Who is this man?

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[0:00] So we're looking at a really famous story in Jesus' life when he calms the storm. I think a lot of us will have seen this story or known about this story before.

But one of the things that it sort of addresses is the issue of control. Everyone likes to think they have control over their life.
Everyone, I'm included in that. But as we know, you only have to live a little to know that life never goes as you planned.
Even from being a little or even just the past week or over years, you know that every day, every week, there's something will happen that you didn't expect. You think back to when, for some of us, this is not so long, some of it's a bit longer, when you're back to you finish school.
I remember people saying to me, it's great, you've got your whole life ahead of you. Can any of us remember, I mean, vague memories, can you remember what you wanted to do when you were 19?
[1:07] See the world, know there's a particular career path. But as you get older, things change, don't they? I don't know about you, if you're the type of person who made plans for the future, or whether you're sort of just a happy-go-lucky kind of a person.

But as you get older, the options that you have left to do that stuff seem to disappear. I can guarantee that there are things that have happened, however old we are, that you didn't expect. From big things, big things that happen, even just to little things, even today. And when you boil it down to, like I said, it's not just true over long periods of time, but every day things happen that you don't plan for.
Things that are unplanned that happen all the time. And sometimes we get that issue of control. If you get a lot of things happening in a short space of time, that is when we feel out of control.
When we feel overwhelmed, like there's too much going on, and that we can't cope. You can either have two ways of feeling out of control. Well, you can get that way of lots of things happening over a short space of time.
[2:29] Alternatively, there's the big moments in life. The huge moments in life. You know, the diagnosis at the hospital.

The death of a loved one. When we feel out of control. In this passage, Jesus and his closest friends, the disciples, they encounter an unexpected event.
The disciples hadn't planned it. If they would, they wouldn't have gone fishing. But as we see the way Jesus handles this unexpected event, a troubling disaster in their life, a storm.
It teaches us. It really teaches us about who Jesus is. And it reassures us when we face storms in our own lives. When we feel overwhelmed, stressed out, anxious.
When we feel like we can't cope. We're going to look at that in a few points. A few things that we notice in this passage. The first thing I want us to notice is that it's Jesus who leads them into the storm.
[3:33] Now, I don't know what fears you have. But when I was really young, I was terrified of roller coasters. Totally terrified.

I'm not now. But especially the ones that go upside down. And I would check first to see how steep the drops were. And did it have any loops in it?
Did it go upside down? It took a long time. And it took an older cousin of mine persuaded me, said that she'd sit next to me, held my hand, and that I would be allowed to shut my eyes in the event that I went one or it went upside down.
I think I was only raised about eight or nine at the time. The point I want to make is that there are fears or potential fears where we want somebody with us.

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We want to feel safe. When you had your first injection as a child, your mum and dad were the ones there who talked to you the whole time. They reassured you when you didn't know what to expect.
[4:39] And maybe even now we still have friends that you would go to and ask if you needed support, if you wanted somebody to come with you, somebody to be there with us. Jesus.

Jesus Christ is able to meet this need in us, but on such a deeper level. The first thing I want us to notice, it is Jesus that leads them into the boat.
Verse 35. 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 are also other boats within him. It is Jesus' idea. He leads them into the storm knowing it is coming. He knows what they will face and he knows how they will react.
But he leads them in anyway. It is his idea. But notice with me that the point, he doesn't point them where to go and then stand back and let their fear and misery unfold with him at a distance.
[5:42] He leads them in. But he goes in the boat with him. Jesus knows what lies ahead in their life. And it is exactly the same with us in ours.

Jesus knows ours, your tomorrow. But he doesn't stand watching from the sight. He gets in the boat. He leads you. The unknowns of our life are known to him.
He doesn't leave you to face tomorrow on your own, but he gets in the boat. And it is him who leads you into it. It is him who leads you into the difficulty.
Now, that can be a very hard idea for us to comprehend. It can be hard for us to understand, especially if we've gone through significant difficulty in our lives, that Jesus would allow this difficult situation, or perhaps even, it's suggested here, lead us into the trial and the suffering that we would encounter.
In the same way, now, with hindsight, or with the Scriptures, we know why he's doing that to them. It is to display his power.
[6:59] It is to show them who he is. To show them his power over a difficult circumstance. Now, we don't have that same vantage point with the difficulties that he might lead us into.

We can't see how God is always working through the trials in our life. Sometimes we do. We might get a glimpse, and we look back with hindsight, and we can say, oh, I can, that was hard, but I can see why that happened.
I can see how God used that situation in my life, but there are some times where we will never know. And there are things in our life where, that can be so painful that it is hard to comprehend how or why God would do that.
All we can do in those situations, all we can do, is to trust him that he's God, that we're not, that he knows best, and he's always good.
That is all we can do. He never, you know, the living God, Jesus Christ never, never stops being good. He never stops being good. But it is an act of, it is really, it's an act of faith to trust that Jesus would allow difficulty to enter in your life and still use that for a good purpose.
[8:15] That was an act of faith. Okay, the second thing, that's the first thing, Jesus leads them into the storm.

The second thing is, Jesus sleeps in the storm. When I was little, I knew instantly if something bad had happened because my mum, I don't, maybe you know someone, she has a terrified noise.
I'd be asleep in the back seat of the car when all of a sudden I'd hear this. I'd hear that. Both me and my sister would wake up and be like, what's just, what's happened, what's happened?
And the situation raged from things that, like, qualif, where, where that was a, you know, the appropriate response, there was just an accident once immediately in front of us.
It was really bad. But it ranged from that to the innocuous, you know, like, she thought my dad had got too close to the car in the next day. But whenever my mum made that noise, it would startle you.
[9:25] I don't know if you have experienced the same. But it sort of put you on edge as well.
We're the same, aren't we? When someone is afraid or is anxious or is stressed or is experiencing difficulty, it sort of impacts the people around them.

It makes them feel in a similar way. So when we read what the disciples face in the book, you can picture the situation.
You can imagine the noises that were coming. Verse 37, we read, a furious squall came up and the waves broke over the boat so that it was nearly swamped. Squall is, it's probably not a common word that we use today.

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It's not a common expression, a furious squall. The word for word translation is a great windstorm in the, in Mark's Gospel. The reason they had, the Sea of Galilee had regular storms.
It's because of the geography of the area. There was mountains that were susceptible to cool air rushing down the hills and colliding with the warm air in the lakes basin, creating very sudden dramatic changes in weather.
[10:39] So there would have been very little warning to this, to them for this storm happening. And so when, when it happens, they don't expect it. And they're panicking like, you can imagine, they'd be panicking like mad.

Plenty of terrified noises. Alongside the noise of the storm and the tossing of the boat. You can imagine the scenario, it would have been utter chaos and panic. And we know they're feeling like that because of what they say to Jesus when they fight.
Teacher, don't you care if we drown? They are afraid. I mean, that's obvious. They are afraid because death seems like a very real possibility.
And they would have known of, they would have known, you know, they weren't the only fishermen in Galilee. They would have known of other fishermen who had lost their lives in similar circumstances.
But in the middle of the storm, in the middle of the panic, in the middle of the terrified noises, Jesus sleeps. Now we know he's exhausted from being with people all day.
[11:52] He's been teaching them about the kingdom of God. However, when I'm, if you, or maybe for me personally, if you ever experience stress or anxiety, it doesn't matter how tired I am, my sleep is one of the first things that takes a hit.

Is that, I don't know if that's, that's probably true with some of us, we've had that. Either you can't get to sleep or you have a couple of hours, you wake up in the middle of the night sweating, worried, stressed, anxious, or you wake up early and the same thought that you went to bed with is the same thought that you wake up with.
And it is a sign that you're stressed. Sleep's the first thing to go. But Jesus is in the middle of it all. He's asleep. Jesus' sleep. Jesus' sleep ensures he's none of those things.
He's not anxious or worried. He's not affected by the panic of his pals who are fearful. I just want to pause a minute here just to say something about fear, because that is what we're dealing with, the disciples' fear.
That fear in and of itself is not a bad thing. In the right circumstances, it is given by God's keep us safe so that when we see danger or potential danger, we make appropriate response to negate the impact it has on our lives.
[13:17] But anxiety is when our fears take a hold of us. All of us at some point will experience that kind of anxiety and fear.

And there are lots of things that cause that in our life. That will be different for each of us. But what the disciples experience that would make any of us afraid.
I hope I don't ever have to experience a furious squall. Their reaction says it all, doesn't it? Teacher, don't you care if you drown?
There is two things. It is a cry for help. It is a cry for help. But notice it also carries a tone of accusation. Aren't you going to do something, Jesus?
Panic anxiety, it causes responses that are uncharacteristic for the way we normally are. We know that in our lives, don't we?
[14:15] When we're panicked, when we're stressed, when we're different people to be around, we're just like the disciples. Our cries for help can come across as angry and as accusations.

Aren't you going to do something? Aren't you going to do something? Why are you asleep? That's the last thing you should be. we're tempted to do that with Jesus ourselves. We all have been. Jesus, can you not see the difficulty that I'm going through? Why are you allowing this to happen? Why have you let this happen?
Why are you not doing anything? Why aren't you hearing my prayer and answering it right now? Why are you sleeping? doing it? Do something.
Do it now. In the middle of the storms of our life, when the outcome is unknown, Jesus can sleep.
[15:17] When we see him sleeping, it teaches us, it actually teaches that even in the scary, most anxious situation that we can have, that peace is possible. and what we need is, what we see is actually the faith of Jesus, and that faith triumphs over fear, because faith is trusting God with the

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unknown future of life, with the storms, from the small storms, the wee rain clouds, to the big ones, the furious scrolls.

when you're low on money, and the car breaks down, it's a storm. When your child is sick, and in the middle of the night, and you're awake, it's a storm, or they fall over and break a bone.
If you lose your job, even when you have a row with a friend or a spouse, and you think there's no way of reconciliation, it's a storm. I mentioned earlier, if we were to get that diagnosis from the doctor, or even if we contemplate what the disciples are contemplating, they're on death.
Having said all that, the disciples, in their fear, they do get one thing right, they go to Jesus with their fear. It's okay to wake him up.
he's not overwhelmed by their panic. He's not overwhelmed by it. That is who we go to.
[17:01] In our panics and our fears and our anxieties, however we're feeling, whatever the situation is, Jesus can sleep because he has faith over fear, but we can go to Jesus in the middle of our panic and our fear and our anxieties, however we're feeling, we can go to him.

And he's not overwhelmed by it. So we've seen Jesus leads them into the storm, Jesus sleeps in the storm, and the last one is Jesus calms the storm. I mentioned earlier about being younger and having plans for our future.
One other thing that you might, a long time, getting further away from us is maybe the times when we were teenagers. I don't know if you were a bit of a rebel when you were younger or whether you did everything that you were told, but I think everyone at some point, whether it was your teenager or whether it was just in your early twenties, everybody knows what it means or can choose to be a bit rebellious, even as adults, we're told to do something that we don't want to do.
Or maybe with adult siblings, they tell you what they want you to do and we just say no. I'm not going to do that.
We just don't want to do the thing that somebody is asking. in. And if you think about it, no one, and if you think about when somebody tells you to do something, this goes in lots of circumstances, no one can actually make you do anything.
[18:42] No one can actually make you do anything. You have to choose. You could be persuaded or bribed or threatened to do something if you were commanded. you see that in our justice system.

Part of the justice system is there to have a threat attached to a crime. Don't do this. Otherwise, this will happen to you.
If you do and we catch you, you will get punished in this way. It's not just there as a punishment, it's there as a threat so that you don't do the crime in the first place.
But, that doesn't stop people, does it? It doesn't stop people from doing the thing that we're told not to do. People choose for themselves. There is no ultimate human authority.
There's no ultimate human authority. Until we encounter Jesus, until we encounter Jesus, there's no one like him because he has ultimate authority and power that no one has ever had.
[19:51] And we see it in his response to this great windstorm, this furious squall. The wind and the waves, verse 39, he got up, rebuked the wind and said to the waves, quiet, be still.

In Heidi and Angus' little children's bible, they have it, he said to the waves, shh, shh, then the wind dies down and it's completely calm.
If you were to, in storms, these days you can track the activity of a storm, and if you were to track the activity of a modern, a recent storm, even after the storm has finished, the after effects of the storm can last for days.
I was just talking to someone this week about how they can have really stormy weather on the mince over on the crossing to Lewis. But despite the storm, the mince can have choppy waves for some days after, even after the storm's finished.
But notice here, instantly, the wind goes and the seas flacker. This is supernatural. The natural forces of this world, the wind and the waves, they don't have a choice.
[21:10] they can't do what I said we do. It's not like they can ignore Jesus or that they have a choice because Jesus himself has power and authority over them.

He stops it dead. What Jesus does here is a visible demonstration of who he really is. In the psalm earlier we sung about the one who can calm the seas. Then they cried out to the Lord in their trouble and he brought them out of their distress.
He stilled the storm to a whisper. The waves of the sea were hushed. Then they were glad when it grew calm and he guided them to their desired haven. You see who the only one who is able to do

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this is?
It is the Lord God. In doing this before them Jesus positions himself as God himself. God in the flesh. The disciples knew what was written about God before Jesus was born.
They knew who the God of Psalm 107 were. They only know that God is the only one who can do this. And so the cogs begin to turn.
[22:17] They ask the question terrified. Who's this? Who is this? Even when the waves are being? You see the point? The point is if they were terrified of the waves because of their impending death, then they're even more afraid of this man because he has authority over their biggest fear.

Fear in this context, fear of God is the right response. When I say fear, I don't mean scared really. I mean reverence and awe for something that is impressive.
the type of fear of awe, of reverence that you might have if you were to stand at the bottom of Niagara Falls. There's kind of a fear, even though you're safe, as you look up at it, there's kind of a fear of a reverence and awe of its power, the sheer scale of the power of this huge waterfall, a respect of it.
It's not about being scared, but of awe and of reverence. And they have the same as they behold Jesus. Who is this man? We need to have awe and reverence, a right kind of godly fear for who he is.
And here's the point for us. We may never, let's be honest, we'll probably never be in a fishing boat surrounded by a storm. Well, I hope I know. But the point, if Jesus is able to have authority over something that humanly speaking is uncontrollable, there's nothing, there is nothing in your life of which he doesn't have that same power nor thought.
[24:04] We might not face a real storm, but we all have the storms of life. Only Jesus can calm the storms of your life. Jesus can calm the storms of your life.

He's able to bring peace and calm to you. That doesn't mean an absence from the difficulty, but what it might mean is that he can calm the raging storm within you and bring peace.
Everything might feel out of control. In one sense, it might stay like that, but in the middle of it all, he gives you hope because you realise that whilst you might be out of control, the world is not because he's in charge.
He quietens your mind because you know that the God who's in control is the one who loves you and gave himself for you. That Jesus Christ, who's in control, is your friend and your brother and your saviour, your rescuer, your redeemer.
The whole time Jesus orchestrates this moment, because it is only through him doing something that is impossible for anyone else, that he's able to demonstrate who he is to them.
[25:16] No one else's power like this. Even the wind and the waves obey him. Your situation, whatever situation, past or present, whatever you go through, he's able to calm the storm of your life.

There's nothing, no situation or circumstance that's beyond the control of Jesus. The worst moment in your life and the most trying of circumstances, the storms, Jesus has the power to rebuke and still he's able and he will.
Jesus says to them, have you still no faith? Isn't this amazing? He says, have you still no faith? And yet he still calms the storm.
Imagine what he will do for us who have faith in him. If he calms the storm for these men who have no faith, what will he do for us who have faith in him?
And the real truth is that if you put your trust in him, the storms in your life do have an end font. The biggest storm that we all face, the same predicament the disciples face, it is a real possibility because that we all face it.
[26:33] Our death is just around the corner, it comes to all of us. Jesus Christ doesn't just take the storms in life, he takes away the storm of death. The cross, the darkest moment in Jesus' life, the biggest storm he faced, Jesus, you know Jesus was powerful to get out of it any time he wanted.

If he'd have wanted, he could have put a hole to the whole eventuality any time. You remember that's what he's taught it as he's hung on the cross.
He saved others, why doesn't he save himself? The biggest storm in his life, he walked into and he carried on walking and there was no one to hold his hand to make him feel safe.

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There was no one in the boat with him. In fact, all of his friends decided. And in fact, the night before he died, we see the reverse of what happens on the boat. On the boat, he sleeps while they're terrified of dying.
The night before he died, it's Jesus who's anxious, terrified about facing his own death so much so that he would literally sweat drops of his own blood. His body will perish.
[27:46] He asks his disciples to stay awake and pray, but they go to sleep. He sleeps in the boat with them, but on the road to Calvary the next day, they desert him.

He walks the road to his execution alone. He does that out of love for us, knowing the whole time that he is receiving the punishment for all the sin and the mess we've made in our own lives.
But he does that knowing that he will destroy death itself and give us true hope and freedom from all the mess we've made and destroy the biggest storm in life that we will face. He will say to death, shh.
So that even death itself we don't have to fear. Jesus has authority over death, just like the wind and the waves. He demonstrates it when he rises above it, three days later.
Whatever storms are in your life, Jesus is in the boat with you. He'll never go out, he'll never leave the boat. He's in the boat with you, he's holding your hand every step of the way.
[28:58] He has power over everything that you will face. Lean on him. Let's pray. Almighty God, we praise you, we give you thanks for who you are, we thank you that you love us so much that you died for us.

We thank you that in all the difficulty that we face in life that you're in the boat, that you never leave us or forsake us. Lord, sometimes we struggle with the things that we face and we wish for quick resolutions, but it's just so reassuring to know that you're in charge, that you're in control, that you have power and authority over everything and nothing can, when you speak, there is no one or nothing that can, that can ignore you.
So we pray for our own hearts that you'd restore and refresh us with an understanding of who you are in the situations that we will face in the next week, the unexpected moments of life.
Would you give us an assurance that you're there in the boat with us? Will you give us assurance and help us to trust that you're in, even when we sin and fall short, that you're in the boat with us, that you're in the boat and that you have the power to conquer our biggest fears.
Take away our fears and set us free so that it might live and work for your praise and glory, we ask. We ask for this in Jesus' name. Amen.

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