

Stillness in a Storm

by James D. Nickel

The stark contrast of the scene suddenly dawned upon my mind as I contemplated the solitary afternoon. The weather had been chilly and ominous all morning long. Our little party of adventurers had been intently exploring the wet New Zealand bush, and intermittent showers frequently inundated us.

Reflecting upon a May afternoon experience in Auckland, New Zealand, James Nickel penned these thoughts in July 1982.

I finally returned to my lodgings at about 3:00 PM. My hosts were gone, so I was all alone in this beach resort house, which was virtually 80% windows. My hands were shivering as I made myself a cup of hot chocolate (Milo in New Zealand). Then I walked into the lounge, opened the window shades, turned on the small electric heater, sat down on an easy chair, took off my wet shoes, and directed my cold feet toward the warm air.



Suddenly, a torrential gush of water slammed against the windows. Because of the gale-force winds, the rain struck the glass at an angle close to zero degrees. I continued to sip my warm Milo as the sound of water splattering against the glass grew louder. My eyes and ears were acutely cognizant of the existence of turbulent fury just a few feet from where I was comfortably sitting. What a difference a few feet made! A cold tempest on the outside and warm tranquility on the inside.

About 2500 years ago, amid turmoil that included roaring waters, God spoke through the psalmist: “Be still, and know that I am God” (Psalm 46). Many times, our minds are confused, our emotions are turbulent, and our bodies are in cold pain. Yet, on the inside, in our spirits, Christ is our peace. Sink into Him. We must learn the discipline of being still in our inner man, even though a deluge of fury may slam against us. Through the window of our spirit, we will certainly recognize the storm, but what a difference Christ in us makes!

In the middle of the stormy tempests of everyday life, let us look within and listen to the still, small voice of our Master saying, “Peace, be still.”