

“Peace! Be Still!”

✦ **The voice of compassion. (vv.35-38)**

✦ **The power of peace. (vv.39-41)**

In the name of Jesus who rules over wind and wave, dear fellow redeemed:

On Father’s Day you may have happy memories of your Dad carrying you like one Israeli father running down the beach with his son bouncing on his back, yelling, “Abba! Abba! Abba!” Even if your childhood was troubled, you can find blessings from your father. Thank God for each, one-by-one.

One father I’ve long admired is my friend and classmate, Bradley Mattes, President of Life Issues Institute. His radio series, “The Anguish of Forgotten Fathers,”¹ says the “walking wounded” number nearly five million men who struggle emotionally to get through a day. Some regret abortion decisions, others grieve for no choice that their child could live. You may have a co-worker or a colleague hard to get along with because of some deep regret. He may not know why. He needs God’s grace as we all do.

Our heavenly Father has always been there for us. **“I carried you on eagles’ wings”** (Exodus 19:4), He says. In Him we have the strength to **“bear one another’s burdens, and in this way fulfill the law of Christ.”** (Galatians 6:2 EHV²) All this because God’s Son, our Brother Jesus, says, **“Peace! Be Still!”**

✦ **The voice of compassion. (vv.35-38)**

“Cast all your anxiety on him, because he cares for you.” (1 Peter 5:7) Without some traumatic experiences, we tend to make our own worries. Like a woman on a bus clutching her grocery bags on her lap. Finally a tired young man said kindly, “Lady, if you put your bags down on the floor, the bus can carry them too!” How could we truly trust **The voice of compassion** without some weary questions beyond our control? Then we truly appreciate that **voice** inviting: **“Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest....rest for your souls.”** (Matthew 11:28–30 NIV84)

Did something like this happen to you? Or did your Dad or Grandfather tell you about some terrible storm they survived at sea? There’s a Fisherman’s Memorial in Gloucester, MA, quoting Psalm 107:23 – **“They That Go Down to the Sea in Ships.”** Names of those lost at sea include captain and crew of the *Andrea Gail*, the fishing boat famous in book and film, *The Perfect Storm*. (Read Psalm 107:23-32.)

You can see what it’s like to be drowning if you read Jonah’s prayer: **“Waters engulfed me so that I was near death. The deep surrounded me. Seaweed was wrapped around my head. To the roots of the mountains I sank down. The earth locked me behind its bars forever. But you brought my life up from the pit, O Lord, my God.”** (Read Jonah 2:5-9 God rescued Jonah with a huge fish.

How about today’s Second Lesson? Luke’s vivid description of shipwreck in Acts 27 is the most detailed from ancient times. To Paul: **“God has graciously given you all those who are sailing with you.”**

You know that the storms of life picture our most challenging times when we really need to hear **The voice of compassion** from Jesus Himself. That’s where the Spirit takes us now on Galilee. A body of water 8 x 13 miles is a lake to us, nothing like Lake Superior. Traditionally the Sea of Galilee is where Jesus and His disciples got into a boat to cross to the other side. Other small boats followed along, pictured with a small sail and a few oars. Jesus has been teaching and preaching and healing massive

¹ <https://www.lifeissues.org/2021/06/the-anguish-of-forgotten-fathers/>

² EHV ~ *Evangelical Heritage Version* (<http://wartburgproject.org>) © 2019. NPH: 800-662-6022, Amazon-Kindle, LOGOS.

crowds all day, so a cushion in the back of the boat is a welcome sight. Very soon the gentle rocking of the boat has you checking out the backs of your eyelids while your body sighs with relief.

But then from the hills around the Sea fires up a mighty storm out of nowhere. But that's okay. Fisherman like Peter and the other disciples have survived many a storm. So you just row a little harder and smile at Jesus back there relaxing. You all care so much about Him that sometimes you try to send noisy children away, but Jesus calls the children (Mark 10:14f) because He is **The Voice of Compassion**.

This storm is the worst. The wind is crashing waves over the sides of the boat. It's filling up! Everyone is bailing as fast as they can, but you're getting swamped. The wind keeps blowing harder, but Jesus just keeps sleeping! Wake Him up! ***“Teacher, don't you care that we're perishing?”*** (TPA)

Been there? Done that? Everything seems to be going from bad to worse. You're struggling to keep up day by day, hour by hour. What more can you do? How long before some wave crashes over your life and turns everything upside-down? Worst of all, it seems that God doesn't care. In the middle of life's storms, we forget along with the other disciples: ***“God so loved the world so much that he gave his only-begotten Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish, but have eternal life.”*** (John 3:16)

✦ **The power of peace. (vv.39-41)**

Then he got up, rebuked the wind, and said to the sea, “Peace! Be still!” The wind stopped, and there was a great calm. The Almighty Creator told the wind and wave, “Put a muzzle on it.” Jesus is the **power** behind the **peace** that calms the storms of life. This ***“peace surpasses all understanding, guards your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.”*** (Philippians 4:7 TPA) Jesus told His disciples, ***“Peace I leave with you. My peace I give to you. Not as the world gives do I give to you. Do not let your heart be troubled, and do not let it be afraid.”*** (John 14:27) Isaiah wrote: ***“You will keep him in perfect peace, Whose mind is stayed on You, Because he trusts in You.”*** (Isaiah 26:3 NKJV)

There is a warning here. Jesus asked, ***“Why are you so afraid? Do you still lack faith?”*** Absence of faith is unbelief. It can pierce like splinters for pastors who fear their congregation too much to warn the sinner and cheer the saint. “He has become a robed worldling.”³ Heed Jesus' warning: ***“The fearful, the unbelieving, detestable, murderers, adulterers, sorcerers, idolaters, and all the liars will have their share in the lake burning with fire and sulfur, which is the second death.”*** (Revelation 21:8) This word of law is meant to kill our cowardly sinful nature. This message of Christ's powerful victory over our sin, death and hell, and even the forces of nature, brings Gospel healing and courage to our new man. ***“In repentance and rest is your salvation, in quietness and trust is your strength....”*** (Isaiah 30:15 NIV84)

Christ's **peace** lets others see your calm in storms. A missionary to the American Indians was caught in a violent storm mid-Atlantic. Still one group held a worship service! A gigantic wave crashed over the ship, splitting the mainsail, pouring water below decks to swallow the ship. But the Moravians didn't miss a note; they kept singing. “Weren't you afraid?” John Wesley asked the German missionary. “I thank God, no.” “Were not your women and children afraid?” “No, our women and children are not afraid.” Wesley returned to London, still unconverted as he reports. In a Moravian service someone was reading Luther's Preface to Romans. No sin is too great to be forgiven already by God who also credits Christ and His righteousness to you by faith. “I felt my heart strangely warmed [to] trust in Christ...alone for salvation; and an assurance was given to me that he had taken away my sins, even mine.”⁴

That assurance is meant for you today – father, mother, son, daughter – no matter where you've been or what you've done. John Newton wrote, “Our sins they are many. His mercy is more.” More than enough in **The Voice of compassion**. More than enough in **The power of peace**. Tell your fearful heart to “put a muzzle on it!” because Jesus says, ***“Peace! Be still!”*** Amen.

³ Deutschlander, Daniel M. *THE THEOLOGY OF THE CROSS*. (NPH, 2008.), p. 79. Order: 1-800-662-6022.

⁴ Morgan, Robert J. *On This Day* © 1997. Thomas Nelson, Inc. May 24, “Storm Greater: Afraid!” Wheeler, Rairdin. Laridian. For *The Preacher's Apprentice (TPA)* sermon study or copies: m.cordes@comast.net . New Life Evangelical Lutheran Church You can also call: 651-484-1169. Hear the sermon at www.newlifeshoreview.com . 180 County Rd F - Shoreview, MN 55126