

Mark 4:35-41 (New Century Version)

That evening, Jesus said to his followers, "Let's go across the lake." Leaving the crowd behind, they took him in the boat just as he was. There were also other boats with them. A very strong wind came up on the lake. The waves came over the sides and into the boat so that it was already full of water. Jesus was at the back of the boat, sleeping with his head on a cushion. His followers woke him and said, "Teacher, don't you care that we are drowning!"

Jesus stood up and commanded the wind and said to the waves, "Quiet! Be still!" Then the wind stopped, and it became completely calm.

Jesus said to his followers, "Why are you afraid? Do you still have no faith?"

The followers were very afraid and asked each other, "Who is this? Even the wind and the waves obey him!"

**This is the Word of God and It Can Be Trusted
Thanks Be to God!**

Introduction

In this passage of Scripture, Jesus shows his power and sovereignty over creation by calming the storm that worried the disciples. Just as in the days of the disciples, Jesus has the power to calm the storms of our lives as well. He is sovereign and is completely in control of our lives. How is Jesus in control of our lives? He is in control in three ways; God is in control of our lives in that He allows our troubles, God is in control of our lives in that He understands our troubles and God is control of our lives in that He calms our troubles. Before we continue, let us pray that God will open our ears and soften our hearts this morning as we look closely at His Word. Let us pray.

Dear Heavenly Father:

You have taught us that it is important for us to delve into Your Word and to seek You in all that we do. This morning, Father we ask that You pour out Your Holy Spirit on this place and anoint our hearts and our ears that we may experience all that You have for us; helping us to learn more about Your Will for our lives through Your teaching and through the message You have provided for us today. As we continue in this service, may our actions be an encouragement to one another and a blessing unto You. We ask all of this in Jesus wonderful and Holy Name; giving You the praise honor and glory that You deserve. Amen.

1. God is in control of our lives in that he allows our troubles (v.35-36)

Look at verse 35. "That day when evening came, he 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. There were also other boats with him."

The disciples had just spent the afternoon listening to Jesus teach about the kingdom of God. The disciples were witnesses to four parables prior to encountering the storm on the lake. Jesus taught about how the kingdom of God was like a farmer planting seed in a field. He taught that there were four different kinds of seed. Some people are like the seed sown along a path where birds eat it up. Some people are like seed sown on rocky places where there is not much soil and had no root and withered as soon as they sprouted. Some people are like the seed which fell among thorns meaning that when they grew they were strangled by the deceitfulness of the world. And some people are like the seed sown on good soil which grew and produced a crop, multiplying thirty, sixty, even a hundred times. Unfortunately, the

disciples did not understand this parable and Jesus had to explain it to them.

Jesus also taught that day about a lamp on a stand. He taught that you place a lamp on a stand so that its light can be seen; not under a bowl or a bed. After all, Jesus said, whatever is hidden is meant to be disclosed and whatever is concealed is meant to be brought out into the open. He then urged the disciples to consider carefully what they heard and that whoever has will be given more and whoever does not have, even what he has will be taken from him. He then taught that the kingdom of God is like growing seed that is ready to harvest. The general lesson in the parable, as we saw last week, is that in the Kingdom of God, as in the kingdom of nature, we are laborers together with God. We work that we may spread the seed and absorb His Word for the betterment of those around us and for the enrichment of our own relationship with God. The results of our work depend on God, and for the perfection of these results we must continue to trust that it will all manifest in God's time.

Finally he taught how the kingdom of God is like a mustard seed which is the smallest seed in the region but when it grows it becomes the largest plant. He was concerned that the disciples did not understand the parables because the parables were meant for those who had ears to hear. That is, whenever someone had a ready heart for the teaching of Christ, the insights and understandings flowed freely. When there was no readiness for His lessons, any and all trace of receptivity soon appeared to fade away. "That's why I tell stories," Jesus said, ". . . to create readiness, to nudge the people toward receptive insight. In their present state they can stare till doomsday and not see it, listen till they're blue in the face and not get it . . ."

Understandably the disciples' heads were spinning. Here was hard teaching being given in parables, not to mention a lot of information. The disciples did not understand all of the parables Jesus had taught that day. Is there ever anything that you don't understand in the Bible? Are there things that you do not understand about the Christian life? I hope you all say 'yes' to

that question. There are things we will never understand in this life.

Jesus knew the disciples were confused and so he decided to take them across the lake to teach them another lesson. Sometimes, like the disciples, we may have all the head knowledge in the world about who Jesus is and what the kingdom of God is, but if we don't have faith, all the knowledge in the world is worth about as much as the paper it is written on. Jesus also knew that on that lake where the disciples were getting ready to go, there would be a fierce storm. He needed to take the disciples across the lake and into that storm for a reason.

What reason? Why would Jesus take the disciples through such a storm? Sometimes the Lord needs to take us through troubles in our life because we may not be ready for future situations that he has for us. Little did the disciples know that after they crossed the lake, there would be a demon-possessed man waiting for them. His name was "Legion" because he had so many demons inside of him. No amount of chains could hold him

down and no amount of men could keep him subdued. He was terrorizing the entire region.

But the main reason that God allows our troubles is to increase our faith. Jesus is in control of our lives in that he allows us to go through troubles because He loves us and knows that our faith falters all the time.

2. God is in control of our lives in that he understands our troubles (v.37-38)

Look at verse 37. "And there arose a fierce gale of wind, and the waves were breaking over the boat so much that the boat was already filling up." Picture the scene if you will for a moment. Jesus has just finished teaching the disciples all about the Kingdom of God. Now he has told the disciples that he would like to get on a boat and cross the lake. He did not tell the disciples why. They did not ask, "Why?" They simply obeyed. Had they known what Jesus knew, they probably would not have followed

Him. Jesus, being fully God and fully man knew full well that there was going to be a fierce storm later that evening. The Greek word for this phrase, "fierce gale" is very interesting. This phrase is not describing a single gust of wind, nor a steady blowing wind. When Mark uses this word, he is describing a storm breaking forth from black thunderclouds in furious gusts, with floods of rain, and throwing everything topsy-turvy and out of control. Imagine this if you can: you are in a boat, in the middle of a lake and you look out and you see this storm forming. You realize it's going to be bad. You can feel your heart starting to beat a little faster. Then it starts to rain, and the wind picks up and it rains harder. The boat is then flooding. Pretty soon you can hardly stand up. You are battenning down the hatches. It is thundering and lightening constantly and waves of water are partnering with the rain and the boat is filling with water. Where is the captain of this ship? Where's Jesus? Where is He? Where is Jesus in my trouble? Does he care? Is he there? "Where's Jesus?" one disciple asks. The other one says, "I don't know I can't find him!" Furiously, amidst all of the chaos of their present trouble

they finally find Jesus Look at verse 38. "Jesus Himself was in the stern, asleep on the cushion." Jesus was there on the ship the whole time and he was sleeping. Sleeping? How can Jesus be still when we're going through so much trouble? I remember last week hearing about another man who slept. Recall, that Jesus said, "God's kingdom is like seed thrown on a field by a man who then goes to bed and forgets about it . . ." Jesus had just taught the disciples earlier that day that things happen in God's time, and here they find themselves in total chaos and fail to trust that God is in control.

Look at the next part of the verse: "and they woke Him and said to Him, "Teacher, do You not care that we are perishing?" Do you not care, Jesus? God, are you out there? My life is in a tailspin, God. I lost my job, God, where are you? My husband left me, God, where are you? My child was killed by a drunk driver! Where are you God?" God is in the stern, asleep on a cushion. How can he do that? God, do you not care that I am perishing? Do you not care about me, God? Do you not?

Simply answered, YES, GOD CARES! God is in control and he understands our troubles. He can relate. Like the disciples, Jesus is there with us when we go through troubles. During the midst of the storm, Jesus is there...in the stern, not stressing out, but in quiet control.

My nephew Adam served in the War in Iraq. The first time he was up for his tour of duty, my sister, Adam's mother, prayed that God would make a way for him not to go. She knew in her heart that he wasn't coming back, if he left on this tour. As it turns out, Adam didn't go. Several weeks later, he was again called up for duty. My sister felt a peace about this tour. Adam left for the war, served his time and returned home safely.

Not long after he returned home, safe and sound from the perils of war, a freak one car accident took his life. He had served his country, he had fulfilled his duty to America and then, safe and sound on American soil, he loses his life in a late night accident. My sister, devastated by the loss of her child, continued to have faith in God, even though she was facing one of the worse storms anyone could ever want to experience; to

bury their own child. What is God's reaction to our storms? Well, know that God understands our troubles. How can he possibly do that? In the case of my sister and all parents who have lost a child or any of us who have lost a loved one, God understands. He lost Lucifer from his appointed juxtaposition to the Judgment Seat when the now fallen angel decided that he knew better than God. He lost Adam when he allowed himself to eat of the tree of knowledge, again deciding that he knew better.

Lastly, Philippians chapter 2 reminds us that God came to earth in a human form but was 100% God. Jesus made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant. Being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient even to death! Christ suffered in the ultimate way! He was crucified on a sinner's cross to die the death that was meant for us! God understands. He is in control and He understands our troubles because He has been in our shoes. When we say that God understands, believe me, He understands.

3. God is in control of our lives in that he calms our troubles (v.39-41)

Not only does God allow our troubles and understand our troubles, God, in His infinite wisdom and mercy calms our troubles. Look at verse 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." Now what I want to point out to you here is that when the disciples realized that they were perishing and that they could not save themselves, they cried out to the Lord. "Lord, save us, we are perishing!" What did Jesus do? He saved the disciples. He arose from his slumber and spoke into the wind - "Quiet! Be still." What did the storm do? It stopped. God is in control of the weather. If God can control the weather, He can take control of our lives if we ask him to.

The Bible is filled with natural illustrations of people crying out to God. Listen to David in Psalm 34: "I sought the Lord, and he answered me; he delivered me from all my fears. Those who look to him are radiant; their faces are never covered with shame. This poor man called, and the Lord heard him; he saved him out of all his troubles. The angel of the Lord encamps around those who fear him, and he delivers them."

Look at verse 40. This is the most important verse of this section. He said to his disciples, "Why are you so afraid? Do you still have no faith?" The disciples were obviously afraid of the weather. Jesus states that their fear is something else. Their fear is a lack of faith in Jesus. It is lack of faith that Jesus is God. It is a lack of faith that God can take care of them. Do you ever doubt God's care? I know I do. The fact that we doubt God's care for us is why he sends us through troubles.

Romans 5 states, "And we rejoice in the hope of the glory of God. Not only so, but we also rejoice in our sufferings." Rejoice in our sufferings? Why would we do that? The next part of Romans tells us: "Because we know that suffering produces perseverance; perseverance produces character; and character produces hope." When we go through troubles, we develop perseverance that enables us to undergo future troubles. Through the perseverance that we build, our character is molded into the image of Christ, which is His goal for us. When our character is molded into the image of Christ; our hope, our meaning and our bedrock faith

increases. That is the reason for our trials: so that ultimately God will get the glory.

Look at the last verse, verse 41. "They were terrified and asked each other, "Who is this? Even the wind and the waves obey him!" Who is this? Who has the power to calm the storms? Even the wind and the waves obey Him! Who is it? It's Jesus! Jesus Christ who is the Son of God and God Himself who is in control over all creation.

God is in control of our lives in that he allows our troubles, he understands our troubles, and he calms our troubles.

Conclusion

I'm sure everyone in this room is experiencing a trouble or a trial of some kind. I ask you this morning to lay that burden at the feet of Christ. Call out his name and He will hear you. Why will he hear you? He'll hear you because by crying out to Him you are showing to Him that you have faith in Him as Lord. The disciples made many mistakes and were confused often through Jesus' ministry. They lacked faith a lot. And these guys actually

walked beside Jesus. Therefore, don't feel bad if your faith falters. All of our faith falters at some time. Just call on God to forgive your unbelief and to rescue you from your longsuffering and He will do that. He promises us this in this book.

Maybe this morning, you have realized that you need to give Christ total control of your life. You've been trying to do things your own way for too long and your troubles have just increased. God wants you to place your burden at his feet. During the sermon hymn, if you'd like to do that this morning, feel free to come to the alter and give those troubles to Jesus.

Maybe, this morning, you have realized that you have been living your life without Jesus. Take some time today to ask Jesus to forgive you of your unbelief and your sin and He will take that burden away from you just as easy as you ask him to. He sent his Son for you so that you can have eternal life. He loves you. The time is now; ask Him into your life. Amen!