

Matt Kang, Deputy Chair of the ACC provided the opening devotion at the Special Meeting of the Assembly of Confessing Congregations held on November 20, 2021.

Matt calls us to refresh our minds about who Jesus is.

Text: Matthew 8: 23 – 27 (NIV)

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!"

Friends, I want to begin by asking a question and the question is this.

Is it possible to be truly secure in this world?

As we as a nation come out of this pandemic, we have lost over 2000 lives in this country and five million people dead in the world. This tells us that five million people had not planned to die. They had planned to go on living, to go to work, on a holiday, to raise a family.

We were not ready for a pandemic, and it makes us ask is possible to be truly secure in this world today?

It is estimated that more than 500 000 people have lost their jobs in the last five years, and in the last three years more than 50 000 small businesses have gone under and shut down.

We are going to look at a day in the life of Jesus and this will tell us that the answer is No and the answer is Yes.

We come to the portion of the gospel where the disciples are getting into a boat to cross the sea. So far up until this point Jesus has been teaching and healing.

They plan to cross the sea of Galilee. As they try and cross, a furious storm arises. The bible highlights it is a furious storm. I have lived in Sydney most of life and I have seen many types of storms; wind, rain, hail, thunderstorms, but I don't think I have seen a furious storm before.

We have to imagine what it was like to be in that situation. Imagine you were one of the disciples. You can see Jesus in front of you and you know how powerful he is. You have four professional fishermen with you. They know how to swim and handle a boat and they know the Sea of Galilee that is a few hundred metres below sea level. They are used to storms, but this day something was different. This storm was so furious it makes four professional fishermen scared for their lives. They are utterly convinced they are going to die.

²⁵ The disciples went and woke him, saying, "Lord, save us! We're going to drown!"

Imagine you are on this boat and you are convinced you are going to die. Your friend over there is probably crying. It is remarkable and crazy, but what is more remarkable is what we read in the next verse. We see these words "*But Jesus was sleeping.*"

It makes us ask Jesus, how could you sleep?

What I really love about this section, it that gives us a good clue as to who Jesus is. Jesus is fully God and fully man. He is not half God and half man.

Why, because here he is sleeping. He is not afraid. He is God and can command the waves and the wind, and our Lord has been doing ministry all day and he is tired. Fully man, and he needs to nap.

Look then at verses 26 and 27.

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!"

Friends, as we see this story in the bible and we see Jesus take complete authority over nature. When we see his supreme authority and power over the winds and the waves, it causes us to ask the same question the disciples ask. Who is this man?

Now I want to tell you what this passage does not mean.

This doesn't mean that if you put your faith in Jesus, he will calm the storms of your life, or that he is going to make ministry easy and flourishing.

It confirms who Jesus is. He has complete control over the winds and the waves. It means Jesus is God. This shows us his identity and authority.

In the gospels we see Jesus doing a lot of things, healing, feeding people, casting out demons, preaching the kingdom, but the bible makes it clear why he came to earth. He came to die to reconcile us back to the father, so that we may be filled with the Holy Spirit, sanctified and welcomed by God in heaven.

Friends of the ACC, you and I worship the risen saviour. Jesus who is the image of the invisible God. He did not stay dead, he rose from the dead. This has great implication for our lives.

As we go on with this meeting, and with our lives and ministries, I want us to remember this Jesus who is God. This Jesus who has complete authority over the winds and the waves in all our lives. He knows the concerns we have in our church and ministries. This passage is causing us to trust in him.

Friends, are you trusting him with your lives, with the future of the ACC?

My hope and prayer is that as we gaze afresh on Jesus, that in his kindness Jesus will refresh our minds and trust in him.