

That day when evening came, he said to his disciples, "Let us go over to the other side." Leaving the crowd behind, they took him along, just as he was, in the boat. There were also other boats with him. A furious squall came up, and the waves broke over the boat, so that it was nearly swamped. Jesus was in the stern, sleeping on a cushion. The disciples woke him and said to him, "Teacher, don't you care if we drown?" He got up, rebuked the wind and said to the waves, "Quiet! Be still!" Then the wind died down and it was completely calm. He said to his disciples, "Why are you so afraid? Do you still have no faith?" They were terrified and asked each other, "Who is this? Even the wind and the waves obey him!"

Last weekend I was watching the football on TV when the camera looked into the coaches' box. At the back of the box was a security guard – sound asleep, on national television! (it must have been a Port game – all over in the first quarter!) The person next to him noticed they were on camera and immediately woke him up. Security guards are not supposed to sleep on the job.

Have you ever felt that God is asleep on the job when he is supposed to be watching over us? If there is a God isn't he supposed to be in control. Isn't he supposed to keep us safe, protect us from danger and keep order in the universe? Why doesn't God stop the chaos in the environment, how come it doesn't rain more often? How come a small cell can mutate and turn into cancer and God doesn't stop it? Why didn't God suspend the laws of gravity for a split second to stop a baby being crushed by a massage table here in Adelaide this week? Was God asleep on the job?

Life changed quickly for 12 mates of Jesus one night. The peaceful order of an evening cruise across the lake turned into a nightmare. Four of them were fishermen but they were terrified as a howling wind came from nowhere and their tinny was no match for the waves. No doubt a few of them were turning green and the odd one heaving over the side as the skipper cried out "All hands on deck! We're sinking!" Start bailing! Who's idea was it to go sailing, anyway?"

It was Jesus' idea and where was he? At the back of the boat sound asleep on a cushion, a pillow normally kept under the seat of the person who was supposed to be steering the boat! Now religious people of the day thought that when the gods slept, bad things happened and a lot of religion seems like an attempt to wake the gods up from their afternoon nap. Make a big noise, get their attention. It even creeps into Christianity. So they grab Jesus and start shaking him to wake him up. Their boat can't save them. Their strength can't save them. Their knowledge and ingenuity can't save them. Their swimming ability can't save them. Maybe Jesus can save them, but he is asleep on the pillow. **"Teacher, don't you care if we drown?" v38** the disciples accuse him. "If you cared, you would do something. Don't just lie there. Do something, if you care."

"Don't you care?" Who of us hasn't thought or said that to God sometimes?

Of course Jesus cared. He entered their world at Christmas and became a flesh and blood human being like them and us because he cared. He healed the sick and cast out the demons and forgave sinners all because he cared. And he was about to be crucified on Good Friday because he cared that we are all drowning in a sea of sin and guilt and facing eternal death. He cares enough about what happens to us in this life but about what happens to us in the next to go through death and hell himself for all of us to save us. Don't think or say Jesus doesn't care! The cross says he does. But they didn't know all that back then. They were still learning to trust him, just like us.

So Jesus stood up in the sinking boat, wiped the sleep from his eyes and said **"Quiet! Be still!" v39** "shut-up" – not to the disciples who were panicking, but to the wind and the waves! And the wind died down. There was a great calm, and all it took was two words from Jesus' mouth.

And his mates **"were terrified,"** no longer over the storm, now over Jesus. **"Who is this? Even the wind and the waves obey him?" v41** Later on as they thought about what he said and what

happened they remembered that at the creation of the world it was God who simply spoke and the seas parted and formed dry land and he created order out of chaos. Who is this Jesus that even the wind and the sea obey him? He can restore peace and order where there is chaos and fear and the threat of death. This Jesus is no less than God, God here with us bringing order and peace to this out of control world and our out of control lives.

The first disciples discovered that Jesus is God and he is in the boat with us when things seem overwhelming, and we are safe even when God seems asleep, even when it appears as though he's lost control. Jesus went with them out into a storm in a little boat with no protection but himself. One kind of wonders whether Jesus had one eye open while his head was on the pillow, just testing the disciples! The question is - How far would they and we trust him? Do we trust Him when He seems oblivious to our situation? When our lives in danger? When He doesn't seem to be paying attention? When it seems like he's asleep on the job? Do we trust Him when chaos threatens to sink us? Do we trust a sleeping Jesus? It is easy to trust when Jesus works a miracle and the disciples got theirs, but Jesus really wanted them to trust him even when he appeared to be sleeping, to trust that they would still get through the storm OK. He wanted to give them an inner peace even before he brought peace to the waves around them.

This miracle is a promise that one day God will through Jesus Christ restore peace and order to everything – our bodies, our relationships and the whole creation. In the meantime we live with Jesus in a world that is broken and threatens us. He may not stop the storm on the outside but he stops the one going on on the inside as we look to him and trust him with our lives and loved ones. I saw an interview with a lady whose daughter was killed in the London bombings a few years ago. At first she did not want to think about God. How could he let that happen. But in the interview she spoke with a peace and quiet that had come to her after her faith had been restored. She still grieved over her daughter, nothing had changed on the outside in her world, but the calm was now in the inside.

"Why are you so afraid?" v40 Jesus asks his disciples. Good question. Why are we afraid when our safety is threatened? When the doctor brings bad news? When things happen to our loved ones, when our lives are thrown into chaos and disorder? When the winds howl and the waves threaten? It's because we don't fully trust Jesus, we reserve a bit of control for ourselves. We keep one hand on the rudder, just in case God doesn't know where he's going. We think we can and have to save ourselves. We think God doesn't care or needs a wake up call to get him moving.

It's strange that when Jesus would appear most powerless, most out of it, most unable to do anything constructive, when they would see him hanging dead and naked on a wooden cross with all the people standing around mocking Him and spitting on Him and insulting him - that's when he was in fact most powerful to save. His death is the death that forgives all of us and puts us right and safe and at peace with God again for all eternity. This is the God Cody was joined to in baptism today who not only stilled storms and healed people but who died and rose for him, who cared enough to go through all that for him and who is now in charge of his life even when everything looks hopeless. This God, this Jesus calls Cody and us to trust him in life and in death, to live and die with peace no matter what. As baptised people we have already died and been raised with Jesus. What can harm us now?

When life is out of control all we have to hang onto is the word of Jesus. That word which said to Cody and to us this morning "your sins are forgiven, your baptism saves you. That word which says to us as we leave church every Sunday "go in peace" just like the window above you says as you walk out of here under it. May we learn to trust this Jesus both when life is under control and when it is out of control, whether we feel his presence or it seems like he is asleep on the job. And may we recognize him as our Lord and our God.