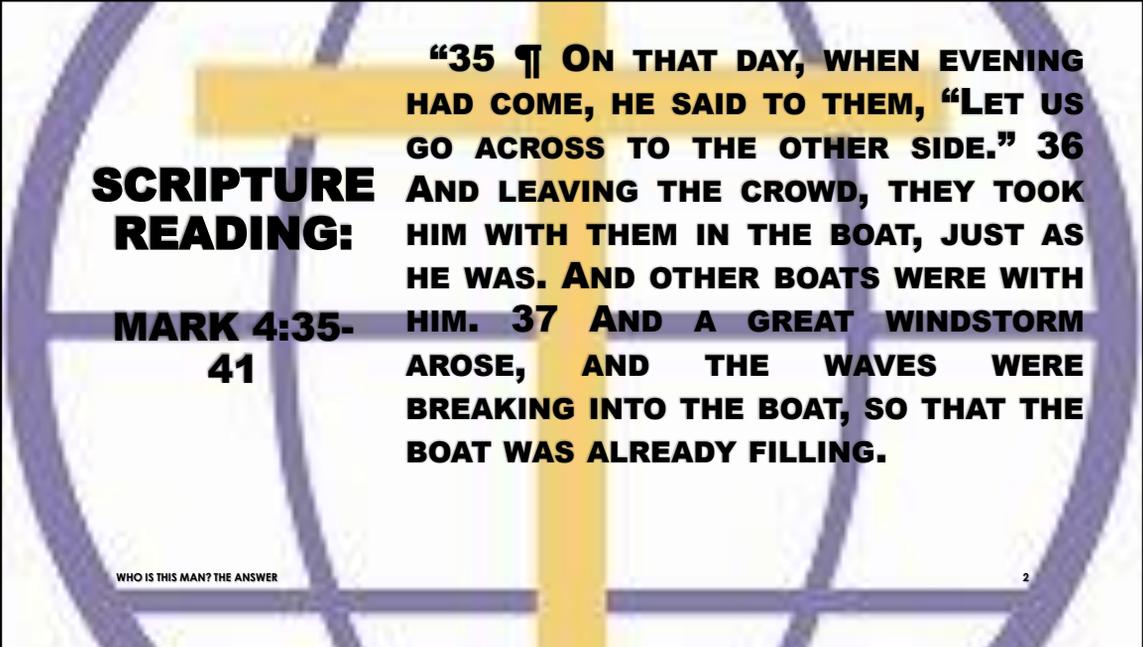




# **WHO IS THIS MAN? THE ANSWER**

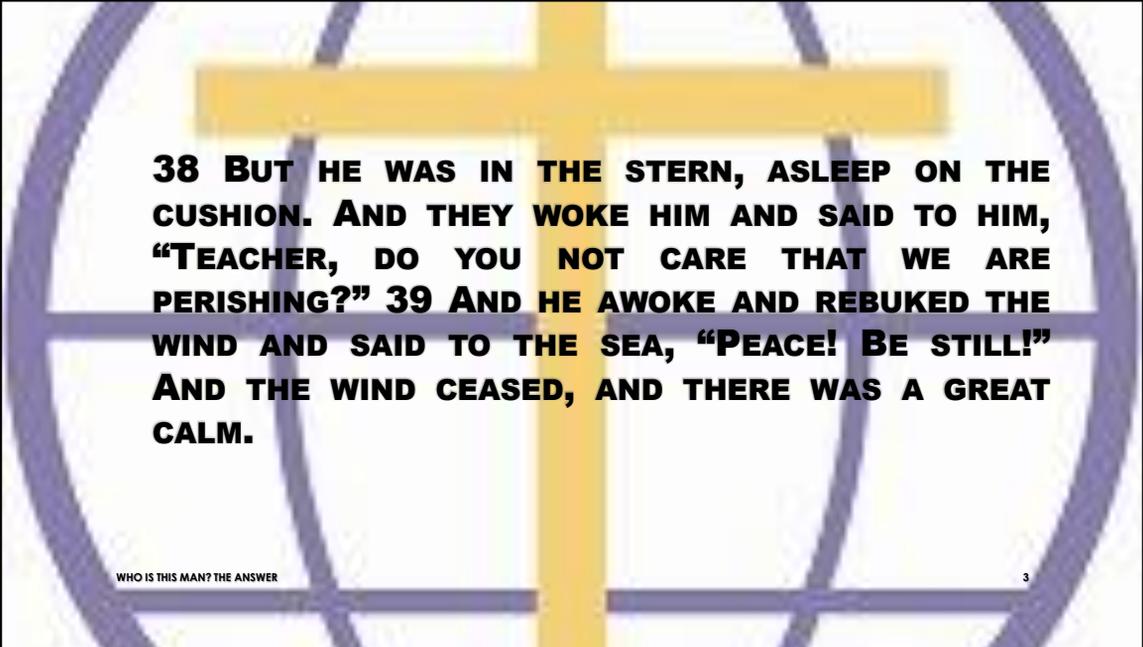
**Grace Communion International**  
**Minister: Eric Vautour**  
**Date: June 24, 2018**



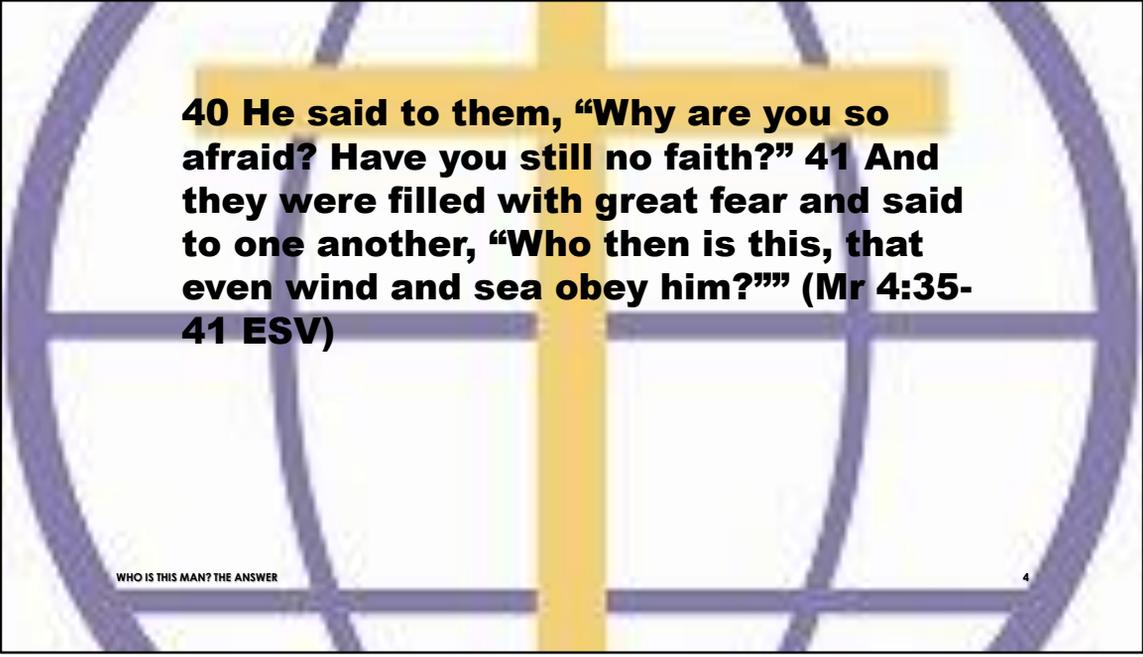
**SCRIPTURE  
READING:**

**MARK 4:35-  
41**

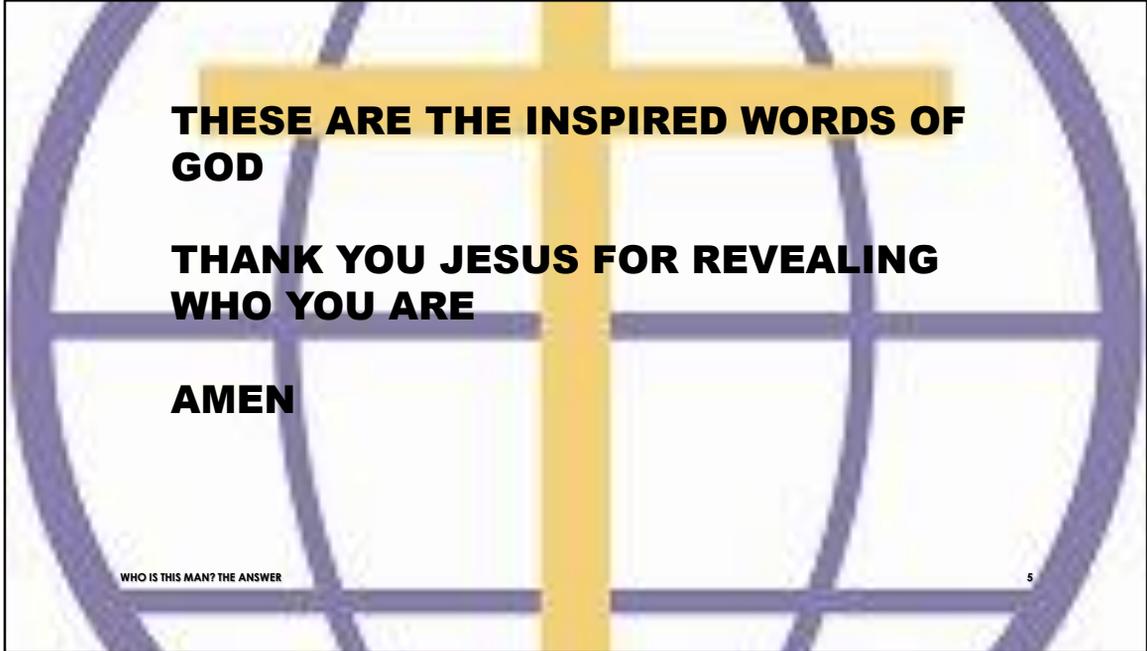
**“35 ¶ ON THAT DAY, WHEN EVENING  
HAD COME, HE SAID TO THEM, “LET US  
GO ACROSS TO THE OTHER SIDE.” 36  
AND LEAVING THE CROWD, THEY TOOK  
HIM WITH THEM IN THE BOAT, JUST AS  
HE WAS. AND OTHER BOATS WERE WITH  
HIM. 37 AND A GREAT WINDSTORM  
AROSE, AND THE WAVES WERE  
BREAKING INTO THE BOAT, SO THAT THE  
BOAT WAS ALREADY FILLING.**



**38 BUT HE WAS IN THE STERN, ASLEEP ON THE CUSHION. AND THEY WOKE HIM AND SAID TO HIM, “TEACHER, DO YOU NOT CARE THAT WE ARE PERISHING?” 39 AND HE AWOKE AND REBUKED THE WIND AND SAID TO THE SEA, “PEACE! BE STILL!” AND THE WIND CEASED, AND THERE WAS A GREAT CALM.**



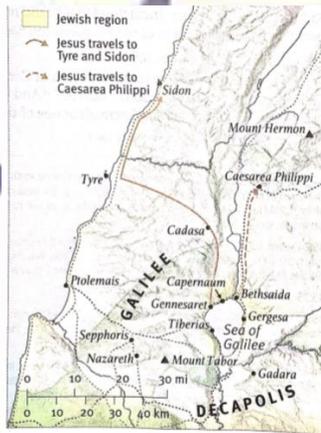
**40 He said to them, “Why are you so afraid? Have you still no faith?” 41 And they were filled with great fear and said to one another, “Who then is this, that even wind and sea obey him?”” (Mr 4:35-41 ESV)**



During this sermon, we are going to consider the importance of always fixing our eyes on Jesus.

Let's look at the context of this passage of Scripture.

# CONTEXT



WHO IS THIS MAN? THE ANSWER

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**The Sea of Galilee is 696 feet (212 m) below sea level, resulting in violent downdrafts and sudden storms.**

**Galilean Fishing Boat:** this illustration shows the type of boat that Jesus and his disciples probably used, based on the remains of an approximately 2000-year-old fishing boat found on the north-western shore of the Sea of Galilee. It could hold 15 men, and was 26.5 feet long and 7.5 feet wide and 4.5 feet high (8.1 x 2.3 x 4.1 m) (“Taken from the ESV® Study Bible [The Holy Bible, English Standard Version®], copyright ©2008 by Crossway, a publishing ministry of Good News Publishers. Used by permission. All rights reserved.”)

Parallel Scriptures: Matthew 8:23–27; Luke 8:22–25)

When Jesus calmed the storm, the disciples asked a very important question, **“Who then is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him?”**

As God’s people, we are not going on the Sea of Galilee to face physical storms. However, we face other kinds of storms. We can learn from this passage of Scriptures and apply the principle to our lives.

We can face all kinds of storms in this life.

1 – **There Are Societal Storms.** This past week, I was listening to the news. The morning hosts interviewed a teacher from one of the local schools in our area. This was the first year this teacher taught. He was interviewed about his experience during his first year as a teacher. He spoke about a number of subjects describing his experience. One that I found rather sad was that he taught his students about mindfulness which he grounded in eastern religion. Mindfulness is a fancy word to say that we are to be in the moment. The origin of this thinking comes from Hinduism and Buddhism—Buddhism especially. This teacher was very open about the fact that he was relating mindfulness to Buddhism. He talked about the fact of how some of his students were helped. He spoke about his gratefulness about a student who brought him a statue of Buddha as a token of his appreciation. He also spoke of the fact that this school where he was teaching that the principal was planning on introducing this philosophy in all the school. The radio hosts praised this well-spoken teacher and expressed their enthusiasm for this new direction.

As I was listening to this, I was thinking of the fact that if he had talked about Jesus being the true answer about life and would have spoken of his life changing teachings that he would not have been tolerated.

Western society is gradually rejecting Christianity and Jesus to replace it with eastern religions. How sad. These kinds of philosophies are also infiltrating the minds of Christians as being an alternative to cope with life struggles and challenges.

Buddhism was founded around 400–500 B.C.E. by Siddhartha Gautama, who was referred to as the Buddha from then on. Buddha is simply a man who has died. He is unable to change anyone's heart or to give life beyond this life.

How are we Christians to react to these trends?

2- **Trinity Western University:** June 15, 2018

'A B.C.-based evangelical Christian university has lost its legal battle over accreditation for a planned new law school, with a Supreme Court of Canada ruling today saying it's "proportionate and reasonable" to limit religious rights in order to ensure open access for LGBT students.

In a pair of 7-2 rulings, the majority of justices found the law societies of British Columbia and Ontario have the power to refuse accreditation based on Trinity Western University's so-called community covenant....

The mandatory covenant binds students to a strict code of conduct that includes abstinence from sex outside of heterosexual marriage.

The majority judgment said the covenant would deter LGBT students from attending the proposed law school, and those who did attend would be at risk of significant harm.' (From <http://www.cbc.ca/news/politics/trinity-western-supreme-court-decision-1.4707240>)

Christianity it's certainly not popular. Again, how are we Christians to react to these trends?

### 3- Personal Crisis and Challenges:

We also face many personal challenges in our lives whether it be with health, finances, family relationships, work related relationships and many others. Some of the most difficult challenges we have is our ourselves. Paul spoke of how coveting, desiring what is not good in God's eyes can be such a big challenge. **"7 ¶ What then shall we say? That the law is sin? By no means! Yet if it had not been for the law, I would not have known sin. I would not have known what it is to covet if the law had not said, "You shall not covet." 8 But sin, seizing an opportunity through the commandment, produced in me all kinds of covetousness. Apart from the law, sin lies dead." (Ro 7:7-8 ESV).** Coveting or desiring what is not good, what is sinful in God's eyes can be a very big struggle. Coveting can range from wrong sexual desires which come to the mind as temptations. Or it may be other temptations such as the desire to be powerful, the desire to hate rather than to forgive, etc... These struggles can be very big and large.

What do we do with those. They are storms in our personal life that maybe only God and ourselves know about.

### 4- The Education of Our Children and Grandchildren:

Of course, parents have the primary responsibility of teaching their children. As grandparents, as much as we are permitted, how can we guide our grandchildren to look to Jesus Christ rather than this world's philosophies for final answers.

### 5- Personal Hurts and Disappointments

There are times where we have been deeply hurt by people close to us or by others which have had profound impact on us. Forgiveness can be a challenge.

Where do we look or where do we turn when facing such real situation in our lives?

## **6- Religious Confusion:**

How do we navigate the religious confusion that exist in our world even in Christianity. These can cause real storms in our lives.

The list could go on.

How are we Christians to react to these trends?

The Bible gives us very clear instructions. (Next slide)

- **“1 ¶ Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, 2 looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God. 3 Consider him who endured from sinners such hostility against himself, so that you may not grow weary or fainthearted. 4 ¶ In your struggle against sin you have not yet resisted to the point of shedding your blood.” (Heb 12:1-4 ESV)**

As I was thinking about these various challenges that we face in our modern society, while in prayer, it came to me that things were not so good when Jesus became incarnate in our flesh and lived the perfect human life for all of us and then died on the cross to conquer the forces of darkness, sin and death. He lived and died, completely empowered by the Holy Spirit always perfectly doing the Father's will without ever sinning.

When he came to the earth, power politics was involved. There was a lot of dissatisfaction with the government that the time. The Jews were looking for the day when the Romans would no longer be in power. They were waiting for a Saviour. When he came, they did not recognize him. In their blindness, the Jews and the Romans killed Jesus. Waiting involved suffering.

Government was oppressive. Herod tried to have Jesus killed as a child.

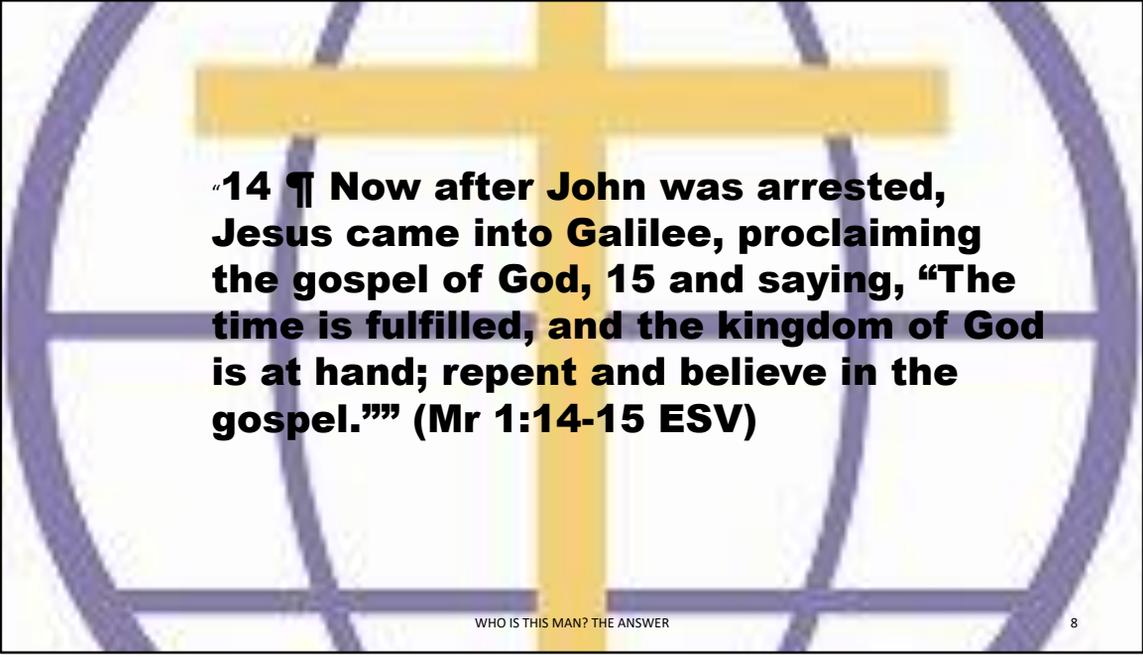
Religious confusion, oppression and corruption were rampant. People honoured God with their lips but their hearts were far from him. **They worship God in vain teaching as doctrines the commandments of men** (paraphrase of Matthew 15:8 – 9)

The Army was corrupt as John the Baptists taught t soldiers to be satisfied with their wages.

There was confusion about family values, about marriage and divorce, as we read in the Gospels.

The human heart was corrupt. Jesus said that what came out of the mouth proceeded from the heart. This defiled a person. **Out of the heart came evil thoughts, murder, adultery, sexual immorality, theft, false witness and slander** (Matthew 15).

What did Jesus do in the face of such dire circumstances. (next slide)



**“14 ¶ Now after John was arrested, Jesus came into Galilee, proclaiming the gospel of God, 15 and saying, “The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel.”” (Mr 1:14-15 ESV)**

WHO IS THIS MAN? THE ANSWER

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In this very difficult situation, Jesus, consistent with the fact that he was sent by God the Father to save the world and not to condemn the world but to save everyone who would believe on him, his focus was not on the mess people were in but rather, he pointed them to the kingdom of God. He taught them to believe and to repent. Repenting simply means a change of mind, change of focus, a change of priority, in other words, he taught them to turn to God and to look to the fullness of the kingdom of God. In doing so, he became very controversial as he identified himself as being the Son of God. They killed him as a result.

**On the day of Pentecost**, during Peter’s inspired sermon to the people who had come to worship in Jerusalem, he pointed them to Jesus. He told him in Acts 2:36, **“Let all the house of Israel therefore know for certain that God has made him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom you crucified”**.

As he was preaching, people were touched to the heart and asked Peter and the rest of the apostles, **“Brothers, what shall we do?”**

The apostle Peter went on to say that they were to, **“Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins and you will**

***receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. For the promise is for you and for your children and for all who are afar off, everyone whom the Lord our God calls to himself***". In other words, Peter pointed them not to political solutions or to any other solutions but to the real solution which is turning to God in belief and repentance to be given a brand-new life, a brand-new heart, to become new creations.

**In Corinth**, the apostle Paul preached what is most important. He pointed people to Christ. He did not go and attack the Gentiles or the Jews.

**"20 Where is the one who is wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the debater of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world? 21 For since, in the wisdom of God, the world did not know God through wisdom, it pleased God through the folly of what we preach to save those who believe. 22 For Jews demand signs and Greeks seek wisdom, 23 but we preach Christ crucified, a stumbling block to Jews and folly to Gentiles, 24 but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God." (1Co 1:20–24 ESV)**

Now Corinth, at the time Paul wrote these letters from Ephesus between 53 and 55 A.D., was a very degenerate city. There was a great temple dedicated to Athena or Apollo. There were many other deities.

There was an important sanctuary to the god of healing (Asklepios).

There was Emperor worship.

There was a temple to Aphrodite where temple prostitutes, both male and female, abounded. Wanton, deliberate, willful sexuality outside of marriage was common in that port city. The Corinthians had all the sins of modern times. Nothing has changed much. God called people to himself who had been idolaters, people who practiced all kinds of sexual sins and aberrations outside the marital relationship. There were also thieves, greedy people, drunkards, revilers and swindlers. These were the people who form the background of the church in Corinth. As Paul preached the good news of the gospel, good news about the kingdom of God, the loving sacrifice of Jesus Christ for them, many repented. They were granted a new life in Christ and began to live in the obedience of faith.

As we face the challenges in our society and in our personal life, we must remember that the answer to all problems we now face as a human race will be solved as God establishes the fullness of his kingdom on the earth.

Whether the problems we face are societal, religious, personal or otherwise, the

answer is found in Jesus Christ who was sent by the God the Father to rescue us from the darkness we were in.

We are now ambassadors of Jesus Christ to this world. God's desire is that all will come to repentance and that none will perish. We have been called to proclaim this message by our words and by our behaviours. The main way that people will hear about the kingdom of God now is through people who teach others about the beauty and the superiority of God's kingdom. It is through people who live faithfully, ***"9 who confess with their mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in their heart that God raised him from the dead, will be saved. 10 For with the heart one believes and is justified, and with the mouth one confesses and is saved. 11 For the Scripture says, "Everyone who believes in him will not be put to shame."*** (Ro 10:9-11 paraphrase)

As we face these challenges, we are called not to leave this world. We are called to live in the world but not be of this world meaning that our allegiance is not to the kingdom of this world but to the kingdom of God. Our high calling is to respond and participate in the work that Jesus Christ, the King of kings, the Lord of lords is doing on the earth through the Holy Spirit.

The disciples on the boat were very afraid. Because they were going through a storm, they thought Jesus did not care. They said to him, "Teacher, do you not care that we are perishing".

Humanly speaking, when we are threatened, we fear. The disciples feared for their lives. The dangers was real for them. The wind was strong and the waves were breaking into their boat. Actually, the Bible tells us that the boat was already filling with water. Through all of this, Jesus was sleeping because he was very tired.

When he awoke, he rebuked the wind and commanded the sea to be calm and to be still. Immediately, there was a great calm.

**He asked them a very pointed to question as he asked them whether or not they had faith.** They were struck with fear and seized with great alarm.

I imagine they had fear because of the big storm they were in. They were also greatly startled because Jesus calmed the sea and the wind with his word. They wondered who was this man!

Fear is the enemy of faith. Whatever situation we are in, as believers united to Christ, God is always with us. In fact, through the Holy Spirit, Jesus is living in us. Since God is

one, God is living in us. We are never forgotten. We are never abandoned. Whatever situation we are in, whatever personal struggles we are in, we can rely on him to see us through even if the figurative waves appear to be extremely menacing and threatening.

The last book of the Bible, the book of Revelation tells us who wins. God will establish his kingdom on the earth. The new Jerusalem is going to come down from heaven. God is going to live with men. God is going to be our temple. The temple in the city will be the Lord God the Almighty and the Lamb. The city will have no need of sun or moon to shine on it, for the glory of God will give it light. It's lamp is the light of the Lamb, the light of Jesus. By the light of Jesus, the nations will walk, the kings of the earth will bring glory unto it and the gates of the new Jerusalem will never be shut by day. Night will no longer exist. This city will be filled with people who have placed their faith in Jesus Christ.

Revelation 21:26-27 tell us ***“26 They will bring into it the glory and the honor of the nations. 27 But nothing unclean will ever enter it, nor anyone who does what is detestable or false, but only those who are written in the Lamb’s book of life.” (Re 21:26-27 ESV)***

God's plan is sure. He will make it happen. That is why, unlike the religions of this world, we are not to look to ourselves for solutions. We are to look to Jesus. We are to look to God.

Does this mean that this life will be easy? No.

***“21 When they had preached the gospel to that city and had made many disciples, they returned to Lystra and to Iconium and to Antioch, 22 strengthening the souls of the disciples, encouraging them to continue in the faith, and saying that through many tribulations we must enter the kingdom of God.” (Ac 14:21-22 ESV)***

That word tribulation is found 43 times in the Bible and is translated with the following words: AV-tribulation 21, affliction 17, trouble 3, anguish 1, persecution 1, burdened 1, to be afflicted (Strong's Concordance).

Because of the revealed word of God, we live in the post-crucifixion and resurrection era. We know who this man is. He is none other than the Son of God, the Son of man, the son of David, Jesus. We can trust him to fully see us through all kinds of storms. One day, He will calm them all! The storms of life will be no more in the fullness of his Kingdom!

Let us pray.