

## **Comfort – Not Always Comfortable**

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Scriptures:

Matthew 8:23-27

Mark 4:35-41

Luke 8:22-25

Galatians 2:20

In this 21<sup>st</sup> Century we are bombarded on all sides with things to make our life more comfortable. Our homes are filled with labour saving paraphernalia that would totally bamboozle our ancestors. No more beating the carpets every spring, no more standing in the cold with soaking wet sheets being pushed through a mangle that could crush your fingers if they got in the way. Vacuum cleaners and automatic washing machines are very much the norm in our society, along with fridges, freezers, orthopaedic mattresses and sumptuous couches for sitting in front of a screen that purports to give us an escape from the world's troubles. But does being comfortable really bring comfort?

We live in a world where suicide rates are spiralling, where life destroying addictions are constantly satisfied by the unscrupulous and greed driven. This world looks with suspicion on those who would reach out and hug a lonely child, because abuse of every heinous type abounds. Yet, deep down inside we all crave comfort, although we may not give it that name.

True, deep comfort is a precious, fragile yet amazingly strong gift to treasure.

Imagine being in a small boat battling through a massive storm in the middle of the night, where comfort would seem to be impossible. For most in that boat, there was no comfort, save for the one man at the back of the boat who lay fast asleep. His followers were astounded, they were being tossed around, their levels of fear were sky high. These experienced seamen knew the ferocity of the storms that could whip up on this inland sea, there was danger all around, yet Jesus was asleep. All of their focus was on the storm, the battle, while all of Jesus' focus was on His Father. He did not speak anything He had not heard from His Father, so His Father must have said they were going to the other side of the lake for this is what Jesus had told the men. The storm could not destroy His comfort, the words of His Father were a promise, what other comfort could He need? Absolutely, it was not a comfortable night, but He knew comfort because He believed His Father, therefore He slept.

Eventually someone woke Jesus with the words "Master, don't you care that we are perishing?", and I would think that inside he may have been putting it a lot more strongly. Immediately, Jesus calmed the storm and they were at the other side of the lake. Jesus' words to these men who had been feeling so terrified and abandoned was to gently and lovingly ask them why they were afraid, where was their faith? In other words, no matter what the storm, He was in the boat with them and they were going to the other side.

I have to ask myself, how often do I get so involved with the uncomfortable place I find myself in that I forget Jesus is right with me, He is the Comfort I need and He has promised to get me through whatever storm I face? We all go through times that are stormy, uncomfortable, trying and seemingly lonely.

Jesus promised that we would face trials, but He has already overcome, we have nothing to fear.

If we place our expectation of comfort on being comfortable all of our physical lives, we will put ourselves through so much more discomfort than we need to. But, if we live in the assurance that Jesus Himself is our comfort and that He lives in us, He is our strength, our shield, our ever-present help in trouble, then the storms will come but their impact upon us will be so much less.

**Prayer:** Thank you Father God for always being in our boat, the source of all Comfort in the midst of life's storms.