**Thesis:** Who do you say Jesus is? A good teacher? A miracle worker? A healer? Or someone much greater? How you define Jesus directly feeds into your faith. If you see him as simply a man of great power, you might believe there are situations more powerful than him. But if you view him as the Lord of all creation, you’ll know that he has authority over all things and will never allow anything to overcome us as his followers.

**Introduction:** Welcome back to The Jesus Podcast, a year of stories showcasing the depth of Christ’s love and the glory of God’s truth. I’m \_\_\_\_ your host from Pray.com. I’m so excited to have you here today. Be sure to follow the podcast to stay up to date on all the epic stories of Jesus’ life and ministry.

**Context:** Our story today can be found in all three of the synoptic gospels of Matthew, Mark, and Luke. It’s a story filled with terror, wonder, and fear of the Lord. We’ll begin with another scene of Jesus teaching the crowds before heading out onto the waters of the Sea of Galilee. Before long, a monumental storm quickly sets in and seems to threaten the safety of the disciples. Gripped with fear and wondering how the Lord could be asleep at a time like this, they press through the raging weather with their eyes set on the other side of the sea, desperately wondering if they’ll make it to the shore. But Jesus was with them, and this storm would only be used as another opportunity for him to teach his disciples to have faith in who he was.

**Message:** The story of Jesus commanding the storm is a remarkable account of the power of Jesus and the faith we should have in him. It was occasions like this that remind us that following Jesus is much more than listening to messages and doing good deeds for others. The fullness of living out our faith is rugged. It’s raw. It’s real. While life with Jesus is the best option for us, it doesn’t mean that it’s always easy. Following Jesus can often take us to uncomfortable or even dangerous places. For some, that might be related to physical location as the Lord calls some to mission fields not too dissimilar from Jesus’ where persecution is a very real threat. For others, it might relate more towards our inward disposition, being called to things that threaten our personal discomfort and require us to do things we might not have previously thought of doing. We have to remember that all of this was new to the disciples. We have the privilege of living on this side of the cross, wondering how the disciples could possibly fear when they were with the Son of God. But the reality is, they were learning as they went along.

The lesson they learned that day is a lesson we can glean today, that we don’t have to worry when we’re with Jesus. And thankfully for us, that’s everywhere! It might sound fun to be one of the twelve, getting to spend time with the incarnate Son of God, but Jesus said it was better that he go because he was going to send the Helper, His Holy Spirit. It’s the Spirit who dwells in us and goes with us wherever we go. And maybe you need to ask yourself, “Do I really believe that it was better that Jesus left?” Do you believe that it’s better to have the Spirit in you than to have the physical manifestation of Jesus beside you? Through Scripture, we learn that the Spirit helps us in our weakness, He teaches us all things and brings to remembrance Christ’s words, He leads us into all truth, He gives us strength, He bears fruit in our lives, and He empowers us to be witnesses of Jesus and his gospel. Surely we can agree that it’s better that we have the Spirit. And because we do, we don’t have to be afraid wherever Jesus leads us.

Having this type of faith drives out fear. But it also helps us from preventing fear to creep into our lives. Shortly before the disciples got onto the boat with Jesus to row to the other shore, Jesus was teaching a large group of disciples. He was teaching using various parables, but each one of them reflected a tone of the growing kingdom of God and the faith that the citizens of that kingdom should have. It’s no coincidence that Jesus gave the disciples an opportunity right afterwards to exercise that faith and learn what it really means to let faith drive out fear.

David wrote in *Psalm 34:4 “I sought the Lord, and he answered me; he delivered me from all my fears.”*

If we’re continually seeking the Lord and bolstering our faith through seeing his power and glory, we’ll have much more confidence that God will deliver us from all of our fears. No matter what trials or temptations we face, Jesus will always provide a way out for us.

This is the encouragement Paul gives to Timothy in *2 Timothy 1:6 “For this reason I remind you to fan into flame the gift of God, which is in you through the laying on of my hands, 7 for God gave us a spirit not of fear but of power and love and self-control.”*

But sometimes it won’t be easy. Sometimes fear sneaks its way into our lives. And that’s why God has not only given us his Spirit, but has also surrounded us with other Spirit-empowered disciples to stand by our side during our trials. As the winds threw the boat and the disciples along the sea, the disciples remained unified and worked together to persevere. Trials have the potential to bring out the best or worst in us. We can think of them like a microscope, magnifying the innermost feelings of our hearts. If deep down we’re afraid, trials will draw out more fear. If we’re thinking only of ourselves, trials will cause us to fend for ourselves at the detriment of others. But if our innermost being has faith in the Lord, his Spirit works to keep his people together, supporting one another to get to the shore on the other side of our proverbial storm.

The apostle Peter writes this in *1 Peter 2:4 “As you come to him, the living Stone—rejected by humans but chosen by God and precious to him— 5 you also, like living stones, are being built into a spiritual house…”*

God wants to build us up to be a spiritual house with Jesus as our cornerstone, directing us and keeping us on course. We have to work together to stand strong on the unshakable foundation of Christ. Surround yourself with people who you know love the Lord above all else, love others as themselves, and are devoted to keeping the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. We have Jesus’ Spirit within us through every trial, and his Spirit will empower us to stick together.

What the disciples failed to remember in sticking together was that they couldn’t do it apart from Jesus. As soon as the storm hit, they turned towards their own strength to fight the war against the ravenous storm. It wasn’t until Peter called out to Jesus that the Lord awoke to rebuke the waves. And though Peter’s cry came from a place of frustration, we should be encouraged to know that Jesus was willing to respond despite Peter’s failing faith. You might have moments where you cry out to God with your heart not in the right place. But remember that God still loves you and will help you not only through your circumstances, but will help you to get your heart back in the right place, abiding in his love as he abides in you.

What happens at the end of the story is arguably the most important part. With just a few words, Jesus commands the storm. He tells the waves to be still, and they are. Creation submitted to the Creator. This was the moment the disciples began to understand that their Rabbi was much more than an ordinary man. He was much more than a prophet. He was the only one who had true authority over all things, because he was the one who made all things. Though they knew Jesus was important, they were beginning to learn that he was much more than they could even imagine.

As you reflect on who Jesus is, maybe you find yourself in the middle of your own storm. And I pray that today’s story would remind you that Jesus has authority and has given you a faith that can drive out all fear. Trust in him to do what he’s promised. He’ll get you to the other shore. Call out to him. And just as he commands the storm to be still and it was, let him command your heart to be still, and it will be.