**LORD OF THE STORM**

Mark 4:35–41.
We all go through storms in life, and there will be people here today, going through a storm. You’ve lost your job, you are in serious debt, your marriage is crumbling, children in trouble, - this is for you.

**1. Jesus power is real!**

This passage is very vivid. It is only 150 words, depending on how it’s translated, but it is a tremendously compact story with an incredible economy of style, and any unnecessary details are in it.

1. “*That day when evening came ...”* We’re told what time it happened.
2. We’re told he went along just as he was. He didn’t change for the trip. “*just as he was*”
3. we’re told there were also other boats with him. “*There were also other boats with him”*
4. what part of the boat he was on. “*Jesus was in the stern”*
5. asleep on a cushion. “*sleeping on a cushion”*

This is unusual and surprising, not normal in ancient literature. Ancient literature didn’t have unnecessary details. It has these details because it was a memorable event, it actually happened. The people who told Mark the story remembered them. There’s no other reason for them to be there. This passage is bristling with evidence that this is a historical account, that this really happened.

Why is that important? It’s not just an academic point....the message of this passage is that if you are going to trust Jesus in the storms of life, you have to believe in the reality of this story and that Jesus’ power is real.

2. **Jesus’ power is unmatched!**If you’re a sailor or a fisherman on the Sea of Galilee, you’re very used to storms all the time. For these experienced fishermen to believe they’re about to die meant this must’ve been one heck of a storm. This was a very big storm.

Jesus’ authority & power here is remarkable. **“Quiet! Be still!**” better yet, “Shut up and stay shut up.” Do you see the power in this? There’s no conjuring. There’s no rolling up of the sleeves. No huffing and puffing. No - “Behold, the might of the Lord,”. He gets up, and he says, “Shut up!”. Do you see the attitude here? This is nothing for him.

He rebukes the wind. He rebukes the waves. The wind died down, and it was completely calm. Do you know what it means? He spoke to 2 things, and 2 things happened.
Not only did the wind stop, but this phrase here, ***completely calm***, it became smooth as glass.

To get up and say to the wind, “Stop,” and suddenly the storm clears, that can be almost a coincidence, but when you think about it, when the wind stops, the sea keeps on rolling. When the storm clears, you still have incredible waves and swell.

It went like glass, dead calm, instantly. Jesus is not just a match. Nothing is a match for Jesus. Therefore, your problems are no match for Jesus. Jesus is no match for the unruly forces in this world. There is no wrestling match. Jesus is Lord of the storm.

**What’s the lesson?**

Is the lesson *“if you finally get Jesus up, eventually he’ll make your problems go away?”* NO! Something deeper......

Being in a storm, doesn’t mean that Jesus doesn’t care, even if he is silent. Jesus’ caring power is compatible with you sinking. When they come to Jesus, they don’t just say, “***Master, do something***,” they say, “***Teacher, don’t you care if we drown***?”

Here’s what they’re saying, *“Lord, we thought if you were with us, these things wouldn’t happen. We thought if you were in the boat, we wouldn’t sink. We thought now that we’re followers of yours we might have little problems, but not big problems, not storms.*

What they’re saying is not just, ***“Do something.”*** They’re saying, *“This storm is incompatible in our thinking with the caring power of Jesus Christ. If you care, you wouldn’t let this happen, and if you let this happen, you don’t care.”*

Clearly isn’t true – we don’t follow Jesus so that he wraps us up in cotton-wool. No, being a
Christian takes courage – but the difference is, that Jesus is in the boat with us. His presence transforms the experience of suffering, and danger. See that in Stephen – when he was stoned to death in Acts 7 - *“Lord, do not hold this against them”.*

Jesus is asleep because he trusts the Father – he is the picture of the trusting son and the peace we can have when we trust him likewise – even in the midst of storm.

How?

**1. Feed your faith**

Notice the little word *still*. He says, “Do you still not believe?”. That word *still* means they
should be focusing on things they know about him. In Luke Jesus says, “Where is your faith?”

Faith isn’t automatic. Jesus is saying “You have what you need to face this. You’re not using it. Where is your faith? Get it out. It ought to be here. You’ve seen what I’ve done. You know what I’ve done.”

Actually, you and I know far more than they do because we know he bowed his head into the storm of the cross for us, and if he didn’t abandon us in that storm, if he took that for us, he’s not going to abandon you in this storm.

**2. Look at your foundations**

When you get into storms, notice what Jesus says here. He says, “The reason you were terrified was because your faith wasn’t in the right place.”

In Matthew 7, Jesus tells a story of a man who built his house on the rock and on the sand. Two men, two houses. The storm came. That means the problems of life. The wind came. The rains came. The house on the wrong foundation just collapsed, and the house on the right foundation stayed up.

E.g. What does that mean? It means if you love your career, then when a storm comes at work, it’ll hurt, but if you’ve built your life on your career, if it’s your spiritual foundation, if it’s the thing you live for, then a storm at work will destroy you.

It was all well summarized by John Newton so long ago in that hymn based on this incident when he said ...
His love in time past
forbids me to think

he’ll leave me at last
in trouble to sink ...
... by prayer let me wrestle, and he will perform;
with Christ in the vessel,
I smile at the storm.

Let’s pray.

Peter Harwood 15th June 2021