

# THE FIRST 15

Tuesday, July 2, 2024

Today is Tuesday, July 2 and we are studying what the Bible says about still waters.

## OPENING PRAYER

*Holy and loving God, in the midst of a busy day, I pause to find a place of quiet rest. I calm my scattered thoughts and slow my breath. I seek the green pastures and still waters you promise. Show me what it means to have a Sabbath heart and discover the inner peace you provide. Amen.*

## SCRIPTURE

***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 were also other boats with him. 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 if we drown?" He got up, rebuked the wind and said to the waves, "Quiet! Be still!" Then the wind died down and it was completely calm. Mark 4:35-39***

## REFLECTION

Jesus had been teaching all day. When evening came he and his disciples left the crowd, got in a boat and headed across the Sea of Galilee. The water crossing would take several hours depending on the winds. They set out in the evening, planning to spend the night on the boat to arrive in the Gerasenes at daylight. The Sea of Galilee, surrounded by high mountains, is like a basin. Sudden violent storms on the sea are well known to this day. When a storm arises at night it is all the more dangerous. At least four of the disciples were experienced fishermen and would have been good sailors accustomed to storms at night. The concern of the disciples indicates the severity of this particular storm.

Jesus slept on a cushion. He is unconcerned by the furious squall. Jesus is so confident of God's protection, presence and power that he slept soundly on a pillow. The fearful disciples woke him. "Don't you care if we drown?" they say. I frequently ask God the same question when I am afraid or concerned. "God, don't you care?" "Where are you, God? Are you sleeping?"

Jesus got up and spoke the storm away. He said, "Quiet! Be still!" The raging waters responded to his voice. The waves became completely calm. God is the God of all creation. God is the God of the sea and the wind and waves submit to his authority. The Son of God has the full authority of God. He subdues the forces of chaos, rebukes the wind and commands the water. The wind and the waves obey him. Jesus brings calm to chaos and peace to raging storms. This is true of my life as well. Jesus calms my heart, mind, emotions, relationships, troubles, concerns, and situations. If Jesus has the power over the forces of nature, he has the power to calm the chaos of my circumstances, quiet my thoughts and bring peace to my heart.

**Ask:** As I examine my life and heart, where are the places of unrest and how are my waters troubled? How can I invite Jesus to speak peace over me and my circumstances?

**Pause and Pray**

## **CLOSING PRAYER**

*Holy Lord Jesus, you command the winds and the waves. All nature is under the influence of your power and grace. Speak into my life - calm the raging storms, quiet my fears, still the chaos and subdue the unrest. Bring me the peace that passes understanding and lead me beside the still waters of your abiding love. In the midst of the storms of life, I keep my eye focused entirely on you. I am confident of your power, presence and protection. Whatever the world throws at me, I will not fear, for you are with me. I am not in this boat alone. Amen.*