

What Manner Of Man Is This

The title of our message today asks a simple, but very profound question about the Lord Jesus. It asks, "What manner of Man is this Man that we call God"?

I have asked us to consider this question on other occasions recently, and I'd like for us to consider it again today, because within the minds and within the preaching and teaching of all the many teachers and preachers in all the many church settings and all the many other Christian organizations that fill what we would call the Christian community of today, the God that we profess to believe in, can and does take on many very different forms and manners of being.

And as I have pondered that reality and as I have considered the scripture passage that we'll study today given to us here in the Book of Luke, I'm reminded once again of the words that the Lord gave us in the Book of Isaiah chapter 44, words that I have shared with you on other occasions, but I believe are worthy of repeating over and over again.

The occasion spoken about there in Isaiah 44 is one where a man went out to the forest and cut down a tree. And from that tree, he used a portion for firewood, but another portion, he carved out and fashioned into an idol. He then placed that idol before him and bowed down and prayed to it saying, "you are my god, save me".

How foolish that probably sounds to most all of us. Can a "block of wood" save a person? But folks, sadly, within the religious community of today, that kind of mindset is exactly as God warns about here in the Book of Isaiah. So many, many people are doing this very same thing, fashioning within their minds "who they want God to be", and then placing their trust in that "made-up" god to meet their needs.

Unfortunately, Most of them really don't know who God is because they don't spend the time to read and to study the truths within their bibles that tell them who God really is.

May I repeat what I have just said again, because it is so important. Too often, it seems that many, even very sincere Christians want to imagine a God who thinks like they think, a god who will be ever-present just to serve and to meet

their personal needs. And for them, that imaginary God becomes who they believe God really is.

And then also, to make themselves feel confident in the god they have invented, they gather to themselves preachers and teachers who believe as they do, who tickle their ears with comforting sermons that they like to hear. But folks, please hear my words. That is not the right path to take.

Thankfully, here today, within some very simple, but profound words that we will study, we will find out who God really is.

Here in these words, we'll read about the One Living and True God, the Lord Jesus. And when we do, our hearts and our minds ought to ask the same kind of question that the disciples asked, and then express our own wonderment as the disciples did when they asked,

What manner of man is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him?
(Mark 4:41)

Turn with me to Luke chapter 8, and read along with me about a life-threatening incident that Jesus and His disciples encountered one day, but how the God of glory, the Lord Jesus, dealt with that life-threatening incident with simply the words of His mouth. Verse 22,

²²Now it happened, on a certain day, that He got into a boat with His disciples. And He said to them, "Let us cross over to the other side of the lake." And they launched out. ²³But as they sailed He fell asleep. And a windstorm came down on the lake, and they were filling *with water*, and were in jeopardy. ²⁴And they came to Him and awoke Him, saying, "Master, Master, we are perishing!"

Then He arose and rebuked the wind and the raging of the water. And they ceased, and there was a calm. ²⁵But He said to them, "Where is your faith?"

And they were afraid, and marveled, saying to one another, "Who can this be? For He commands even the winds and water, and they obey Him!" (Luke 8:22-25)

And again, in the Book of Mark, we read these words,

What manner of man is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him?
(Mark 4:41)

What really is the “manner” of the man, the Lord Jesus? Because He is truly not of the same manner as you or me, or those other men there with Him in that boat. There is something very different about Jesus.

Neither you nor I, nor any other man or woman will ever have power like that within ourselves, power over the winds and the waves, or over any other part of nature. We are able, yea even commanded to go and have dominion over the earth, but not with dominion of that kind. Our abilities are frail and limited by comparison.

Yes, Jesus was like us in His humanity, but one step beyond His humanity was an essence that was like no other. There, deep within His being abided the very essence of God the Father, the Almighty God, the Great I AM, the omniscient, the omnipotent, the omnipresent God of the universe.

In John chapter 10, Jesus said the simple, but profound words,
³⁰ I and the Father are one.” (John 10:30)

And also, in Colossians 1, we read,

¹⁵He (Jesus) is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. ¹⁶For by Him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created through Him and for Him. ¹⁷And He is before all things, and in Him all things consist. ¹⁸And He is the head of the body, the church, who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in all things He may have the preeminence. (Colossians 1:15-18)

We can only imagine the awe and wonder within the hearts and minds of those men that day as they watched Jesus “rebuke” the winds and the waves as if they were rebellious children caught up in disruptive play.

A simple word from His mouth was all that it took. But we need to remember that Jesus’ words are very different from ours in that our words are simply an expression of something within our minds or hearts and very little more. But Jesus’ words were far more than that, far more than just an expression of His thoughts or desires. His words actually had power within them.

Recall that His Word can do many special things that ours cannot. His words have the ability to reach even into the depths of your and my soul and to see and to do things that no other person or power is able to do. Listen to these words from Hebrews chapter 4,

12 For the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and of spirit, of joints and of marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart. 13 And no creature is hidden from his sight, but all are naked and exposed to the eyes of him to whom we must give account. (Hebrews 4:12-13)

The words of Jesus had power that those men in the boat that day and you and I now will never really be able to comprehend.

And also, we need to always remember that there is far more taking place in each of these events recorded here in these scriptures than is revealed with a simple reading. In this event, there was far more taking place than just some violent force of nature.

Contrary to the secular science of our day, the real "nature of nature" is complex in ways that scientific theory does not comprehend. "Nature" is not, as they suggest, just some ecological system that was put into place at the beginning of time and then was left to itself to come and go at its own will.

Not at all! Nature, like all of the rest of creation is sustained, held up, held together moment by moment within the person, presence and power of Jesus Christ. Nature cannot live and move and have its being or even continue for one more moment without the personal and immediate sustaining power of Jesus Christ.

The verse that I just read from Colossians 1, confirms that to us! There we are told that Jesus

¹⁷ . . . is before all things, and in Him all things consist. (Colossians 1:17)

And also in Hebrews chapter 1, we are told that Jesus is

³ . . . upholding all things by the word of His power (Hebrews 1:3)

These words tell us simply that all things, and especially the things that we are reading about here today, the things we and the scientists call nature, are upheld, "held up" by and controlled by the moment by moment personal

power and intervention of Jesus. It is simply how things work and it works in no other way.

And yes, this is all so very difficult to comprehend and to accept, especially considering that God, in His mysterious sovereignty, is also allowing other forces to exist and to interact within the many events that are taking place around us in this life.

Recall that in the Book of Job, God allowed satan and his fellow demons to intervene and to affect the conditions of nature. And from those words, we can know and accept that behind some of the forces of the winds and the waves, and sometimes behind the powerful outrage of a tornado or a hurricane or a lightning storm, can very often be the contemptuous designs of satan and his demonic forces of evil, those principalities . . . powers . . . rulers of the darkness of this age . . . spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places, that are spoken about in Ephesians chapter 6.

We might never understand during this lifetime why God chose to give satan and his demons such power. I certainly don't know right now. But God has done that, and it is all a part of His righteous governance of this world to do it, and we must accept His wisdom.

But thankfully also, here in these words, God gives us a precious reminder that even though satan has been granted such great and awful power, Jesus' power is far greater.

And this demonstration with the winds and the waves was only a small measure of the way that Jesus would, later on, really show His power and His glory. Later, on the cross, Jesus would utterly and thoroughly put satan and his demons to shame. We read about that in Colossians chapter 2. Listen!

¹⁵ . . .having disarmed the powers and authorities, he made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them by the cross. (Colossians 2:15)

Again, yes, satan and his demons have power, power that is far greater than ours, but their power is nothing in comparison to the power of Jesus. And the power that satan and his demons exert is only by permission granted by the Lord Jesus.

You and I can only stand alongside of those awestruck disciples and exclaim with them, "What manner of man is this, that even the winds and the waves obey him?"

Yes, again, in His humanity, Jesus was just like us in many ways. He was frail. He hungered and He thirsted. He could feel pain and fatigue and all the other limitations and weaknesses that the human body endures.

But deep within that fragile humanity, Jesus also had something that raised Him far beyond our level of humanity. He had the very essence of the Almighty God.

I might pause here for a moment and say that some theologians believe that Jesus had completely set aside His might and His power as He became one of us. Some go so far as to say that the power Jesus demonstrated in rebuking the winds and the waves came solely from a basis of His faith. But folks, for myself, based on all the other many scriptures that speak about the omnipotent power that Jesus displays, I can't help but believe that there was so much, much more at work within Jesus than simple faith.

But also, with that being said, we do know that God places a very special importance and value on this matter of faith, especially as it concerns you and me. We see that necessity for faith within the question Jesus asked His disciples there at that moment when they came to Him in a panic. He asked them,

²⁵ . . . "Where is your faith?" (Luke 8:25)

Think with me about this for just a moment! Were Jesus' words, "Where is your faith?" simply a rebuke to the disciples for their fears of perishing, or was Jesus perhaps saying something more, that after He was gone from them back to heaven, through the power of faith, they would be doing things that they at that time couldn't even imagine?

Listen to these words given in John 14,

¹² "Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever believes in me will also do the works that I do; and greater works than these will he do, because I am going to the Father. ¹³ Whatever you ask in my name, this I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. ¹⁴ If you ask me anything in my name, I will do it. (John 14:12-14)

As for this moment in time when Jesus spoke to the winds and the waves and they obeyed His command to them, I personally have no doubt that we are seeing Jesus in some of the glory that was His throughout all of time and eternity. Yes, He had set aside some of His power and ability, but not all of it. And I am personally blessed as I imagine what it must have been like as one of the disciples to see the God of Glory speaking to the rebellious waves of the sea, and those waves immediately obeying His commands.

And also, while nothing is mentioned here about satan's involvement in the turmoil of the sea that day, even if he were, the outcome would still have been the same. Jesus is the Almighty God of all creation. And all creation responds and obeys the voice of the Lord Jesus.

And may I also add one other thought to this circumstance here on the Sea of Galilee? Our God is very "Intentional" in all that takes place on the earth. Nothing is random, especially an incident such as this. Some preachers would preach that this storm took place and Jesus simply took the opportunity to give an object lesson to His disciples.

Not at all folks! I am very comfortable trusting that God is providential and this incident of this storm was orchestrated by Him to reveal to the disciples then, and to us today that Jesus truly is who He says He is. He is our Almighty, all-powerful God. And He is trustworthy in every situation of life.

And Jesus wants you and me to know that faith, real faith carries with it the reality that He really does have a plan for each of our lives, a plan that is at work within any storm that is taking place in our lives.

And if, by faith, during those stressful moments of the storm, you and I can remember that God is far more powerful than satan and his demons, then we truly will not fear. We will, by faith, know that everything really will go just as God planned. We need only to, in faith, lash ourselves to His mast, and hang on tightly and we can ride out the storm.

And most often, the first step is to do just as those disciples did that day, to quickly remember that Jesus said if we will ask for anything in His name, He will do it for us.

Yes, those disciples were probably in a panic that day, and yes, it would have been far better if they had of just trusted peacefully in the knowledge that Jesus would, even in His sleep, take care of such small matters as a storm. But still, while lacking in that full measure of faith, they did, and we must do the same, quickly run first to Jesus. He will surely save us from our storm.

Eventually, hopefully, our faith will grow to the point that we will not panic as quickly. We will simply trust and rest in the assurance that Jesus will take care of our crisis.

But until that blessed day comes, I invite you and me to continue to do the next best thing, and that is to run quickly to Jesus, making our cries and petitions known to Him and He will surely come to our aid.

Now, before we close our time together today, may we go back for a moment to the thoughts and questions that we asked as we began this message, beginning with, "What manner of man is this who can simply speak to the winds and the waves and they will obey His voice"? What manner of Man is this Jesus?

May I again strongly exhort and admonish each of us to not do as so much of the world seems to be doing, that of imagining a God who exists solely for the purpose of meeting our own personal needs. And may we also not do as the man in the Book of Isaiah did and foolishly carve out an image of a person who meets our definition of God and then expect it to dutifully obey our wishes.

None of that is God! God is the Almighty All-powerful, All-knowing, Ever-present Creator and Sustainer of all that exists. He is Pure and Holy and Righteous in all that He is and all that He does. He is Savior of those who give their hearts and lives to Him. And He is Lord over all things and all people. That is the "manner of man" that Jesus is!

Our only part within all that takes place on this earth is for us to, by faith, simply surrender our hearts to Him, and to love Him. All else comes from and returns to Him, the Lord Jesus.

Let me close with some of my favorite words in these scriptures given in Matthew 11. There the Lord Jesus calls out to us

²⁸Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. ²⁹Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. ³⁰For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light. (Matthew 11:28-30)

May we pray.