

The Only True Superhero

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Preacher: Don Coleman

[0:00] So take your Bibles this morning and open to our text, Luke chapter 8, starting with verse 22.

! I'm going to be reading verses 22 through 25. So, listen. Listen to God's Word.

And it happened, or now it happened, on a certain day, that He got into a boat with His disciples, and He said to them, Let us cross over to the other side of the lake.

And they launched out. But as they sailed, He fell asleep. And a windstorm came down on the lake, and they were filled with water and were in jeopardy.

And they came to Him and awoke Him, saying, Master, Master, we are perishing. Then He arose and rebuked the wind and the raging of the water.

[1:15] And they ceased, and there was a calm. And He said to them, Where is your faith? And they were afraid, marveled, saying to one another, Who can this be?

For He commands even the winds and the water, and they obey Him. Great story, isn't it? I don't know if you've noticed, but those of you who are moviegoers, you've certainly noticed that Hollywood these days seems to be fixed on a couple of themes in their moviemaking.

Now, there are others, and of course, a wide range of themes, and most of them really bad. But these two themes, Hollywood just fixed on these two things.

And I would say, even before I introduce them, that they are poles apart. They are opposite extremes. There's evil on the one side.

And good on the other. All right, these two extremes. Have you noticed this? Well, let me identify this just a little bit more specifically, because some of you are not moviegoers, and so you may not have a sense of this.

[2:38] But, so let me fine-tune this just a little bit. For the past several, I don't know, years, Hollywood has been cranking out movies about zombies. You notice that?

Or some version of that. The undead, the walking dead, and all of that kind of rot. You know what I'm talking about? Hideous-looking people who are dead, so to speak, and yet somehow they're still walking around and wreaking havoc, and they walk around destroying things and killing people and worse.

All right, if you know what I'm talking about, then you've probably been watching some of those movies, and you shouldn't be. All right, I caught you on that, didn't I?

And God help us, by the way, they've even perverted Jane Austen's classic, and now there is Pride and Prejudice and Zombies. Have you seen that?

They've even made that into a movie, I understand, though. I've not seen it. I did notice a book the other day in a bookstore. I couldn't believe it. What a perversion of Jane Austen.

[3:47] Well, anyway. So there's that theme on the one side. On the opposite extreme, of course, Hollywood has also been feeding its consumers, that's us, a steady diet of movies about what?

Could you guess? Superheroes. You didn't even look at the bulletin and see what my title was for this morning, did you? Superheroes. I mean, there's Spider-Man and Superman, and there's Batman, and there's Iron Man, and the list goes on and on and on and on.

So two opposite extremes, right? I mean, evil on the one side. Gross evil. And good, so-called, on the other side.

And so while the Walking Dead are threatening to destroy the world, and the world as we know it, the superheroes are saving it. So opposite extremes, right?

And moviegoers can't seem to get enough of it. That's why they keep cranking these movies out.

Now, I'm sure you're wondering, where am I going with this? And, well, this morning, let's kind of forget about the Walking Dead side of that, that comparison or that identification.

[5:06] Let's just forget about that part of it. Though I think I could make a pretty convincing argument from the Bible for why these movies are so popular today. And I think it is basically because of man's innate fear of death.

And so these movies are just attractive somehow. You would think it would be the opposite, but it's not. But laying that aside, that theme aside, let's consider for a moment the fixation, our fixation on superheroes.

Because we really have that, don't we? And I think, clearly, it's founded in man's sort of innate desire for a savior.

Some colossal, some super, you know, supernatural, bigger-than-life kind of savior. And it's in all of us.

It's part of our DNA. We're always looking for a savior. And God, by the way, I think, has created us that way. And so is it any wonder to us that Marvel and DC comic book writers and, consequently, Hollywood movie producers, is it any wonder why they have borrowed from the Bible to give their characters believability?

[6:26] They've borrowed the themes and such from the Bible. Some of you watched the movie Superman Returns. I know that's an old movie now, but I'll get to the newer one here in a minute.

You know, back in 2006, I think it was, and there was this one scene where Superman takes Lois Lane for a flight in the sky.

You know, how he just picks her up and they're off and flying around up there. And it's very thrilling. And you might remember that at one point, they're up there above the earth, looking down upon the earth.

And Superman asks Lois, what do you hear? And she says, I don't hear anything. To which Superman responds, I hear everything.

And then comes this line, and he says to Lois, you wrote that the world doesn't need a Savior, but every day I hear people crying for one.

[7:33] Remember that in the movie? And it's right, isn't it? I mean, he's right. That's right. Of course, they are. Crying for a Savior.

And obviously not the right one. These movies that have come on the scene, and especially these superhero movies that have made parallels clear, explicit parallels with Christ, they're there and they're popular because man's looking for a Savior.

Even to the point of fantasizing about one. And that's why these movies are popular. And that's even clearer, I think, in the latest edition of Superman, The Man of Steel.

Some of you may have seen that. And Superman is, of course, again, like always, he's a very likable, very humble, very servant-oriented personality.

And like Christ, the comparison becomes even clearer, though, as you go along. His birth, we discover, is unique.

[8:39] And like any others, it's unique. And he was born with the last name of El, which, by the way, is the Hebrew name for God.

And the bad guys, of course, in the movie, the bad guys from his old planet, led by General Zod, you know, they typify fallen angels who are trying to kill this Christ-like Superman here on Earth.

It's a clear comparison. Even Clark Kent, you know, he's really Superman, of course.

Mild-mannered reporter. Clark Kent, even before he becomes a reporter, he's 33 years old, we're told, in the movie, when he becomes fully engaged with all of his superpowers, and when he risks his life to save the world, the same age, we believe, that Jesus was when he went to the cross.

Superman's earthly father, I think, clearly filled the role of the kind of blue-collar Joseph figure. They're queer in the movie.

We can make many, many comparisons. There's even, by the way, and you might have missed this, a parallel to the biblical scene of Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane. Did you notice this in the movie?

[10:05] Some of you who watched it? Superman, at this point, is struggling with whether to submit himself to this Zod and ransom the Earth.

That's what it's all about. To ransom his life for the life of the Earth. To spare the life of the Earth. And Superman is struggling with this decision. And so where does he go?

To a church. To speak to a priest. And as he is asking the priest for counsel, you may have missed this, but immediately behind Superman is seen a stained-glass depiction of Jesus in the Garden of

Gethsemane.

I think Christians, if they notice that a Christian audience might even be tempted and imagine Superman saying, Lord, take this cup from me.

Comparisons are really very clear and they kind of go on and on in the movie. And I haven't just mentioned, I've just mentioned a few of them. And there are similar parallels woven into some of the other superhero movies of our day.

[11 : 14] And I don't have time to mention all of them. There's something of the Christ and the Christian story woven in nearly every one of the Superman characters and their story and the scenario.

And I can mention one other one. How about Thor? Some of you saw that movie. On his hammer is the symbol of what? The Trinity.

Did you notice that? It's on Thor's hammer, the symbol of the Trinity. Who in the Thor mythology represents the Trinity?

Well, there's Odin the father and there's Thor the son and I think this Heimdall who's in charge of the Bifrost. He represents the Holy Spirit.

He sees all things and so forth. And I think even Loki is... He is representative of Satan, Lucifer.

[12 : 17] And in the story, of course, Thor is cast down to earth. He's sent down to earth by Odin, his father. And he sacrifices his life in a battle against the Destroyer.

Really, it's a battle against Loki, his not really brother, but this person who kind of personifies evil Satan. And in that battle, what happens?

He dies. And then he's raised back to life again. And then his glory is restored to him. And his hammer is restored. And Thor then wins the day and saves mankind.

I mean, it could not be clearer. The parallel with the Christian story. It's undeniable. And that's why these movies are so popular because mankind is always in need of a Savior.

We encounter all kinds of problems and difficulties and afflictions in life for which we need a Savior, including the big one, death.

[13 : 20] And man knows that he cannot save himself from that one. And so, we're looking for a Savior. And more typically, now, we fantasize a superhero to save the day.

Whether it's a God or a God-like person or a demigod or just someone who just, you know, just has superpowers of some kind or maybe it's just simply some earthly human person who is benevolent and he's a superhero and he saves the day.

That's what we're looking for. We crave that and we're looking for that. And Hollywood is accommodating that. There's only one true superhero.

And I don't use that to kind of cheapen Christ. But just to have us aware here very, very, very dramatically.

There aren't any superheroes. Christ is our hero. He's our super, super Savior. There's only one.

[14 : 34] And I think our text here is intended to give its readers a glimpse of Him. Open our eyes to Him. Now, we, on this side of the completion of Scripture, on this side of the cross, we have seen this.

We have seen this about Christ. This has already been revealed to us, but this is the point of Scripture to sort of draw back the veil, so to speak, or take off the mask, or take off the costume, or whatever it is that's obscuring our sight and to pull that aside so that we have a glimpse of who Jesus really is.

And that's what this text is intended to do. And Hollywood couldn't possibly duplicate this.

You see, in eternity past, do you know this? That God devised a perfect plan to redeem you, to redeem His people.

And not only His people, but His creation. He devised a perfect plan to accomplish that. And it was a plan devised in the heart and mind of God even before any of these things were created.

[15 : 53] That's pretty awesome. And this plan began its gradual fulfillment immediately after Adam and Eve sinned in the Garden of Eden.

And of course, with their sin, with them, all of mankind fell. The plan began to unfold before us in Scripture. God promised to them and to us, by the way, that He would send a Redeemer one day. A Redeemer. And He would come and destroy sin and He would come and destroy Satan. And this Redeemer, of course, did eventually come. We know that. He was the Messiah, the Christ.

His name is Jesus Christ. And He offered Himself as a sacrifice for our sin. And God the Father accepted that sacrifice and raised Him from the dead.

And, Matthew 1.21, He saved His people from their sin. Praise the Lord. And it goes on from there. The plan's not finished. He will also return to this earth one day in all of His glory and in all of His majesty.

[16 : 56] And He will judge all the wicked and He will rule this earth and He will restore once and for all peace and justice and joy and Satan's kingdom will be destroyed once and for all and Satan and his demons will be bound in chains of darkness forever and the saints of the Lord will reign with Jesus and disease and death will be replaced by health and healing and the earth itself, the creation itself will be restored once again to its original perfection.

Amen. Isaiah 11.6 describes it. The Bible says, The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb.

The leopard shall lie down with the young goat, the calf and the young lion and the fatling together and a little child shall lead them. The cow and the bear shall graze.

Their young ones shall lie down together and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. The nursing child shall play by the cobra's hole and the weaned child shall put his hand in the viper's den.

They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea. Amen.

[18 : 28] One day that's going to happen. Now listen to me. Here's the point. Do you have any sense of the power necessary to accomplish all of that?

We talk about our superheroes with their superpowers seem to be unlimited but can you grasp the power of God?

One theologian summed it all up this way. He said the power required to redeem lost sinners and to restore the cursed earth is beyond human ability or comprehension.

It belongs only to God. Now that's a long introduction to the text isn't it? It's for purpose because this passage is meant to reveal the true identity of our supernatural Savior.

Call him a superhero if you'd like. The only true one. the only superhero who's ever lived. True superhero who's ever lived. And he still lives today of course and he is the only hero you need will ever need.

[19 : 47] And his name is Jesus of course. Now looking at the text first thing the Holy Spirit wants us to learn here to understand and it's the very kind of very reason that we long for and need a Savior.

So the first thing we need to understand is this the sobering reality of suffering. The sober reality of suffering.

It's communicated everywhere in Scripture. you can't miss it so it's quite strange to me that many have missed that. And so when the suffering comes they wonder why and they complain and they don't understand and yet it's everywhere in Scripture.

And it's also perplexing to me why many preachers today have denied this reality. The reality of Christian suffering. They do so either out of ignorance but I think more so because it just doesn't sell well.

It doesn't sell well and they're all about tickling the ears of their hearers and their supporters of their growing great ministries and their growing great bank accounts.

[21 : 11] And so we just leave that part of the message out but it's everywhere in Scripture. You see in our story here the disciples and this would be of course the twelve I don't think all of the followers of Christ were out in that little fishing boat.

These are the twelve apostles who are with Jesus and they find themselves in a dire situation don't they? I mean they find themselves in a very extreme life threatening kind of situation.

They're out in the middle of the Sea of Galilee. It's a very unpredictable sea they tell us. So there they are in a small fishing boat. I think it's one that you wouldn't normally want to be launching out going across the Sea of Galilee in.

they're all in this fishing boat and a storm comes up as it very typically did and not just some little cloud burst with a little lightning and a little bit of wind but it was a storm that had gale force winds. Suddenly it comes up upon them and their little ship, their little boat, their little fishing boat is nearly swamped with water and they're about to die. This is serious, serious set of circumstances.

[22 : 22] They are in jeopardy. They're not making this up. They didn't come and wake up Jesus and say we're in jeopardy because they are overreacting. Many of these guys were fishermen.

They were old salts.

They understood this kind of thing and they had been through this kind of thing but they were at a point where they were about to die, about to drown and they knew it. Their lives were in jeopardy. But this is symbolic of the reality of life because life is typically one big storm or series of storms. And that's the first thing that we need to consider. The sobering reality of suffering. And so with that let's just understand a few truths about that.

A few truths about Christian suffering, human suffering. And first of all and we may not like this but we need to understand that it's providential rather than circumstantial.

[23 : 26] By the way, did you notice who was responsible for their boat being out there in that storm? It was Jesus.

It was Jesus. He was the one who said, let us cross over to the other side of the lake. and they did it. They set out for it.

It's not given in the form of a command, at least grammatically but it was clearly received that way. Jesus said, let's go across the sea and they went. It was his idea.

He providentially led them. There's no way that you could convince me that Jesus, the Lord of glory, could not know what was in store for them. That somehow he did not know there would be a storm there and they would experience some things.

You can't convince me of that. He sent them there. He put them there right in the middle of that storm. It was Jesus. It's providential. And likewise, God has providentially ordained suffering in the life of his children, lives of his children.

[24 : 39] It's providential. And why in the world would God want to do that? You might ask. Well, we could answer it from another number of places in scripture, but how about James 1, 2?

The Bible says, My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into various or all types of trials. Count it all joy.

Why? Knowing, he says, that the testing of your faith, the trying of your faith, and that's what this is all about, the trying of your faith, what does it do? He says it produces endurance, perseverance, strength to endure the things that are just indicative of life.

So why would we want to avoid those things that would help us be able to endure worse things that may come and certainly will come in life?

It grows your endure. So it is providential. That's what we need to understand. The sobering reality of suffering is providential rather than circumstantial.

[25 : 51] And also I would say to you that it is inevitable rather than coincidental or accidental. It's inevitable.

Jesus said in John 16, 33, in this world you will have tribulation. Well that's good news. By the way, this is a promise.

We don't like those kind of promises. And the Bible is full of those kind of promises. He said in this world you will have, not may have, but you will have tribulation.

It is inevitable. And why? Well we can answer that simply this way because sin is in this world. This world is filled with sin and sin brings misery.

Always. And misery upon misery. And it will continue that way until Jesus Christ comes again.

When he makes everything right, changes everything, makes everything right, and then the final stanza of joy to the world is fulfilled.

[26 : 57] Do you know what that is? I think maybe it's the second to the last one. It goes like this. No more let sins and sorrows grow. Nor thorns infest the ground.

He comes to make his blessings flow far as the curse is found. That means he's going to make his blessings flow how far?

Everywhere the curse is found. Far as the curse is found. Far as, far as, far as the curse is found.

And maybe that stanza of joy to the world will mean a little bit more to you.

That's when he comes again. But until then, what? We continue to live in a world of tribulation.

That's just the way it is.

The sobering reality of suffering. It is providential rather than circumstantial. It is inevitable rather than accidental. And I'll tell you something else. It is normal rather than exceptional.

[28 : 02] 1 Peter 4.12 Beloved, Peter says, Beloved, that's you. It's me. Beloved, do not think it's strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you.

As though some strange thing, some abnormal thing, some exceptional thing happen to you. But rejoice.

Rejoice to the extent that you partake of Christ's suffering. It's normal. It was normal for Christ to suffer.

It was normal for his apostles to suffer. And indeed they did. And it is normal for all his followers to suffer.

And again, Jesus said, in this world you will have tribulation. You will have it. It's normal. Let me tell you one other thing. It is inclusive rather than exclusive.

[29 : 10] Inclusive rather than exclusive. That is, don't think that God is singling you out. Okay. because maybe you know, you just don't measure up.

So God is singling you out. Don't think that. The disciples were all in the same boat. It wasn't just one of them out there, a couple of them out there. It wasn't just Judas out there.

It was all of them, all twelve of them. They were all in the same boat when it came to this storm in their life. And when it comes to our suffering, our storms, we too, are all in the same boat with this. When Jesus said again in John 16, 33, in this world, you will have tribulation. You is plural. That means he's saying you, that is, all of you, every one of you will have tribulation.

Now, obviously some worse than others. I mean, as we would measure it, there are some who have endured tribulations worse than others.

[30 : 25] We recognize and understand that, and that bothers us sometimes. It bothered Peter too, by the way. In John chapter 21, you don't need to turn to it, but let me just remind you of what took place in that chapter.

In verses prior to verse 22, in John 21, Jesus has described, basically, albeit in kind of an cryptic way, a cryptic way, how Peter was going to die.

Remember? And Peter's response is really interesting. He said, Peter, seeing him, that is John, he said to Jesus, but Lord, what about this man?

He just told Peter how he was going to die, he was going to suffer in the excruciating way that he was going to die. And Peter looks at John and he says to Jesus, what about him?

what about him? And notice Jesus' response. He said, if I will that he remain till I come, what is that to you?

[31 : 56] You follow me. Don't be looking at your own sufferings and difficulties and horrendous events taking place in your life and say, you know, it just never happens to him or her or them and they just have a charmed life.

And God, I don't understand that. What about them? God says, what is that to you? You follow me. all right, so we get that, don't we?

We don't like it, the reality of suffering. We get it. You get it? Okay.

I didn't mean it that way. We don't like it, but that's just, we get that. We understand that. Now the question is, what do we do? What do we do about that?

Do we decide, well, we'll just sort of take a fatalistic approach, you know. So when these things come, you know, the bad things, we just say, Lord's will.

[33 : 11] It's kind of fatalistic. Lord's will. No, I don't think so. In fact, I would say to you that we can learn from this passage here, this story, about a proper response to suffering.

I think it's pretty clear. And so, not only the sobering reality of suffering, but the saving response to suffering. And what is it?

It's faith. Simply put, it's faith. Let's just follow the story here. Verse 23, but as they sailed, he fell asleep in a windstorm.

The American Standard says, a fierce gale of wind came up on the lake and they were filled or nearly swamped with water and were in jeopardy.

And they came to him and awoke him, saying, Master, Master, we are perishing. We're going to drown. We're going to die. And then he arose and rebuked the wind and the raging of the water, and they ceased.

[34 : 16] Just like that. And they were calm. But he said to them, and here's what I want you to notice, where is your faith? What did Jesus mean by that question?

We think we know, but do we? Was it a rebuke? Was he rebuking them because they were afraid? And he shouldn't be afraid.

He should never have fear. That's sin. Is that what he was doing? No, I don't think so. In fact, I would say to you that it's okay to be frightened by the evils of life. There is a healthy fear. We ought to be frightened by it. It's okay. And it's okay to be afraid when life rocks your boat. You think it's going to tip over, and it's okay to be afraid.

It's just what you do with that fear that Jesus is getting at. Where is your faith is a question that calls for personal examination, self-examination.

[35 : 30] To examine, first of all, I think, the size of your faith. To examine the size of your faith. Have you examined your faith?

faith? How big is it? What kind of faith do you have? I think we ought to examine that. Not that it is the sole deciding factor on things, but it is important to examine the size of your faith.

Okay, what kind of faith do you have? In Luke chapter 18, there is a parable that Jesus tells. I think it is rather interesting because what he does is tell us about a woman in this parable who comes to a ruler and she needs help, needs him to do something for her.

And he says no at first and she keeps coming and she keeps coming, but even before Jesus tells this parable, this is what is said by Luke to introduce the parable.

Listen to it, in Luke 18, 1, then he spoke a parable to them that men always ought to pray and not lose heart. Pray and not faint.

[36 : 54] That's a description of faith, to pray without giving up, without fainting, without losing heart. And then he tells this parable about this woman and this certain judge or this widow and she comes to him and she needs justice from him and really it's implied that he refuses, but she keeps coming and she keeps coming and so he says to himself, you know, I don't want to give her what she wants, but because she's tiring me out, she keeps coming and coming, I'll give her what she wants.

It's an interesting kind of parable. Don't try to make exact comparisons and parallels the widow being believers and the judge being God because the judge is really portrayed as a very, very, you know, anything but benevolent judge.

But the idea, the focus is this woman that keeps coming, keeps coming, she keeps coming and making her request and she does not lose heart, she does not give up, she keeps coming and then the judge grants her what she's asking for and then after he tells this parable, listen to what he said. Also, in verse 9, or excuse me, verse 8, he says, I tell you that he will avenge them speedily. That is, if you go to God in this same manner, he will avenge them speedily.

Nevertheless, now listen to this, when the Son of Man comes, will he really find faith on the earth? That is, this kind of faith.

[38 : 32] the faith that prays, trusts God, and does not give up, does not lose heart. We're talking about the size of your faith.

You have that kind of faith where you will not give up, you're in the midst of something, and whatever it may be, it may be something relatively minor, it may be something horrendous, even life threatening, and you're praying, and you're not giving up, you're not losing heart.

Examine your faith, the size of your faith. I think also, where is your faith is a question that compels us to examine the importance of our faith.

How important is it that you respond always in faith? That faith is the way you approach God. How important is faith?

Well, Jesus said in Matthew 9, 29, it shall be done to you according to your faith. That is, it is on the basis of faith that God responds to your need.

[39 : 47] Basis of faith, not unbelief, but faith. So how important is faith? Well, the writer of Hebrews Tom, no, actually not Tom, Tom didn't write it.

I just mentioned, you know, giving him deference here, the writer of Hebrews. Hebrews 11, 6 says, but without faith it is, what? Impossible, impossible to please Him, please God.

Impossible, without faith. How important is faith then? Very important. It's crucial. It's, it's paramount. And, and he goes on to say, faith, for he who comes to God must believe that he is. He is all, he says he is, and all, who he is, is to believe he is, and that he is the rewarder of those who diligently seek him.

The, those who respond always in faith, unshakable faith toward him. So, where is your faith is a question that calls for self-examination.

[40:54] To examine the size of your faith, to examine the importance of your faith. And I'll tell you one more, and it's more to the point of the text, to examine the object of your faith.

You see, today, faith has just become kind of a principle, kind of a, kind of a, you know, just, I don't know, faith, just have faith.

I mean, it's just so broad and so general, and so, you know, what does it mean? It's just, it's kind of a principle of life, to have faith, where it's faith in the pew, or faith in a person, or faith in a government, or faith in yourself, you know, just have faith, brother.

It's more than that. Faith must have the right object. And that's the point, the primary point that Jesus is getting at here. Here they are, they've come to him, they're waking him up, you're crying out to him, and saying, we're about to die here.

And it's as if Jesus is asking, do you know who is in this boat with you? Do you know who I am?

[42:12] Do you know what I'm able to do? And really he's already answered that question. In fact, where is your faith? The real object or the reason for the question, the point of the question has already been answered.

Jesus answered it in what he did. What he did before that. Jesus gave the answer before he asked the question. They cried, Master, Master, we are perishing.

And in response, he arose and rebuked the wind and the raging of the water and they ceased and there was a calm. Then he asked the question, where is your faith?

You see, the object of your faith is what? Yourself? Your resources? You may have a lot of resources.

Is that where your faith is? Your smarts? Your strength? Is that where it is?

[43:13] No, the object of your faith is entirely outside of yourself. Because the things you face, the problems you face are too great for you to handle.

So the object of your faith must be outside of yourself. And specifically, the object of your faith is Jesus. It's Jesus. And as profoundly demonstrated right here in the story, he is certainly infinitely able to handle anything life might throw your way.

I mean, he spoke, commanded the wind and the sea. They obeyed him. Is that the object of your faith? Where is your faith? Before we go on and I'm about finished, let me point out something you may have missed here.

Jesus was asleep on the boat, right? Yeah, he was.

He was asleep. It's pretty amazing. It's part of the, one of the perplexing things about the story. He was asleep. Now, here's the question. What awakened Jesus from his sleep?

[44:24] The storm? The raging storm? No. That's pretty amazing. Right? I mean, it's amazing that Jesus could just go on sleeping there in that fishing boat while it's being rocked around and the waves are coming up over the sides and the wind is blowing and, you know, he's just sleeping.

What woke him up? the cries of his disciples. Now, that's pretty important. The storm did not wake him up.

The cries of his disciples woke him up. Now, listen. Storms, storms don't really concern Jesus. they're no big deal to him. See, we're always coming to the Lord and saying, don't you see this storm?

Now, don't you see what's happening here? Of course, he sees it. It don't matter to him. The storm's not the big deal.

[45:43] I mean, the storms do not affect. Him. He's not affected by troubles or tumultuous events. Why should he be? He's sovereign, almighty God.

He sleeps right through the night. He's not sleeping, all right? I know the Bible says he does not sleep, he doesn't slumber. But the instant one of his beloved cries to him, he takes notice.

That's pretty important to know. He takes notice. He acts. Disciples cried out to him, Lord, we're dying.

And he says, I hear you. Stop wind and sea. And they stop. It could have just as well focused.

Oh, I didn't know there was a storm going on. Now, that doesn't mean, of course, that his answer to our cries is always an immediate cessation of trouble.

[46:54] I don't want to give you any false hope. There isn't anything in Scripture that teaches that. I have known some godly, godly people over the years who have become sick and one of the most fear-filled people that I've known and they pray and they die.

Remember what Job said about that? In Job 121, he said, naked I came from my mother's womb and naked shall I return there. The Lord gave and the Lord has taken away.

Then finish that. Do you know it? Blessed be the name of the Lord. He said also in Job 13, 15, though he slay me, yet will I trust him.

See, there's the answer. The answer is still him. Regardless of the outcome, the immediate outcome. Because however he chooses to save, and that's up to him, however he chooses to save, and he will save, but however he chooses to, whether he saves you in this life or through death, you're secure in him.

no matter what. Don't look within yourself, look to him. A saving response to suffering is faith.

[48:28] It's faith. It always has been. The size of it is important. The importance of it should be acknowledged, but chiefly the object of our faith.

That's the key. one more thing quickly. The sobering reality of suffering, the saving response to suffering, and finally, the sovereign reason for suffering.

Interesting thing about superheroes, the common people, the ordinary people, they always want to know who they are. I mean, you know, they want to know their true identities, right?

Because they usually hide that with a mask or whatever. And so the paradigm is kind of always the same with these superhero movies. You know, the people are in trouble, and they look to the skies, and they say, look, it's a bird.

Or, translation, is that a bird? Is it a plane? Superman? No, it's Superman.

[49:46] And, you know, that's a formula in these movies. And what does that do? That lets you know that the one who can save, he's come, he's on the way. Or, you know, on the other side of it, the superhero has just saved the day.

And he slips away unnoticed, and the people say, who was that masked man? Someone will say, don't write Leno.

You know, that's what they say. It's Western, you know. Don't write Leno. But they call him the Lone Ranger.

And then, you know, you hear a little bit of William Tell Overture after that. Now, the question is asked at the end of our story.

Isn't it? I'm not saying the Bible or the Holy Spirit borrowed from Hollywood writers, movie writers.

They borrowed from the Bible, I think.

[50:54] But the question is there, verse 25, and they were afraid and marveled, saying to one another, who can this be?

Who is he really? Is what they're asking. I mean, they have just been, you know, in awe of what has happened.

And they say, who is he? For he commands even the winds and the water, and they obey him. And after this experience, the disciples knew Jesus better than they had ever known him before.

And that's the point. That's the point of it all. In short, and don't forget this, the sovereign reason for suffering is that you would come to know Jesus better.

Don't ever forget that. You may not understand any of the rest of it, about what's going on in your life and why this is happening. Just remember this one thing. The reason for it is that you would come to know Jesus better.

[52:13] I guarantee you that is the most important thing in this life.