of Psalms**, David wrote of God's pursuit and knowledge of him. Given that David was inspired by God to write as He did, we can believe these things about our Lord. He searches us, knows us, knows our ups and downs, what we are thinking right now, and knows everything about us. He hears everything we say. He is on all sides of us and His hand is upon us. There is no place we can go; no place where we can run, whether good or bad, where God can not join us. Even in the depths of Hell, He is aware of us and is with us. An all knowing God put us in that place. It doesn't matter to God if it is dark or light. If we can not see the right path to take, or any path to take, we can take the hand of a God who sees in the dark and let Him lead us.

If all that is true, then He knows all about the storm. After all, He led us into it. Why do I say that? Look at **Mark 4:35** again. Since God knows everything, He knew the storm was coming, and sent them directly into it. Maybe He is aware of what we are not. He knows the storm we are in will not destroy us. It is only in the storm that we are made aware of His power to bring about a great calm in our lives. Even in the worst of situations, we can still trust in Him if He is our master. If He is there, even asleep on the pillow, then He will share our fate and I doubt He will let our ship go down. He had said, "Let us go," not onto the sea, but over to the other side. Knowing the storm was coming, He still planned to make it across with His disciples.

Why did He purposely send His followers into a dangerous storm? Rest assured, these seasoned fishermen would not have been afraid had it not been very dangerous. I think God lets us endure troubles so we will know storms are not intended to destroy us, but to reveal what foundations we are built upon, whether sand or rock. The storms are also intended to show us His glory, to give us a reason to depend upon Him in the future. They build our faith. Remember that. They build our faith.

God has no intention for us to perish in the storms. **Ezekiel 18:32** promises He takes no pleasure at all in our deaths. What point would there have been to His death if He allowed avoidable circumstances to destroy His disciples? There is a beautiful, even if simple ending to this story. It is found in **Mark 5:1** and is just this, "And they came over unto the other side of the sea, into the country of the Gadarenes." They made it to the other side, just as intended.

For whatever reason, God uses faith on the part of those around Him to perform miracles. Because they were sure Jesus was only the son of a carpenter, He found it difficult to be God in the land in which He

had grown up. In fact, **Matthew 13:57-58** lets us know the home town folks were offended by His actions and words. Here is where scripture tells us “A prophet is not without honour, save in his own country, and in his own house.” In one case, He had to send everyone out of the room who doubted before raising a dead girl. This was in response to scornful laughter upon His proclamation that the girl was “not dead, only sleeping.” Once only those with faith remained, He spoke to her and restored her life.

It was on the other side of the sea that a very powerful miracle was needed. In the Gaderenes, having demonstrated His power over the incredible forces of the physical world, Jesus demonstrated His power over the spiritual world. There he cast legions of devils (interpreted as one or two thousand of them) out of the man in the tombs. I believe that after seeing His frightening power in the storm, His disciples were full of faith that their leader really was God. I think the faith resulting from Him calming the storm provided the power behind the casting out of Legion.

Can we trust Him through the stormy seasons? What are we willing to endure, so that the power of God can be demonstrated and unleashed through our faith into our world?