

Trusting in Jesus  
 Luke 8:22-25  
 Tampa Covenant Church  
 09 March 2025

Proposition: Jesus is the Sovereign Lord over all creation in whom we place our trust in all of life.

FCF: Failing to place our trust in Christ when assailed by the storms of life.

RHF: Jesus endured the torrent of agony on the cross in order save us from the raging waters of sin and despair in bringing us safely into the family of God.

### **(#1) Introduction:**

We are continuing our study in Luke's gospel; discovering each week how Jesus is the one who came to seek and save the lost. Our text today concerns a miracle witnessed only by the disciples. And on this particular day, they learn a very valuable lesson on the nature of faith and discover something breathtaking about the one they've left everything to follow. The narrative is only four verses but I pray it calls us to consider the nature of our faith, the true identity of our Savior and the difference it makes in our lives as children of God. So, let's look to the Lord in prayer as we open our hearts to receive his word.

### **Two Important Questions from the Story (vv.22-25):** *Where is your faith? Who then is this?*

The setting of our narrative is the Sea of Galilee.<sup>1</sup> The disciples are accustomed to the sea; especially Peter, James and John who once made a living there as fishermen. (#2) On this day, Jesus takes the lead, gets into a boat and tells them, "let us go cross to the other side of the lake." No big deal.. they all pile into the boat and off they went. Luke tells us as they sailed, Jesus fell asleep! In Mark's account, Jesus was sleeping in the stern on a cushion (*Mk 2:38*). (#3) And then it happened, a violent windstorm descended on the lake. Commentators note how the location of the Sea of Galilee makes it susceptible to sudden storms, as the cool mountain air swoops down and stirs up the waters into a violent frenzy. And the boat was filling up with water, placing everyone in real danger.

Sensing the danger, the disciples did what everyone of us would've done. (#4) They ran down to Jesus and woke him up, "Master, Master, we are perishing." It's similar to what we read in Jonah when the captain of the ship ran down and hollered at him to get up and cry out to his god so they would not perish. But someone greater than Jonah is sleeping on this boat. And Luke tells us Jesus "awoke and rebuked the wind and the raging waves, and they ceased." And now in the stillness of the moment, two crucial questions are asked: First, (#5) Jesus asks his disciples; "Where is your faith?" (#6) Next, the disciples ask, "Who then is this, that he commands even winds and water, and they obey him?" These questions are now ours to ponder. And how we answer could mean the difference between wallowing in despair or persevering in hope as Christians living in a (#7) fallen world. So, let's look at Jesus' question first.

### **Where is your Faith?** *Answering the call to trust in Jesus amid adverse circumstances*

(#8) All three of the synoptics highlight Jesus' rebuke of the disciples. In Matt and Mark, Jesus emphasized their fear then commented on the littleness of their faith or the lack thereof.<sup>2</sup> In our text, Jesus simply asks the rhetorical question, "Where's your faith?" (#9 Blank) We're all familiar with this line of questioning. Imagine living up north and you're leaving the house with your loved one and it's blistering

cold outside and you look over and they don't have a jacket. Whadda ya say? *"Where's your jacket?"* You're not looking for an answer rather you're seeking to make a point and provoke thought... *"Oh yeah, I better get my jacket."* That's what Jesus is doing; He's not looking for an answer; He's making a profound point: *"Fellas, your faith should be firing on all cylinders right now. You should be trusting in me and my ability to care for you in this very circumstance."* Up to this point in Luke's gospel, we've seen this kind of faith in action: (#10) Recall in chap 5, when Jesus saw the faith of the paralytic's friends, the lengths they went to in getting him inside that house, Jesus said to him, *"Man, your sins are forgiven you."* Next, think of the centurion. He knew he wasn't worthy to have Jesus come to him and didn't presume he was worthy to go to Jesus. So, he sent a message in faith, *"Just say the word, and let my servant be healed."* At this Jesus (#11) marveled and said to the crowd, *"I tell you, not even in Israel have I found such faith."* Finally, last week Lou preached on how (#12) Jesus told the sinful woman, *"Your faith has saved you; go in peace."* Meaning everything the woman did was done in faith; entering a place she wasn't invited, anointing Jesus' feet with oil and wiping them with her hair. And it all resulted in peace.

The common denominator here is that none of these individuals were in Jesus' inner circle but all acted in faith in their differing circumstances of life. In the case of the disciples, their circumstance was indeed grave but one would think their time spent with Jesus would've placed them a cut above the rest. What's more, Jesus wasn't somewhere on the shore playing in the sand. He was right there in the boat but they were so fixated on the wind and waves, they forgot they were safe in His presence. (#13 Blank) Now, it's easy to pull back from the text and see how the disciples faltered in this instance. But we too have to realize when the winds and waves swoop down and whip our lives into a frenzy; the call is the same; trusting in the abiding presence of our Savior and in His ability to care for us in the midst of adversity.

We've been given the gift of faith through the grace of God in Christ and it's a faith that must be applied in all manner of living; especially when the winds of tribulation are howling around us. (#14) Luther put it this way, *"true living faith, which the Holy Spirit instills into the heart, simply cannot be idle."*<sup>3</sup> Church, our faith has to be a living faith, one that's active and stays in shape through consistent exercise. If it's good for the body, it's immensely good for the soul. But not exercise in the sense that God has done his part and now we're left to ourselves to muster up faith in living the Christian life. But exercise in the sense that we live in full dependence on the Spirit of God who is always at work in our lives, shining the floodlight on our Savior, enabling us to point our faith directly to him in the roughest seasons of life. And we do this because we know He's working out His divine plan and purpose in our lives for His glory; not ours.

(#15) Let me tell you a brief story of a lady named Louisa M.R. Stead, she was born in 1850, in Dover, England. She became a Christian as a child and the Lord placed a deep desire in her heart to serve as a missionary to China but when the time came to answer the call, she couldn't because of ill health. As she endured the grief of loss, coupled with ill health, she would not be deterred. Eventually, she sailed to Rhodesia, Africa where she served faithfully and died at the age of 67. And it was in the midsts of the various storms in her life, she put pen to paper and wrote the (#16) words we sang together, *"Jesus, Jesus how I trust him, how I've proved him o'er and o'er, Jesus, Jesus, precious Jesus, O for grace to trust him more."* And that last verse is one we can sing in the (#17) midsts of the storm, *"I'm so glad I learned to trust Him,*

precious Jesus Savior friend, and I know that He is with me will be with me till the end." May that be our hope and prayer. (#18 Blank) And this brings us to the question of the disciples.

### **Who Then Is This? *The LORD over all of creation***

It's not like the disciples didn't know there was something unique about Jesus. After all, Peter, James, John and Matthew walked away from their livelihoods to follow him. In the time spent with him, they witnessed His miraculous healings, sat under his teachings, and received insights to the secrets of the kingdom of God. And with all the privilege they enjoyed in the presence of the master, they hadn't even scratched the surface in their knowledge of Him. Have you ever had a friend; just an ordinary person in your life and one day you discover they're not as ordinary as you thought? Out of nowhere, they reveal some hidden talent or skill. Naturally, you're surprised because you just discovered something about them you never knew existed. On this boat ride to the other side of the lake, the disciples made such a discovery of the highest order. They witnessed Jesus' power over the natural order. In that moment, they weren't pleasantly surprised. No, their fear of danger was replaced with (#19) awe and utter astonishment, "*Who then is this that he commands even winds and water and they obey?*"

"Who then is this?" is one of the most frequently asked questions concerning Jesus' identity. Many people recognize Him as a good man or a great moral teacher. Those who've casually read the bible have walked away with the opinion he was the Son of God but nothing more. Or maybe he was a prophet who spoke for God but certainly not God in human flesh. As Christians, we sometimes suffer from shortsightedness concerning Jesus. When asked to give an account for our belief in Him, all too often we focus on what He means to us or how He makes us feel. That's great but instead, we should speak objectively concerning His person and work and the hope that He brings to a fallen world as witnessed throughout the pages of scripture.

(#20) Paul tells us, "*He is the image of the invisible God,*" meaning He's the living likeness of the invisible God.<sup>4</sup> (#21) The Hebrews writer tells us, *in these last days he [God] has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed the heir of all things, through whom also he created the world. <sup>3</sup> He is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature, and he upholds the universe by the word of his power.* The NT writers didn't make this stuff up. Under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, they drew from the pages of the OT: (#22) We read from Ps. 89, where the Psalmist declared, "*<sup>8</sup> O Lord God of hosts, who is mighty as you are, O Lord, with your faithfulness all around you? <sup>9</sup> You rule the raging of the sea; when its waves rise, you still them.* (#23) Psalm 107:28-29 says, "*Then they cried to the LORD in their trouble, and he delivered them from their distress. He made the storm be still, and the waves of the sea were hushed.*"

(#24) Now Luke is connecting the dots in showing us how Jesus exercised the kind of power only attributed to God in the OT. He's letting us know that Jesus Christ is the full manifestation of the all-powerful invisible God; therefore, he is Lord over all of His creation. It's mind blowing and speaks to His complete power over the natural order. Living in Florida, we know firsthand about the power of wind and water. Hurricanes Helene and Milton passed by last year and scores of people are still dealing with the devastation left in their wake. Our courtyard tree enjoyed 15 years of plunging its roots deep into the soil, surrounded by the security of concrete on every side. (#25) But within 2hrs of Milton's landfall, it toppled over without protest. And when that happened, there was absolutely nothing we could do to stop

it because man does not control the forces of nature; that job is reserved for the one who commands even wind and water and they obey, our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.<sup>5</sup>

(#26) So, if we desire to answer the “*the who then is this*” question, we must endeavor to grow in the grace and knowledge of our Savior. (#27) And we do this first by finding comfort in knowing we serve a God who is all-wise, all-powerful, independent, and unchangeable; He’s unlike us in every way but He’s not out of reach. Because at the same time He’s compassionate, good, loving, patient and draws near to us in the person of Jesus Christ; who is Immanuel, God with us.<sup>6</sup> The one who abides with us through the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit. (#28) Second, we avail ourselves to the ordinary means of grace our Lord has provided for us as His children: word, sacrament and prayer. We study God’s word personally and in community in discovering more and more about the one who’s called us by His grace and keeps us by His grace. This provides us a Christ-centered framework that governs our faith and our practice.<sup>7</sup> We participate in the Sacraments where we behold the love of Father, Son and Holy Spirit that has brought us into the family of God and secures our place in the family of God. And in prayer, we pour out our hearts to Him personally and corporately, knowing that he hears the cry of his children. And intercedes for us at all times and in all circumstances. (#29) Finally, we rest confidently in the work of our Savior. In moments of uncertainty, we remember that Jesus, who calmed the storm, is the same one who walks beside us every single day of our lives. He’s full of compassion and love and ever-present in our trials, reminding us, “*trust in me.*”

### **Conclusion:**

(#30 Blank) And the reason we can trust in Christ is because He’s already proven His love for us. Church, the supreme manifestation of God’s love for us is Christ’s death on the cross. The scriptures tell us that while we were still weak, at the right time, Christ died for the ungodly; that’s you and me. If Christ died for us while we were ungodly how much more should we trust him now as our redeemer? The love we experience in the family of God is not something we’ve earned. Rather Christ secured it on our behalf by subjecting Himself to an unrelenting storm of epic proportions in absorbing the torrents of agony on a bloodstained cross. He was pummeled under the weight of our sin, guilt and shame before God. But through his great sacrifice, we have been rescued from the raging waters of sin and despair and have been brought safely into the arms of His mercy. Thus, we respond by living lives of gratitude to Him.

And now through His glorious resurrection from the dead, our hope is sure and secure in the promises of our Savior. Yes, the storms of life will rage with fury but we are held firmly in the grip of His grace. Because we know that storms serve to develop the endurance and the strength of character we need to live out His plan and purposes for our lives. So let us continue to fix our eyes on that coming day when we will experience the fullness of what we now long for... Eternal peace in the presence of our King where the storms of life will be no more; only gladness and joy forevermore. And may he grant us grace toward that end. Amen.

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<sup>1</sup> Luke refers to the Sea of Galilee as Lake Gennesaret; see Luke 5:1.

<sup>2</sup> See Matt 8:26 and Mk 4:40.

<sup>3</sup> Mark Water, "The Encyclopedia of Christian Quotations", (Hampshire, UK: John Hundt Publishing, 2000), Logos.

<sup>4</sup> εἰκῶν (*eikōn*), 1. image, portrait (Mt 22:20); 2. likeness, having the same form as something else (1Co 15:49); 3. representation, pattern (Heb 10:1)... that which has the same form as something. else (not a crafted object as in 1 above), *living image*.

<sup>5</sup> Darrell L. Bock, "Luke 1:1-9:50, Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament, (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 1994), 764.

<sup>6</sup> Kevin DeYoung, "Daily Doctrine, A One-Year to Guide to Systematic Theology", (Wheaton Ill: Crossway, 2024), 59-60.

<sup>7</sup> David W. Pao, Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament, Colossians & Philemon, (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Academic, 2012), 111.