

## Mark 4:35-41

There are many things which are **wrong** in our world today - and I guess we shouldn't be too surprised at that. Ever since the days of Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden, **sin** has reared its ugly head, and has caused God's entire creation to **groan** and **suffer** under its influence. Volcanic eruptions, droughts, earthquakes, floods, hurricanes, and tornadoes are just a few of the many manifestations of the effects of **sin** upon our world. The world is **full** of wrongs - but fortunately, **many** of them can be **corrected** - at least **temporarily**. For example, there are **moms** who put Band-Aids on scrapes, and dry the tears of their children. There are **repairmen** who fix our broken washing machines, air conditioners, and computers. There are **doctors** and **surgeons** who remove, replace, or repair the diseased parts of our bodies. There are even **pastors** and **counselors** who can sometimes help to mend broken relationships - both inside and outside of the family circle. But when it comes to the **weather**, there really isn't much that anyone can do, except take it as it comes! We all **talk** about the weather; forecasters and meteorologists try to **predict** it; but only **God** can **change** the weather - and that's exactly what He did in our text for today. **Jesus Calmed The Storm.**

Let's take a look at the events which took place on that day. It had been a **long** day for Jesus and His disciples. Jesus had begun the day by telling **parables** on the **seashore**. Such a large crowd gathered that He even had to get into a **boat** in order to allow everyone on shore to **see** Him, and to properly **hear** His message. After a while, Jesus sent the people away, while He and His disciples went to a **house**. There Jesus **continued** to teach by explaining the meaning of the parables to His disciples. Evidently, the word got out that Jesus wasn't taking a **break**, and that He was still teaching at the house, because a **crowd** gathered there as well. That's where our text begins. *"That day when evening came, Jesus said to His disciples, 'Let us go over to the other side.' Leaving the crowd behind, they took Him along, just as He was, in the boat."* Jesus obviously needed a **break**. I know how I feel on a Sunday afternoon after getting up early, and conducting two worship services and a Bible class on Sunday morning. My wife can tell you that I usually end up falling asleep on the sofa with the TV still running. When the kids were little, it didn't even matter if they were running around and making all kinds of noise. I was out for the count - and that was just after a **few hours** of preaching and teaching. **Jesus** had been preaching and teaching **all morning** and **all afternoon**. Believe me, He was **tired** to the point of **exhaustion**.

It's no wonder that we later find Jesus in a **deep sleep** on the boat, in spite of all the **action** which was going on all around Him. Our text continues, "*A **furios squall** came up, and the waves broke over the boat, so that it was nearly **swamped**. Jesus was in the stern, **sleeping** on a cushion.*" The Sea of Galilee is no stranger to severe **storms** which come up at a moment's notice. The sea lies in an area surrounded by mini-mountains. When the **cool** mountain wind currents rush down and collide with the much **warmer** air above the **water**, the effect is a violent and sudden **tempest**. Apparently, the storm in our text was even **worse** than usual. Mark says that the waves broke over the boat and nearly **swamped** it. Matthew calls it an "**earthquake**" of the sea. And the **disciples** who were there - men who had a lot of **experience** with such storms - were **afraid** for their **lives**.

But notice that **Jesus** was **not** afraid. We read, "*The disciples woke Him up and said to Him, 'Teacher, don't You **care** if we **drown**?'*" In the frenzy of the moment, Jesus' own disciples accused **Him** of being **uncaring**! I suppose we shouldn't be too hard on them. After all, the disciples were **tired** too - they had had a **long** day, and they had a **lot** on their minds. About the last thing they wanted to deal with that night, was a **storm**. Besides, isn't their reaction just a part of human nature? When we are confronted with a **crisis** - even one which is **not** life threatening - quite often **fear** and **confusion** take hold of us, causing us to **do** and **say** things which we don't really **mean**. People who are normally very **pleasant** to be around can become **sharp-tongued**, **short-tempered**, and **ill-mannered** with their co-workers, spouse, or children. When that "**sinking** feeling" of helplessness and hopelessness sets in, we **lash out** at anyone who happens to be nearby, whether or not they were the **cause** of the problem in the first place.

Perhaps there have been times in your **own** life when you felt as if Jesus didn't **care** about you - times when you felt as if you were **fighting** the good fight of faith - you were **struggling** against sin and Satan - and you were **striving** to drown your Old Adam with daily contrition and repentance. But while **you** were growing **tired** and **weak**, and were longing to find some **rest** from your struggles, **Jesus** was already **sleeping**! So, you cried out to Him in prayer, "Lord, I'm **drowning** in this sea of **despair**! Lord, this burden of grief is **too heavy** for me to carry. Lord, I don't know how much longer I can **last**." Perhaps you even **lashed out** at Jesus saying, "**Help** me, Lord. Don't You **care** about me?"

But obviously, Jesus **does** care about us. He cared enough to give up His own **life** to save us from eternal ruin. He cares enough to **forgive** our harsh words

and misjudgments against Him, and to **assure** us that - in His own time, and in His own way - He will do what is **best** for us in this life as well. Jesus did the same thing for His frightened disciples. He took their harsh words in **stride**, and set out to **solve** their problem.

Our text continues, “*Jesus got up, **rebuked** the wind and said to the waves, ‘**Quiet! Be still!**’ Then the wind died down, and it was completely **calm**.*” When we see how **quickly** and **easily** Jesus made things right, it seems impossible that we should **ever** be afraid of **anything**. And what a lesson we can learn here from the **wind** and the **waves**. When the Lord **spoke** to them, they **obeyed** - immediately. All too often, we choose **not** to obey. We offer **excuses** instead. Lord, it takes too much **time** to read Your Word daily - Lord, it costs too much **money** to do all the work You have placed before us - Lord, I don’t have the **talents** to be a witness for You. Remember, the wind and the waves offered **no excuses**. They simply **did** what Jesus asked of them.

Now, we would probably guess that after **Jesus had Calmed The Storm**, the disciples would have had a much **stronger** faith. In **time** that would be true. But for **now**, the disciples were still **afraid**. Our text concludes with these words, “*Jesus said to His disciples, ‘Why are you so **afraid**? Do you **still** have no faith?’ They were **terrified** and asked each other, ‘Who is this? Even the wind and waves obey Him!’*” The disciples had just witnessed a miracle of **immense** proportions. Where was their **faith**, at a time when it should have been shining **brightly**? We must remember that at this time, the faith of the disciples was still quite **young**. In reality, they had **no reason** to be afraid of the storm, because **Jesus** was in the boat with them. In fact, even if He had **not** been there, they had no reason to be afraid, for God has **promised** that we are **always** under His watchful eye, and in His protective **care**.

It would take some **time** for the disciples to have that kind of complete trust and assurance. Their faith would **grow**, one step at a time. That’s the way **our** faith grows too. We have already **witnessed** God’s almighty power in our own lives in so many different ways. Yet, we too, are often needlessly **afraid**. Our faith is not always **obvious**. But, as we study God’s Word individually and as a congregation, and as we come together to receive the Lord’s Supper, our faith will grow **stronger**. Then, when the storms of life come **raging down** on us, and even catch us by **surprise**, we will not be **afraid**. Instead, our faith will assure us once again that **Jesus Calms The Storm**. Amen.