

Raise Your Hands if You Are in the Middle of a Storm in Your Life

By Anand Peter

I sit here in my all-too-familiar chair again this morning, by the grace of God — I sit as one who should not be here, yet am here by that very grace; I sit to write this.

All of us have problems. Raise your hand if you are going through one — though, secluded as we are, there may be no one to see you do it. You are the fortunate ones, if you have a problem: you should consider yourself very fortunate indeed. Do you know why? Because if you have a problem, then you are a candidate for a miracle of Jesus. Think with me for a moment: who, in the New Testament, received a miracle? It was those who had some problem or other. Let me repeat: the people in the Bible who received a miracle, received it because they had a problem.

Now here is what is interesting: in Matthew 14:22, Jesus led His disciples into what could have been a life-threatening situation. Look at the verse: "And straightway Jesus constrained his disciples to get into a ship, and to go before him unto the other side, while he sent the multitudes away" (Matthew 14:22). Notice the word "constrained." It is a strong word: Jesus did not merely suggest or invite; He compelled His disciples to get into the boat. I get the strong impression that the disciples did not want to get into that boat. They were smart and savvy seamen; looking out into the distance, they could see a storm brewing. Yet Jesus insisted, and commanded them to get into the boat and head to the other side of the lake.

And a very fierce storm did indeed arise. Look at verses twenty-four and twenty-five: "But the ship was now in the midst of the sea, tossed with waves: for the wind was contrary. And in the fourth watch of the night Jesus went unto them, walking on the sea" (Matthew 14:24-25). Here is the point: sometimes Jesus deliberately leads us into a storm. Did you catch that? Before I am accused of speaking amiss, let me explain.

My conviction is that Jesus wants to teach us a very important lesson through the storm His disciples faced. Their boat was right in the middle of the Sea of Galilee, some seven miles wide. Perhaps those of you who raised your hands earlier are, likewise, in the middle of your own problems. If you are, one of two things is true: either God has led you into the problem, or God has allowed you to remain in it. Whatever the case, and whatever the problem you find yourself in, your problem bears the mark of God's hand upon it. You may feel yourself caught between a rock and a hard place. The disciples, too, were almost perishing in the storm. Did they cry out, "Why us, Lord?" as we so often ask when trouble comes? The Gospel account does not say so. They did all they could to keep the boat afloat, though perhaps without much thought of faith in Jesus, without assuring themselves that He was able to save them, if only they had faith enough in Him. Are you like them? Do you feel that for every foot you gain, you lose two? Are you thinking, in the middle of the coronavirus pandemic, that life simply does not make sense any longer?

But here is the point: you may not be able to see Jesus at work, but He is at work nonetheless. He knows that the high waves would prove disastrous, just as He knows that our own problems could lead to terrible ends. Do you think Jesus is ignoring you, having allowed you to be in your problem? Consider what Jesus was doing about the problem His disciples faced: He was praying. Jesus had gone up a hill, and there He prayed. So, while you are going through your own problem here below, Jesus is praying for you above. Believe that. He has said that He would intercede for you, and He is true to His word: "Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them" (Hebrews 7:25).

That is not all He was doing that night. He was watching over His disciples, as He watches over each one of us. Nothing is a barrier to Him; nothing stands in the way of His grace; nothing can stop Him from reaching out with His miraculous help. Let me tell you, my friends: Satan cannot stir up a storm fierce enough to take you out of the sight of Jesus.

Whatever may be happening to you, simply believe that the Saviour is praying for you, that the Saviour is watching over you, and that the Saviour is there with you. And the Saviour will pull you out of your storm to safety. Do you know how? Look at what happened that night: He went to them, walking on the turbulent waters — the turbulence stamped down and calmed beneath His very feet. When His disciples saw Him, and finally believed that it was not a ghost but the Saviour Himself, when they accepted in their hearts the truth that He would never discard them, the storm ceased.

Do not be like Peter, believing and then sliding backwards. Simply believe in Jesus, and know that He has the power to pull you out of any impossible situation. Believe that He is right beside you. Amen.