

the midst of the storms of life will only be ours when we come to Jesus.

When we don't make it a priority to be in Church as much as possible, is it really so strange that we have so many problems and no solutions, so much anxiety and no peace.

This is easy to say and to think about but hard to do! It takes much practice, but now is the time to practice.

THE STORMS OF LIFE DO NOT GO AWAY IMMEDIATELY

Last week our text was the story of Peter coming to Jesus by walking on the water in the midst of the storm. It was as if Jesus was saying to Peter: You are frightened by the Storm—Come to me. You are drowning—Come to me, put your hand in mine, you will be safe. As the deacon pointed out, when Peter came to Jesus the storm did not stop immediately. Jesus eventually stilled the wind and calmed the waves, but even though the storm was still raging around Peter, he was safe because he was with Jesus.

When we are with Jesus, the storms, the problems, the diseases, the difficulties are not as frightening as before, because in His presence there is peace and courage and hope. The great king David said it this way:

“Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for Thou art with me.” (Ps. 23).

Jesus will eventually, in His time, heal all diseases, eliminate death, solve all our difficulties and problems, calm every storm. Until then, we must be with Him, hold onto Him, and rest secure in His arms of love. It was not the calming of the storm but the presence of Jesus that gave St. Peter peace and courage.

CONCLUSION:

This morning, all of us face problems and the storms of life. For some the problems are small and the storm not very dangerous, but for others, the problems are huge and the storm is raging and life threatening. As frightened children run to the arms of their parents for protection and safety, so we need to seek the loving arms of our Lord.

Jesus is still calling to us “Come to me. Bring all your burdens to Me.”

Jesus is the solution to all of our problems and difficulties. Simply naïve? **No!** Simply profound? **Yes!** Amen!



THE SOLUTION

“For some the problems are small and the storm not very dangerous, but for others, the problems are huge and the storm is raging and life threatening. As frightened children run to the arms of their parents for protection and safety, so we need to seek the loving arms of our Lord.”

†Gospel: Matt. 5:14–19 (RSV)

At that time, a man came up to Jesus and kneeling before Him said, “Lord, have mercy on my son, for he is an epileptic and he suffers terribly; for often he falls into the fire, and often into the water. And I brought him to Thy disciples, and they could not heal him.” And Jesus answered, “O faithless and perverse generation, how long am I to be with you? How long am I to bear with you? Bring him here to me.” And Jesus rebuked him, and the demon came out of him, and the boy was cured instantly. Then the disciples came to Jesus privately and said, “Why could we not cast it out?” Jesus said to them, “Because you have no faith. For truly, I say to you, if you have faith as a grain of mustard seed, you will say to this mountain, ‘Move from here to there,’ and it will move; and nothing will be impossible to you. This kind never comes out except by prayer and fasting.” As they were traveling together through Galilee, Jesus said to them, “The Son of man is to be delivered into the hands of men, and they will kill Him, and He will rise on the third day.”

INTRODUCTION

In this text, Jesus statement: “Bring him here to me” caught my attention. After the man had tried everything else, including the disciples of Jesus, to find a solution to his sons illness, he finally went directly to Jesus.

Is it possible that our text is really implying that Jesus is the solution and the answer to all our problems and difficulties and diseases? Should we hear in our text Jesus saying to us: “Bring your troubles, struggles, difficulties etc. to Me. Do not try to handle them yourselves or deny them or control them, or seek any other solution. Bring them here to me.”

If we understand the text in this way, is this simply naïve or simply profound? Is this just wishful thinking or absolute Truth?

WE MUST COME TO JESUS

Certainly for the man and the boy in our text, Jesus was the solution, the only solution. Nothing else that the man tried had worked, including going to the disciples. Only Jesus was able to heal the boy—to solve the father’s problem.

If Jesus is God, if He is the one who gives us life, who sustains our life, who heals all our diseases, in whom all power and authority resides, and in whom all things subsist, then is it really so hard to believe that Jesus is the answer to all our problems?

If you are like me, when I have problems or difficulties, I try to solve them myself—I try everything else—and when I utterly fail then I turn to Jesus. Much of my trouble comes from **worry—*anxiety***—about my actual or

perceived or anticipated problems. If I could only learn to bring my troubles and cares to Jesus immediately.

In our text it wasn’t wrong for the man to go to the disciples of Jesus to seek healing for his son, what was wrong was that he apparently saw them as having power to heal in and of themselves and not simply as the servants of Christ. In the same way, it is not wrong to use doctors, or therapists, or medicines, or procedures or counselors to help with our problems but we must see that these are only tools in the hands of the great physician Himself. We must give glory to God and not to man. We must come to Jesus not to anyone or anything else.

In our text, Jesus told the father of the demon possessed boy “Bring him here to me.” Jesus tells us today:

“Come to Me, all who are weary and heavy-laden, and I will give you rest.” (Matt. 11:28)

To paraphrase: “Bring all your problems, your difficulties, your burdens to Me for I am the solution.”

St. Peter counsels us to:

“cast all your anxiety on Him, because He cares for you.” (1 Pet 5:7)

We need to come to Jesus! And we do that today by coming to His Body, the Church. The only sure way to know that we are in the presence of Christ is to come to church.

Jesus promised us that He would never leave His church nor forsake it. He promised that wherever two or three were gathered together in His name that He would be in their midst. (Like the “More Spacious than the Heavens” Icon reveals)

When we come to church, we come into the very presence of Jesus Christ, we receive the very Body and Blood of Jesus into our bodies. In Church, because the Lord is so near, we can understand St. Paul’s words:

“Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.” (Phil 4:5-7)

The solution to all our problems is to come to Jesus. The peace that we seek in