

Mark 4

Who is this?

OR

Fear Factor

Hey church – so good to be with you today as we continue our time of worship through the Word this morning. We are continuing in the Gospel of Mark today, Mark 4. Then next week on Easter Sunday – we'll have a stand alone Easter message – then we'll be back in Mark 5 two weeks from today.

We will also stay in Mark while I'm away some this summer – Matt and I worked through a tentative schedule to get us – with his help and some others' help – to get us through the book of Mark in early July.

But for today – go ahead and turn to Mark 4:35-41. One of the most misused miracle stories in all of the Gospels. Where Jesus is asleep on a boat, in the middle of the storm. And the disciples get scared. And Jesus tells the wind and waves to stop. Now, a lot of times we hear (well intentioned) that "Jesus calmed the storm in the sea...and he can calm any storm in your life." That statement's true – but that misses the point of this story – and misses the point of why the Holy Ghost had Mark write this Gospel account.

Because remember:

- The book of Mark – it's about Jesus. It's not about you or me. Yes, there's applications of this book to each of us – but ultimately it's about Jesus.
- Remember the Holy Ghost's purpose through Mark's writing is to
 - Show us WHO Jesus is
 - Calls us to respond
- So the narrative ark that the Holy Ghost is creating for us – everything we have written here – is to show us who Jesus is and call us to respond.

What we've seen so far:

- Jesus came preaching – proclaiming – a message of repentance and belief. To turn from sin – and to believe in Him. It's why he came.
- We've also seen His authority – specifically in the miracle narratives – again through the narrative the Holy Ghost is crafting for us – in seeing WHO Jesus is.
 - Jesus' teaching carried an authority to it – unlike the religious dudes in the temple
 - Jesus exercised authority in the spiritual realm – driving out demons
 - Jesus exercised authority over sickness – Mark says he was moved with compassion as he healed the leper
 - Jesus exercised authority over the physical realm – healing the paralytic
 - Jesus exercised authority over sin – forgiving him
 - Jesus exercised authority over the Sabbath – one of THE major rules in Judaism – when he declared himself Lord of the Sabbath (calling himself God)

- Jesus exercised authority over peoples' lives – calling of the 12

And the crowds – they loved the show. Probably somebody selling shirts to the “Jesus Miracle Tour ‘01”.

Connecting the dots from last week – we see the religious dudes – not only did they want to kill him but they called him a devil! And by denying Jesus – they committed the only unforgivable sin – what Jesus refers to as blasphemy against the Holy Spirit. That final and permanent denial of who Jesus is.

Jesus would go on teaching – using parables (everyday things that people in the culture would understand to teach an eternal truth). But then privately explaining the parable to his disciples.

And then, one evening he tells them – “let’s cross over to the other side of the sea.” And this is where we will pickup in Mark 4:35-41

READ Mark 4:35-41

³⁵ On that day, when evening had come, he told them, “Let’s cross over to the other side of the sea.” ³⁶ So they left the crowd and took him along since he was in the boat. And other boats were with him. ³⁷ A great windstorm arose, and the waves were breaking over the boat, so that the boat was already being swamped. ³⁸ He was in the stern, sleeping on the cushion. So they woke him up and said to him, “Teacher! Don’t you care that we’re going to die?”

³⁹ He got up, rebuked the wind, and said to the sea, “Silence! Be still!” The wind ceased, and there was a great calm. ⁴⁰ Then he said to them, “Why are you afraid? Do you still have no faith?”

⁴¹ And they were terrified^[e] and asked one another, “Who then is this? Even the wind and the sea obey him!”

PRAY.

What an incredible story – that the Holy Ghost inspired Mark to write. True story. Actually happened. All to show us who Jesus is.

I. Jesus was (is) in control the whole time

V35 – Let’s cross over to the other side of the sea. He knew what He was doing. He knew there was a storm coming. Not for one second did this surprise Him or catch Him off guard.

It’s not like he woke up and thought to Himself “Oh man, I didn’t see this coming!” He knew there was a storm coming. He was and is in control the whole time.

And the storm...well it was intense and severe. I'm not a boater – but man imagine trying to be on a boat in a hurricane kind of storm. Makes me sea sick just thinking about it. It says here that the boat was taking on water. So incredible winds, water coming into the boat.

Jesus is sleeping on the cushion in the stern (don't know why they don't just say back of the boat for all us non-boaters) but the stern is the back of the boat. Jesus was sleeping.

II. They thought He didn't care about them!

V38 – So they woke him up and said to him, “Teacher! Don't you care that we're going to die!”

The guys they'd left their jobs, their families to follow. The guy they had seen do incredible works of miracles and ministry – their assumption as soon as they got into a little bit of trouble – their assumption was that he didn't care about them.

III. Jesus' Authority Over Creation

So it says in V39 that he rebuked the wind and quieted the sea. Literally with his words – he shows authority over the created world.

Next time you're at the beach – walk out to the edge of the water and say – STOP. And just wait and see what happens. Wait and see if the waves keep going or if the ocean listens to you.

Jesus – after showing his authority over all things – shows that He alone has authority over creation.

And, because he loves these guys – he asks them this heart penetrating question: “Why are you afraid? Do you still have no faith?”

IV. Why are you afraid?

I would say to you – being afraid is natural. When you're a kid – maybe you were afraid of the dark. Man, I'm afraid of frogs. My older brother (wild dog lover now) – but when he was a little kid was terrified of dogs.

And the question – here when Jesus asks why they're afraid – he isn't saying just go be brave. The question that Jesus asks – it's more penetrating than just go be brave. He's trying to get at what will control them. Will they be controlled by fear or controlled by faith.

See – these dudes – their fear led them to doubt the character of Jesus. “Don't you care???” Instead – Jesus wants them to KNOW that he cares – and trust Him even when they're afraid.

Horrible decisions are often made out of fear.

- Abraham – lied about his wife to try and save his own skin because he was afraid

- Jacob – same – fear based liar
- Moses – lived as an outcast for 40 years because he was afraid
- Peter – denied Jesus 3x because he was afraid
- Think about all of the foolish decisions you’ve made because of fear. Fear of missing out even...some of the worst stock trades I’ve ever made have been driven by fear instead of a solid investment strategy.

While fear can be a natural response in certain circumstances (one of my walks seeing a snake) – if fear drives and controls us - our decision making process – then we’re in trouble.

V. Their Landing Spot – Who is this?

Who is this – even the wind and sea obey him!

These guys had seen incredible works, heard incredible teaching, been on the front row for the Jesus Miracle Tour ’01. And now they’re confronted with the reality that Jesus is in Control of everything – including nature and the created world.

And while this story isn’t about us – there are some very key points of application to us. And how we’re going to start is with:

Because Jesus is in control & authority over ALL things...

- I can trust him in the middle of chaos
 - If you are a Christian – there is no circumstance that you can’t trust Jesus in.
- Rejoice in suffering
- Cling to what we know that we know that we know.
- You and I don’t have to be.

CLOSING

Psalm 56

A Call for God’s Protection

For the choir director: according to “A Silent Dove Far Away.” A *Miktam* of David. When the Philistines seized him in Gath.

¹ Be gracious to me, God, for a man is trampling me; he fights and oppresses me all day long.

² My adversaries trample me all day, for many arrogantly fight against me.^[a]

³ When I am afraid, I will trust in you.

⁴ In God, whose word I praise,

in God I trust; I will not be afraid.
What can mere mortals do to me?

⁵ They twist my words all day long;
all their thoughts against me are evil.

⁶ They stir up strife,^[b] they lurk,
they watch my steps
while they wait to take my life.

⁷ Will they escape in spite of such sin?
God, bring down the nations in wrath.

⁸ You yourself have recorded my wanderings.^[c]
Put my tears in your bottle.

Are they not in your book?

⁹ Then my enemies will retreat on the day when I call.
This I know: God is for me.

¹⁰ In God, whose word I praise,
in the Lord, whose word I praise,
¹¹ in God I trust; I will not be afraid.
What can mere humans do to me?

¹² I am obligated by vows^[d] to you, God;
I will make my thanksgiving sacrifices to you.

¹³ For you rescued me from death,
even my feet from stumbling,
to walk before God in the light of life.