

Power

Mark 4:35-41 _____

November 26, 2017

DAY 1: Power over nature

1. The story we'll look at this week is filled with gripping drama, great contrasts, never-saw-this-coming surprises, and some stunning lessons about life.

Mark 4:35 That day when evening came, he said to his disciples, "Let us go over to the other side." ³⁶ Leaving the crowd behind, they took him along, just as he was, in the boat. There were also other boats with him.

³⁷ A furious squall came up, and the waves broke over the boat, so that it was nearly swamped.

³⁸ Jesus was in the stern, sleeping on a cushion. The disciples woke him and said to him, "Teacher, don't you care if we drown?"

³⁹ He got up, rebuked the wind and said to the waves, "Quiet! Be still!" Then the wind died down and it was completely calm.

⁴⁰ He said to his disciples, "Why are you so afraid? Do you still have no faith?"

⁴¹ They were terrified and asked each other, "Who is this? Even the wind and the waves obey him!"

2. Look back at this story and underline all the words that indicate the kind of storm the disciples encountered on the Sea of Galilee.

3. What strikes you most about the ferocity of the storm?

4. As the storm rages, Jesus is asleep in the back of the boat. What reasons can you think of as to why He was asleep while the others were in full panic mode?

5. The disciples ask Jesus a question. What is it? (v. 38)

6. Have you ever asked God this same question? What were the circumstances?

7. How did Jesus address the terrible storm?

8. What was the emotional state of the disciples during the raging of the storm? (v. 40)

9. What was the emotional state of the disciple after Jesus stilled the storm? (v. 41) Why?

10. What does this storm expose about the disciples' faith? (v. 40)

DAY 2: “Jesus, don’t you care ...?”

1. The boat ride across the Sea of Galilee, from where they were was about a five-mile trip.
2. After a long day of ministry, they probably left at dusk.

Mark 4:36 Leaving the crowd behind, they took him along, just as he was, in the boat. There were also other boats with him.

Mark 4:37 A furious squall came up, and the waves broke over the boat, so that it was nearly swamped.

3. Each word that Mark uses adds to the intensity and extreme danger to which the men suddenly found themselves.
 - a. It was a “squall,” meaning a sudden storm with fierce winds.
 - b. Mark describes the squall as “furious.”
 - c. The waves become so tempestuous that their lives are threatened. The waves break over the boat!
 - d. The disciples cannot bail fast enough. The situation comes to a crisis as the boat is nearly swamped.

Mark 4:38 Jesus was in the stern, sleeping on a cushion. The disciples woke him and said to him, "Teacher, don't you care if we drown?"

4. When we are in a life crisis, or so it seems, it sometimes appears that God “is a million miles away.”
5. If we are in a crisis, one of two things “must” happen. Either God is powerful and will change our circumstances, or because God is good, He will not permit critical circumstances to occur, or if they occur to linger.
6. What do you think prompted the disciples’ question? Did they question the power of God or the goodness of God or both?
7. When you go through extreme trials, how are you tempted to respond? Do you tend to doubt the goodness of God? The power of God? Both?
8. Why would God allow the disciples to go through such a life-and-death harrowing storm?
9. Why would God allow you to go through a life-and-death storm?

DAY 3: Jesus speaks to the storm

1. In contrast to the panic and desperate measures of the disciples, Jesus is asleep! He's curled up on a cushion in the back of the boat.

Mark 4:39 He got up, rebuked the wind and said to the waves, "Quiet! Be still!" Then the wind died down and it was completely calm.

2. Jesus address the wind first, then the waves.

a. How does Jesus address the wind?

b. What does He say to the waves?

3. What was the response of the wind?

4. What was the response of the waves?

5. Have you ever been in gale-force winds? Can you imagine the power it would take for the wind to die?

6. There are no theatrics, no histrionics, no showboating, no magic show, no abracadabra. Simple words produce astounding power!

7. What the disciples realize is that Jesus does not just "have" power, but He is power!

8. What strikes you about Jesus from this part of the story?

DAY 4: "Why were you so afraid?"

Mark 4:40 He said to his disciples, "Why are you so afraid? Do you still have no faith?"

1. At first glance, Jesus' first question seems ridiculous. If you had been in the boat, how would you have likely answered His first question?

2. But when the second question is added to the first question, you realize that the first question is meant as a rhetorical question! The rhetorical right answer is something like, "In spite of the treacherous storms, there should have been an anchor in the soul. However, there wasn't."

3. Now(!) the second question fills in the missing part of the equation. The issue is not whether there are storms in our life. Jesus assumes that storms will be a part of life. The issue will be this: is there something deeper in life that can anchor us when we go through life-and-death storms?

4. In dealing with fear, there will be days when we do feel fear. Being anchored in Jesus does not necessarily mean that we will not have the emotion of fear. Being anchored in Jesus means we don't have to be ruled by fear!

5. How have you seen yourself being ruled by fear?

6. How does the goal of not being ruled by fear help you, as opposed to believing that faith (falsely) means that you won't have the experience/emotion of fear?

7. What struck you from today's devotional?

DAY 5: "They were terrified."

1. The story continues to get more intriguing!
2. As amazed the disciples were that they survived the near death experience, there was something that was even more astounding than their survival.

Mark 4:41 They were terrified and asked each other, "Who is this? Even the wind and the waves obey him!"

3. The next great and unexpected contrast is the emotional roller coaster of the disciples. When the storm was raging they were "afraid." Well, I guess so, especially the ones who couldn't swim! But after He stills the wind and the waves, notice their emotional state: terrified!

4. Why do you think the disciples were terrified?

5. All semblance of living in a world that is under my control is shot. But worse, any semblance that because I walk with God "surely" He would never let me go through terrible storms is shot as well!

5. Yet, as strong and powerful as the storm was, the power of Jesus to still storm is even more stunning.

6. What strikes you from today's devotional?