

IS GOD REALLY IN CONTROL?

Introduction

How does the world get from running smoothly to pandemic in such a short time? Why would God allow such a global catastrophe to happen? As information and mandates change daily, even hourly, life around the world may seem more like chaos than under control. Or it may seem like viruses and governments are pulling more strings than the God of the universe. Are you wondering, is God aware? Does he care? Like Jesus' disciples in the face of great danger, we may be asking Jesus some of these questions. And his Word to them is for us too.

Devotion

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?" (Mark 4:37,38)

It looked as if Jesus didn't care. There they were in trouble, with the ship about to go down, and he seemed oblivious to the storm. There they were about to drown, and Jesus was asleep, of all things, in the midst of their distress. They shook him awake with an urgent question, "Teacher, don't you care if we drown?" Some of us have felt that way in our lives too. At times we may have liked to shake Jesus by the shoulders, grab his attention, and ask, "Can't you see my situation? Aren't you going to do something about it?" When storms arise most of us react very much like the disciples and ask whether Jesus really cares.

Of course, he cared very much for his disciples, and he didn't want them to drown. He cared so much that he stood up in the boat and put a stop to the roaring winds and the turbulent waves. His word brought a great calm on the sea. That's what we all need when storms arise— great calm, a quiet peace, a silencing of all fear and turmoil.

We are all guilty, each in a different way, of the same sin as the disciples. In times of trouble, we have smallness of faith and distrust the Father's will. We lack confidence that God will see us through. What Jesus asked his disciples that night on the sea of Galilee, he could just as well ask us, "Why are you so afraid? Do you still have no faith?" It's not that we lose our faith every time we mistrust God's goodness. It's just that our faith is so pitifully weak that when storms arise we cannot see things as they really are. Jesus teaches us that things aren't the way they appear in this world. As the wind whipped the waves over the sides of the boat, it appeared as though the disciples would die and Jesus didn't care. Yet the power and the love of the Lord Jesus were just as real when he was asleep in the stern as when he rebuked the storm. It's just that his disciples couldn't see it. They were called upon to believe what they could not see so they would not be overtaken by fear.

The Bible says that when we are faithless, Christ remains faithful. His Word is stronger than our doubt. His Word brings peace in the very midst of distress to calm hearts that are battered and bruised by sin or weak with heartache. He loves us no matter how fierce the wind or high the waves. He demonstrated that love for us on the cross. With his own blood, he made payment in full for our sins. There is peace between God and man, because Christ himself is our peace. That peace is yours, no matter what storms may rage around you. His love and forgiveness is guaranteed to you in his Holy Word. Come what may, though lightnings flash and thunders crash, Jesus never fails his own. Secure in his redeeming love, we may live always in his perfect peace, even when storms arise.

—by Harold L. Senkbeil from [Where in the World Is God?](#)

Prayer

(Guidance from Martin Luther in praying the Fourth Petition of the Lord's Prayer):

Dear Lord God, Father, bless us also in this temporal, physical life. Give us much desired peace and guard us against war and insurrection. . . . Bestow upon all classes, both city folk and country folk, piety and a mutual love and sincerity. Bless our land with good harvest and good weather. Protect house and home, wife and children. Let me lead them well, bringing them up in the way of the Lord. Ward off and restrain Satan and all evil angels who would harm or distract us in this life. Amen."

—by Martin Luther from [A Simply Way to Pray](#)

Hymn-Sing

My Shepherd Will Supply My Need (CW 374)

[PDF](#), [Organ accompaniment](#), [Piano accompaniment](#)

Listen to an [a cappella version of this hymn](#) recorded by WELS artists *Branches Band*.

Children's Activities

Learn about [Jesus' control over all things even as his disciples doubted](#).

Go deeper and have some fun with these [related activities](#).

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Discover God's care and control with these additional resources:

Devotionals: [Beside Quiet Waters](#), [For Such a time as This](#), [Meditations Daily Devotional](#) (subscription)

Prayer books: [Prayers for People Under Pressure](#), [He Hears My Voice](#) (eBook)

Books: [God's Providence](#), [His Hand Among the Nations](#)

Music albums: [Across the Years, Across the Miles](#); [In His Time](#); [A Cappella](#)

Monthly magazine: [Forward in Christ](#) (preview the April 2020 edition for [FREE](#))