

*“He awoke and rebuked the wind, and said to the sea, “Peace! Be Still!”
And the wind ceased, and there was a great calm.”*

Mark 4:39

Touching the Heart of the Dragon

The second day of our church-wide retreat, we went on a sightseeing trip around the city of Trang. First was what looked like a peaceful boat ride in small rowboats. We entered a cave which quickly got smaller and tighter, and the boatman told us that we were going through the “belly of the dragon.” We needed to take off our shoes and lie flat on our backs for at least 20 minutes. The boat hit the sides of the “dragon’s belly” countless times, the boatmen were lying down, too, pulling us through by grabbing the rock above us or on either side of us. Then the dragon “bit” some of us in the stomach, including me — that is, we had to kind of scrape our bellies past the rock overhead. Just as the cave began to widen again, the boatman told us to touch a big round rock hanging down on the right side of the boat, the “dragon’s heart,” he said. Not long after that we started to feel a breeze and see a little more light, and then we glided out of the “dragon’s mouth.”

I have begun to see similarities in our Christian faith. We’ve got to put all of our trust in Christ even lying flat on our back. We are really not in charge of this life, we’ve got to let go of and let Jesus pilot us. Sometimes we will even get “bitten.” When Jesus was sleeping in the back of the boat and there was a storm, his disciples began to panic. He brought peace, and they were able to get to their destination without injury. When we put our trust in Christ, the way we passengers had to lie down and ride through the “dragon’s belly,” then that part of us God treasures, teaches, pilots and guides will come forth like gold.

Anne Gregory serves with the Church of Christ in Thailand. Her appointment is made possible by your gifts to Disciples Mission Fund, Our Churches Wider Mission, and your special gifts.



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