



Encountering Power over Nature (Luke 8:22-25)

1. Read Luke 8:22-25. Have you ever been awe-struck by something in the natural world? Something like the beauty of creation, or the power of nature, or the vast size of the physical universe?
2. Before the storm, Luke tells us of Jesus that 'As they sailed, he fell asleep'. What does this suggest about Jesus' and his identity?
3. This encounter with Jesus recalls a very dangerous and powerful storm that suddenly arose on the Sea of Galilee. Remember that many of the disciples were local fishermen who would have been used to handling a boat on that lake. But when this storm arose, how did the disciples react?

Is this what you expect of great Christian leaders like the 12 Apostles? Why/why not?

J.C. Ryle (Bishop of Liverpool in the 17th Century) writes that the disciples '...forgot, for a moment, their Master's never-failing care for them in time past. They forgot that so long as they were with Him — they must be safe, whatever happened... Facts like these are sadly humbling to the pride of human nature. It ought to lower our pride and high thoughts... They teach us what to watch and pray against in our own hearts... We must not suppose that men cannot be believers — if they sometimes exhibit great weakness. We must not think that men have no grace — because they are sometimes overwhelmed with fears. Even Peter, James, and John, could cry, "Master, Master, we are going to perish!"'

Has there ever been a moment or season in your life that has caused you to forget or doubt God's power or protection?

4. Once the storm arose and the disciples woke Jesus ‘and rebuked the wind and the raging waters; the storm subsided, and all was calm’. In the larger storyline of the bible, what has such power over nature signified, and who has held it? Look up and consider the following passages:
 - a. Genesis 1:1-10
 - b. Exodus 14:21-22
 - c. Joshua 3:7-17
 - d. Psalm 107:28-31

What does this power over nature suggest about Jesus and his identity?

How do you think you might have reacted if you were there with the disciples?

5. Look up the following passages, what do they tell us about the role of miracles in the ministry of Jesus?
 - a. Luke 4:36-37
 - b. Luke 7:14-17
 - c. Acts 2:22

Many people in our Australian culture have difficulty accepting the authenticity of the miracle accounts in the bible. Why do you think this is? How would you encourage a skeptical friend?

8. Jesus asks his disciples ‘Where is your faith?’. What would it look like for you to trust God in the following situations?
 - a. Financial struggles, unemployment or a business failing?
 - b. Being diagnosed with a serious illness, that is potentially terminal?
 - c. Being worried about the future of the church or the salvation of a family member or friend?
9. Are there any areas in your life where you find it hard to trust God? Or any areas where you need to renew your faith?

End the study by reflecting on what this encounter has taught you about who Jesus is, and about how you are to respond to him.