



The Good News

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Jesus, Savior, Pilot Me #89

By **Larry Baulch** (Elizabeth's late grandfather)

In 1871 these words were written by Edward Hopper and they were published in the *Sailor's Magazine*. Edward Hopper was an ordained minister who preached at the Church of the Land and the Sea, in New York City, a ministry for the sailors of the world who ended up on the ships that anchored in the harbor of New York. He always referenced **Mark 4:39** when he spoke of this hymn "*And He got up and rebuked the wind and said to the sea, "Hush, be still." And the wind died down and it became perfectly calm.*"

We must remember that the Civil War had only been over for about six years. There still would have been wooden sailing ships in New York harbor. I am sure his flock of seamen would have been very close to and comforted by, the wording of this hymn, and to the Biblical references in Mark as well as Matthew and Luke.

This hymn asks us to consider the story of Jesus during that terrible storm at sea; when He was stretching out His hands and calming not only the wind but also the sea, saying "*hush, be still*". In Mathew's account he asks "*you of little faith, why are you so afraid?*" We know that faith and prayer during the storms of life will sustain us and as we inwardly reflect on our lives, we are comforted in the absolute truth; the Lord sees us through all of life's adversities.

The first verse of this hymn raises the question about life's stormy seas, asking us to consider that the problems, the heartache and the catastrophes large and small that happen to us in our lives should always be measured with our Lord's love and understanding. It is imperative that we keep in mind that the Lord will make all of our dilemmas bearable, as in **1 Corinthians 10:13** Paul writes, "*No temptation has overtaken you but such as is common to man; and God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will*

provide the way of escape also, so that you will be able to endure it." The Lord will not allow things to be so horrendous in our lives that all is lost; and again in **2 Peter 2:9** we are told, "*...then the Lord knows how to rescue godly men from trials and to hold the unrighteous for the day of judgment, while continuing their punishment*". We can take a lesson from these verses that as long as we keep His precepts and promises in our hearts we will be able to face our life's predicaments.

In the last verse of this hymn; Edward Hopper writes, "*When at last I near the shore and the fearful breakers roar 'twixt me and the peaceful rest, then while leaning on Thy breast may I hear Thee say to me Fear not, I will pilot thee*". As this hymn is brought to a close we find the writer ending with the lesson of our true dependence on the lord and our independence because of our Lord. We go through our lives clinging to the faith and values we have been taught as Christians. We rejoice in the fact that, as this world turns, we have the promise from our Lord that we have a path to Him through prayer and we can find our redemption in His words.

When the storms of our lives become so strong, being fraught with the towering waves of adversity and with the stinging wind and rain of heartache and sorrow, we need to think of the words of this hymn, as well as the words our Lord has given us in Mark, and again in Peter, to reflect upon. And consider these words written by Edward Hopper in 1871: "*may I hear Thee say to me; fear not I will pilot thee...*"