

Grace and peace are yours dear friends from God our Father and our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.
Amen.

Storms arise at the most unexpected times and places as was the case one day when Jesus and Satan were having an ongoing argument about who was better on his computer. They had been going at it for days, and God was tired of hearing all of the bickering.

Finally God said, "Cool it. I am going to set up a test that will run two hours and I will judge who does the better job."

So Satan and Jesus sat down at the keyboards and typed away. They moused. They did spreadsheets. They wrote reports. They sent faxes. They sent e-mail. They sent out e-mail with attachments. They downloaded. They did some genealogy reports. They made cards. They did every known job. But ten minutes before their time was up, lightning suddenly flashed across the sky, thunder rolled, the rain poured and, of course, the electricity went off.

Satan stared at his blank screen and screamed every curse word known in the underworld. Jesus just sighed. The electricity finally flickered back on and each of them restarted their computers. Satan started searching frantically, screaming "It's gone! It's all gone! I lost everything when the power went out!" Meanwhile, Jesus quietly started printing out all of his files from the past two hours. Satan observed this and became irate.

"Wait! He cheated, how did he do it?" God shrugged and said, "Jesus saves."¹

For those of you who actually want to question when this occurred, the best scholarly sources place this event during the forty days when Christ was tempted in the wilderness.

There is no lack of power or might displayed in any of the scripture texts today. The Old Testament lesson in Job reveals the time when God speaks to the ordering of the universe and invites Job to marvel at the beauty of Creation. The Psalm speaks of God's word stirring up the mighty and powerful waves of the sea while the gospel text speaks of Jesus's words that calm the waves of the sea. Paul's epistle places the other readings into our context and life today by assuring us that we are not rejected, but graciously protected and continuously strengthened for service.

There is power in the heavens my friends...but how many of us see that power working for us or against us? In Job's case we are given God's word that God is in control, caring and watching even though the storm in Job's world is raging. Well, things are not all that different today; sin, temptation, pains, suffering...in other words: STORMS are cause for concern. Yes, storms continue, even after the death and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Powerful STORMS remain in our lives because we remain in the world. And as surely as storms arise, the sun comes out again, the winds subside, the clouds will pass away because when we cry out, when we use our faith to ask for help and admit our weakness, then we hear, feel, and experience the words; Peace, Be Still.

Jesus told His disciples (who were terrified of a great storm at sea in a small finishing boat) why did you doubt? With all we have seen my friends, with all the life we have experienced, with all the storms that have swept through our life, would Jesus still ask us, why did you doubt?

¹ <http://jokes.cc.com/funny-god/a32xjl/jesus-and-satan-are-having-a-conversation--->

If we continue to have doubt, maybe part of the reason lies in the voice that we hear and are listening to. Today I have a truly American icon up here with me to make both a point and a memory. The dog's name is Nipper and he is best known as the logo for RCA or the Radio Corporation of America. You see, back in 1912, they were also trying to go wireless...with the telegraph and they called it Radio. But Nipper actually goes back many more years to 1884 when he was born in Bristol England. His name comes from his behavior of 'nipping' the back of visitor's legs when they came to visit his owner Mark Henry Barraud. After Mark died, Mark's brothers cared for Nipper, but like most faithful companions... Nipper continued to look for and listen for Mark.

Three years after Nipper's death in 1898, Mark's brothers painted a picture of Nipper next to a gramophone with the words, "His Master's Voice" and to make a long story very short; let's just say, the rest is history. The Victor Talking Company was a predecessor name to RCA Victor and eventually RCA Records (the recording division of RCA). The image of Nipper and the gramophone became the trademark of recordings made by RCA with a tagline that the reproduced sound was so clear that Nipper could not tell the difference between a recording and his master's voice.

RCA changed history, they changed the world and their story will be remembered and told as long as the image of Nipper is remembered.

The story of God love for us through Jesus Christ has been recorded in the words of Holy Scripture for all time. Words that will continue to be told and heard as Our Master's Voice, not as a reproduction, but as original words inspired by the very Spirit of God to those who hear it for the first time.

My dear friends in Christ, we come to worship on Sunday to hear our Master's voice and our Lord speaks to us, the Spirit opens our hearts, and our God is known to us. When we leave our worship service, our Master's voice continues to be heard in the sounds of peace, the sounds of comfort, the sounds that care for one another in words of compassion, love, and understanding.

The truth and reality of our Master's voice is there; it is a promise that is given and a gift that is reinforced throughout all of Holy Scripture. When the storms in our life begin to rage and toss us around like tiny boats on the sea, we need to listen very 'carefully and faithfully' for Our Master's voice.

When we listen for our Master's voice, Our Lord assures us of our peace, Our Saviour provides for our comfort, and our Christ grants us the rest that has been won through the Storm that He obediently endured. When we rely upon our Master's voice for the safety, guidance, and, stability in our life; THEN, we experience the reality of the words, Peace, be still.

Too many times, we only see the trials in life because like Job, we are struggling storms that rage around us...without realizing that the battle is now won and the war is finally over. Sin still nips at us but Christ has changed history my friends; Jesus changed the world and changed us, and in doing so; Jesus saves! Jesus saved us from the deadliest storm we faced; Jesus saved us from death; the price of sin.

Today, we stand firmly with the Victor; a place and position that has been securely anchored for us without ropes and wires, but ordained by God's eternal love for us through the blood of Jesus Christ, our Lord and Saviour. Peace, be still; and may that same peace that passes all understanding, keep your hearts and minds through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.