

Who is this man?

Most of us use social media and sometimes we follow someone who we don't know. They might be genuine, or they might be fake. Most of the time we follow them assuming that they're real. Just this week I received a WhatsApp message from a foreign number. The profile pic was of a pretty girl. The person introduced themselves as Bianca who is from California but is working in Johannesburg. They wanted to talk to me about investments. I asked that if they're from the US and working in Johannesburg why they're using a Nigerian number. It was obviously a scam. Other times people are genuine, but we follow them for the wrong reasons. This was the case with Jesus' disciples. They followed Him, but didn't really know Him. Who is this man?

Matthew 8:23-27

Then he got into the boat and his disciples followed him. Suddenly a furious storm came up on the lake, so that the waves swept over the boat. But Jesus was sleeping. The disciples went and woke him, saying, "Lord, save us! We're going to drown!"

He replied, "You of little faith, why are you so afraid?" Then he got up and rebuked the winds and the waves, and it was completely calm.

The men were amazed and asked, "What kind of man is this? Even the winds and the waves obey him!"

1) Led into the storms of life

- When Jesus called His disciples, we wonder what went through their minds
 - Was he calling them to a materially better life than they had?
 - Were they going to get famous?
 - Was He going to be the victorious king over the Romans and allow them to sit on His right and His left when He takes His throne?
- Many times we follow Jesus not really understanding who He is
 - We learn more and more about Him as we follow Him, learn from Him, and see His works in our lives and the lives of others around us
 - Not knowing Him completely can take us surprise at times when things happen in our lives that we never thought would happen, such as being unemployed, having financial problems, relationship issues, etc.
- Jesus' disciples were like that. They had left everything to commit themselves to following Jesus, but still only knew Him at face value, not who he really was and what He came to do
- We know Jesus as our Saviour, but do we know Him as Lord and God, as our provider and protector, as our friend and confidante?
 - Do we know that He embraces us with His love and meets us on mountain tops, but do we know that He leads us through wildernesses and valleys?
- Jesus had just healed a man of leprosy, healed the paralytic servant of a Roman Centurion, cast out demons
 - Him getting into a boat on the Lake of Galilee wasn't anything out of the ordinary, especially for His disciples who were fisherman and had grown up on the lake.
- Those who were fishermen would surely have known if a storm was brewing and that it would have been dangerous to sail over the lake at that time.
 - During a storm the waves can reach up to 3m high on the Lake of Galilee, which could easily overturn the boats that they used at that time.
- Did Jesus know that they would head straight into a storm on the lake?
 - Jesus knew the future, and often prophesied what was going to happen, such as Peter's denial of Him, His death and resurrection, sign of His second coming.
 - We can safely say that Jesus knew that they were going into a storm and so He wasn't taken by surprise, only His disciples were.
- Being led into a storm sometimes throws us into bewilderment and panic, but Jesus is with us in the boat
 - Our bewilderment and panic when we face the storms of life are often based on the fact the we don't understand who Jesus really is
 - We might know that He's in our boat, in our life's situations, and we quote the right Bible verses about Him always being with us, but we still don't know Him when He's so near to us
 - The disciples didn't rest in the fact that He was in the boat, they panicked because of the storm

2) Is God passive in our trials?

- How often we go through the trials of life and wonder where God is in those times!
 - Does God care?
 - Does He see?
 - Is He distant?
- Jesus wasn't uncaring although he was asleep in the boat.
 - God is always in complete control of what is happening in our lives, even when we think He isn't
 - Jesus was sleeping in the boat, so they woke Him up in a panic
 - Matthew 8:24-25 But Jesus was sleeping. The disciples went and woke him, saying, "Lord, save us! We're going to drown!"
- We might go through an unexpected financial crisis and we don't know how we're going to pay the bills, or out petrol in our car, or put food on the table.
 - God seems disinterested and aloof
 - We cry out to Him that we're going to drown
- He rises from His sleep and the first thing He does is rebuke us for our lack of faith
 - Matthew 8:26 He replied, "You of little faith, why are you so afraid?"
- As the storm didn't take Jesus by surprise and He was completely at rest and He wants us to remain in him and be at rest through all the storms of life
 - Matthew 11:28-29 "Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.
 - To abide in Christ means to keep up a habit of constant close communion with Him—to be always leaning on Him, resting on Him, pouring out our hearts to Him, and using Him as our Fountain of life and strength, as our chief Companion and best Friend. To have His words abiding in us, is to keep His sayings and precepts continually before our memories and minds, and to make them the guide of our actions and the rule of our daily conduct and behavior. (J.C Ryle)

3) Who is this man?

- Jesus then demonstrates His complete control over the situation by rebuking the wind and waves bringing a complete calm to the situation
 - He showed His disciples that they could have trusted Him even before He woke up.
 - To them He didn't seem to have had control over the situation, but He was always in full control
- The disciples were amazed at what Jesus did
 - They had seen Him heal the sick and cast out demons, but now they're amazed that he had authority over nature – the storm, the wind and the waves
- The question then arose: Who is this man?
 - They had heard His claims and seen His works, but now they weren't sure who He really was
- Have you got a relationship with Jesus but then are still amazed when He does something remarkable in your life causing you to remark: Who is this man?
- Who is this man?
 - He is Lord of the heavens and the sea
 - He has ultimate authority over all creation
 - He has power over the demonic
 - He has your lives in His hands and has not lost control
- Do you trust Him?