

Jesus Calms the Storm

Mark 4:35-41

June 9, 2024 Pastor Jeremy Cagle

All right, well if you would, please take your copy of the Word of God and make your way over to the Gospel of Mark. That's where we're at today. Please turn in your scriptures to the Gospel of Mark.

And as you're doing that, I want to ask you a question to begin our sermon for this morning. And that is, what is the scariest thing you've ever experienced? You ever thought about that before? I'm sure you have. But what is the worst catastrophe you've ever been through in your entire life? For me, it was probably the time I was stuck in a tornado in Tennessee. If you've ever seen one of those before, you'll know they are there are something to behold. The sky went dark in the middle of the day, the temperature dropped about 20 degrees Celsius, the wind started blowing so hard, it began to move things around in our yard, like our lawnmower. That's personal in Tennessee, when your lawnmower gets messed with, and your patio furniture. And eventually the fence post started to shake, which caused us to go down the basement until it was finally over. But can you relate to that? If you can, let me ask you another question. How did you respond? Luke, you're smiling. You're from Ohio; you've been through a tornado before, haven't you? Yeah. What'd do you do? Well, in my case, the answer is pretty simple. I had to put my hand over my mouth and just marvel at the awesome power of God.

And I'd tell you that because it leads to our passage for today. In Mark 4, Mark is going to continue his narrative of the life of Christ by giving us the next miracle Jesus does, which is the calming of the storm. And how do the disciples respond to that? They just put their hands over their mouth. What do they do when it was over? They just marveled at the power of God. To the point that if you look in your Bibles, they say down in verse 41, "Who then is this?" Not what is this? But who is this? They're trying to figure out what kind of man would do such a thing. Jesus stopped the storm like that. Verse 39, says He got up, He rebuked the wind, and said to the sea, "Hush, be still." And it obeyed because He's God. The reason it did that is because Christ is not a weak-willed saviour. He's the Lord of heaven and earth. This miracle taught the disciples a lesson on that day and that is that Jesus is bigger than the storm, amen? He's greater than the wind and the waves of this life. They're all just nothing compared to Him. When the story begins, they're afraid of the sea. When it's over, they're afraid of Him.

It's important to remember because we're all guilty of fearing the storms of life too much, right? We all have a tendency to let them get us down. If you don't believe me, just look at the upcoming presidential election in the U.S. and tell me what does it do for you, it gets you down. Even if you're in Canada, it's gotta bother you a little bit. Those are your candidates. They're going to ruin it for everybody, but the truth is that they're not eternally going to ruin it because of Christ. He's bigger than that. We don't put our hope in those things. We put it in Him. That's what this text is about.

In this passage, Jesus is going to overcome the greatest power known to man and that's the force of nature itself to tell you there's nothing He can handle. The storm, He can handle it. Waves, He can handle it, wind, He can handle it, a crazy presidential election with two candidates who are making everybody nervous, He can handle that because He's the king of the universe. The Bible says all things have been created through Him and for Him. I don't know about you, but I don't know where I would be as a Christian if I did not believe that. There is too much to worry about in this world. You get up in the morning and you worry. You go to bed at night, and you worry. All throughout the day: worry, worry, worry, worry. This story reminds you, you don't have to be that way as a believer. God is in control Christ is in control.

That's what we're going to talk about this morning by looking at some stages in this story of Jesus calming the storm. I just curious how many of you would say this is your favorite story in the Bible? Anybody? Kids in the room? Do you guys love this story? It's a great story. Nobody raised your hand. That's okay. After the sermon this will be your favorite story. Okay, thanks Cameron. Let's look at some stages to the story of Christ calming the storm.

The first one is it begins with Jesus putting the disciples in a storm. That's interesting. It starts with Christ, putting them in a storm, not taking them out of one. That's how it all kicks off. And as we get into this, let me let me give you the backdrop of this event here. Verse 35 says this, "On that day, when evening came, Jesus said to the disciples, 'Let us go to the other side.'" And as you read that you got to be a careful student or the Word of God, and ask yourself the question, the other side of what? What are you talking about, Jesus? And the answer is found way back in verse one, when it tells us that He began to teach by the sea. That's what He's referring to in verse 35. Jesus is telling the disciples, He wants them to go to the other side of the Sea of Galilee. The Lord had already gone out in a boat into that body of water to teach them some parables. We talked about that last time. He gives them the Parable of the Sower in verses one through 20. Then the Parable of the Lamp, the Measure, the Seed and Mustard Seed in verses 21 through 34. And now that He's done all that verse 35, says on that day, after He's done all this ministry and just taught and taught and taught, He wants to leave and go someplace else.

And I want to stop and say a few words about this because in order to understand what's about to happen here, you've got to understand the Sea of Galilee. And we've talked about it quite a bit in this series probably from a historical point of view. I haven't said a whole lot about the topography and geography of it. Now's a good time to do that. But the Bible often calls it a sea. But there were other names that went by, it's more like a lake really. For example, it's called the Sea of Galilee because it's located in the province of Galilee. So that title fit very well. It was called the Sea of Tiberius as a way to honor the Roman emperor Tiberius. It was also called Lake Kinneret, which is a Hebrew term, that means harp, because that's how the water is laid out. It's like a harp kind of shape that's very wide at the top, it gets narrower as you go down. And it was a pretty safe body of water most days because it wasn't too deep, about 200 feet deep. But the problem was the sea, the lake was one of the lowest freshwater lakes on Earth and it was surrounded on several sides by mountains, which made it sit in a bowl. So as the sun

heated up the lake and the hot air rose, it would hit the cooler air coming down from the mountains nearby, causing an instant storm to appear out of nowhere, especially at night. If you've ever read the gospels before, you might get the impression that the disciples were just really bad sailors, right? Because they kept getting caught in a storm. But that doesn't mean that they were bad sailors. Everybody got caught in a storm at one point on the Sea of Galilee.

That's what you're finding here because verse 36 goes on to tell you that leaving the crowd, by the way, verse 35 says when the evening came, so they can't quite see the sky per se; it's dark outside, they can see some of it. But verse 36, goes on to say, "Leaving the crowd, the disciples took Jesus with them in the boat, just as He was, and other boats were with Him. And there was a fierce gale of wind. And the waves were breaking over the boat, so much so that it was already filling up with water."

This phrase, "fierce gale of wind," it's very helpful. In Greek it literally means a mega storm. Some scholars call it a storm of epic proportions, not a normal storm, not just a mere tempest. It's kind of like an earthquake on the water. Todd Bolin, who once served as a professor at the Master's University's extension campus in Israel said this sort of thing was not unusual because even today, the peaceful calm on the Sea of Galilee can quickly be transformed into a boiling cauldron. As recently as 1992, a storm was recorded with waves get this, up to 10 feet high. It's incredible, isn't it? Can you imagine a storm with 10 foot high waves on Cultus Lake? What would it do? It would ruin the putt-putt golf course wouldn't it? I mean it would be catastrophic.

And it's made worse when you consider what the disciples were in. Verse 36 says they were in a boat. Probably a fisherman's boat; that's what several of them did for a living. They caught fish in a vessel that would have been a little larger than two pickup trucks worth in size made out of wood. In fact, verse 36 does not just call it a boat, it calls it the boat. See that word there? It means it's probably the same boat Jesus was in when He gave the parables. The idea as soon as He was finished with that, they jumped right in, took off. At the command of Christ, by the way, and you need to see that; it's important. It means the Lord led them right into that disaster because sometimes Jesus does that to people. Sometimes He takes you through storms of epic proportions. Well, this would have been a shock to the disciples, I think, because so far things have been going pretty well in the Gospel of Mark for them. They've had some hiccups and setbacks and whatnot, but it's been pretty good. Jesus has been doing miracles. He's been speaking to the crowds and healing and preaching and teaching and shepherding. But now, they're going through the jaws of death.

Makes you wonder why? Why, why would He do this? The reason was, because He wanted to show the disciples, "You can't expect everything to be well and good if you're going to be my disciple. There are going to be times when things are like this." I mean, it's easy to trust Jesus when things are going well, isn't it? And it's way simpler to put your faith in Him when the waters of life are smooth. But it's hard when it's like this.

One mentor of mine put it this way, he said, “We don't need any more power puff Christians who are here today gone tomorrow, because they leave at the first sign of trouble. We need men and women with grit in their grace.”

Here, the Lord is teaching the 12 disciples how to get some grit. This isn't the last time they're going to suffer for Christ. It's going to happen again. Eventually, all these men but a few would be martyred. They'd be shunned by their community, disowned by friends, thrown out of the synagogue. And in a sense, this experience was going to be used as a training ground for that. It taught them when that happens, you can trust in Christ because He's Lord over the storm. They wouldn't know if He's Lord of the storm, if He didn't put them in the storm. But He put him in that to prove it to them.

By the way, some people have a hard time getting their mind around this because they think if you trust in Christ, He'll never put you in a storm. And if you believe in Him, He'll make you healthy, wealthy and wise and give you your best life now, but tell me something, where did they get their best life now in this story? The disciples are not getting a prosperity gospel; they're getting soaking wet. In order to teach you that this is what following Christ is life. It's painful at times.

Brings you to a second stage and the story of Jesus calming the storm and that is that it continues with Jesus falling asleep. First one, it begins with Christ putting the disciples in a storm. Secondly, it continues with Him falling asleep. If you've ever read this passage before, you'll know that here the Lord does the most peculiar thing when it says in verse 37, it says, “There arose a fierce gale of wind, waves were breaking over the boat so much that it was filling with water. And Jesus Himself was in the stern, asleep on a cushion.” Now I know what some of you might be wondering as you read that, “Did you say that correctly, Pastor Jeremy, Jesus is asleep?” Yes. “In a storm?” Yes. “With the boat taking on water?” Yes. “The disciples freaking out?” Yes. “Well, what does it say in Greek?” It says He's asleep. Had to go to seminary to learn that. Thank you very much. “What about the King James Version?” It says He's sleeping, ESV, sleeping, RSV, sleeping, on and on and on, it all says the same thing.

So the next thing you got to figure out is, well, how could He do that? Well, here's how. He's tired. That's why He did that. This is a picture of the Lord being worn out from ministry. Jesus Christ is fully God, fully man, which means He had a body like ours with the limitations of that yet without sin. And there were times when the task that the Father had called Him to do just drained Him of his energy. And this was a strange time to go to sleep, let's be honest, but it showed you how busy He was at this point in time because the moment His head hit the pillow, He just fell asleep.

In fact, verse 38 says He was in the stern, or the back of the ship, where He fell asleep on a cushion. And that doesn't refer to a pillow cushion that was used to sleep on, they wouldn't have that in a fishing boat. It's a leather cushion that was used for the steersman to sit on, as He got into the boat across the water, because the Lord commandeered it for that purpose.

It also caught the disciples off guard. They weren't expecting that. I mean, it's one thing to lead them into a storm. It's another thing to rest while it's happening. So it says here that they woke Him up and said to Him, "Teacher, don't you care?"

Now, if that sounds emotional to you, it should because it is. There is a hint of accusation. It's almost like they're saying, "Teacher, you don't care. It doesn't mean anything to You at all that we're suffering." Which is wrong, because it did mean something to Christ, they should have known that. But before we're too hard on them, let's be honest. How many of you have done this before? You're suffering and you say, "God, don't you care?" You're going through a trial, and you ask Him, "Doesn't it mean anything to You at all that we're perishing?" Some of you know, we had Tim Challies come a couple of weeks ago to talk about the subject of suffering. And when he did, he said, anytime someone suffers, one of the most common responses people have is to blame God and point fingers at Him and say, "It's Your fault I'm in this mess. You don't love me," which is not true. There's all kinds of reasons people suffer. But it never happens because God doesn't love us as Christians, has nothing to do with it. But we talk that way because it's easy to lose sight of that in a trial. That's what the disciples are doing here. They're in a trial, the waves are crashing over them, the rain is falling down, water is getting into the boat, and what's Jesus doing? Nothing to help them, physically. And they're starting to resent him for it. That's the tone of the question here.

The principle though is that you can't do that. You have to trust Him even when Jesus seems distant. I mention this because we've had people in our church who had been through trials lately, hardships. And some have told me there are times when God seems distant, and they're tempted to point fingers and ask why. "Why are You doing this? Why don't You love me? Why don't You make the pain go away?" And I don't have the answers to that. Nobody does. But I know that Hebrews 13:5 says, "God will never leave you nor forsake you." Which means whatever you're going through, you're not alone. And the thought of that should fill you with hope instead of making you blame Him.

Some of you have read the poem "Footprints" before. And if you've not read it, it's about a man who has a dream where the Lord shows him several scenes in his life. And they're represented as footprints in the sand. Because all throughout his life, there's two sets of prints. There's his, and there's God's, except for a few times when there was just one set of prints. And the man asked God, "Why did you leave me there?" And the Lord said, "Child, I didn't leave you. That's when I carried you." That's what you're about to see here in this passage. Jesus is not leaving the disciples. He's about to carry them through it.

That brings you to the next stage in the story, and that is that Jesus stops the storm. If you thought this was going to be a sad story in the Bible, it's not because the third stage is that He stops the storm. Because He doesn't let it go on forever. Out of His mercy He puts an end to it. Because verse 39 says, "Jesus got up and rebuked the wind."

And if you notice, it doesn't say that Jesus got up and pronounced an incantation over the wind the way ancient sorcerers would do. And it doesn't say He got up and sprinkled magic pixie dust like some Jewish exorcists would do when they were exercising demons. It doesn't even say that He got up and danced around the boat like charismatic preachers. He just got up and rebuked it and said to the sea, "Hush, be still." And that phrase can literally be translated, "Hush, and be muzzled." The wind got a rebuke; the sea got a muzzle put on it like a dog.

As it did, it says that the wind died down and it became perfectly calm. And, and this is where it does help to have some knowledge of Greek because this doesn't come across well in English. But in Greek verse 39 says it became mega calm. Earlier it said there was a mega storm. Now there's a mega calm. Previously, there's a great amount of noise and chaos and confusion. Now there's just silence. The Sea of Galilee was like a sheet of glass, which is where the miracle takes place. Because if you've ever been in a storm before, you'll know it doesn't do that. Storms don't just stop like that. The wind takes time to die down, the waves have to calm; this was different. In order to tell you how much power it would take to do that,

I looked it up this week, and found that scientists track the creation of storms today through things like satellite imagery and radar data and that type of stuff. But the reason they're so unpredictable, is that they can change in the site at any moment. And scientists don't really know why. They have some idea, but some think it has to do with the rotation of the Earth. Others think it has to do with the creation of other storms nearby. Personally, I'm from Tennessee, I'm in favor of the old weather rock that you put outside. And if it's wet, that means it's raining. And if it's dry, that means anyway.

But the point Mark is making is that in one split second, Christ overruled all of that. And He showed He's sovereign over whatever, the rotation of the earth and nearby storms. It's like in this story, like so many others in this gospel, He's just Lord over everything. He's Lord over the boat. He's Lord over the sea. He's Lord over the wind and the waves and the storm itself. Everything obeys Him here.

And it's good that they do because the disciples are at their breaking point. The way the story reads, they couldn't take much more and Jesus knew it. So He got up and said, "That's enough." God always does that for his people. This wasn't the only time that in the Bible where He saw someone suffering and He said, "That's enough." Other examples like Job, remember him? Job suffered in the Bible. He went through all kinds of things. He lost everything. He lost his job, his health, his family. But the time came when the Lord said, "That's enough." What about Joseph? That man suffered. His brothers sold him into slavery, then he went off to Egypt, where he was put in prison for a crime he did not commit. It can't get any worse than that, really. But how does the story end? It ends with the Lord making it stop, because He knew his limits. And He understood Joseph could go so far, and no further. So there was a point when He came along, and just did this. And that's what you're seeing here.

This storm could have gone on longer than this. We don't know how long it lasted, but historians tell us storms on the Sea of Galilee could go on all night, if the conditions were right. Jesus wasn't gonna let that happen. He loved these men. He saw what this was doing to them, so He had to call it off. If you remember earlier, they asked Him, "Don't you care?" This is His response. He cares so much He's gonna move heaven and earth to help them.

Friends, if you're struggling with something today, let me tell you don't have to ask if Jesus cares. He cares enough to move heaven and earth to help you as well. Your storms may last several days, several weeks, months, years. But a time will come when He will say, "That's it." What does the Old Testament say? "Weeping may last for the night, but a shout of joy comes in the morning."

It brings you to another stage to all of this, and that is a Jesus questions the disciples about their lack of faith. A fourth stage in the story is that Jesus questions the disciples about their lack of faith in Him. Because after He stops the storm, He turns to them and has a conversation about this because the disciples were not exhibiting a lot of faith. So He has to address that.

And as you come to the next verse, let me remind you of the setting. There's three characters in the story, so to speak at this point. There's Christ, the disciples, and I would almost call the Sea of Galilee a character in its own right. It's such a major role in this. There's Christ, and the twelve, and there is this lake that's just calmed down after this fierce gale. And so far, Christ has not said much to the disciples. He said to them in verse 35, "Let's go to the other side of the lake and He fell asleep, but now it's time to talk to them again. He asks them two questions.

The first one is found in verse 40 when He says, "Why are you afraid?" Now, when I was studying this week for this sermon, I read that and I almost laughed out loud. Are you serious? He says, "Why are you afraid?" Have you looked outside lately? Give me one good reason why they shouldn't be afraid. Well, Jesus says, kind of in a sense, here's one. They have seen Jesus save people before. That's why they shouldn't be afraid. These men watched Him to deliver all kinds of souls from their distress. For example, in Mark 1, they saw Him save a demon possessed man and a leper. In mark 2 and chapter 3, they watched Him heal a paralytic, and a man with a withered hand. And in the midst of all of that, He's healed hundreds of others, maybe thousands. That's what His ministry was like, at this time. Jesus was constantly doing miracles and now it's like they just forgot all about it. As if He stepped into the boat and changed.

It leads to another question that He asked them here and that's this in verse 40. "Do you still have no faith?" Because He's pointing something out to them. And that is that you can't have faith in Me and act like this. You can't trust in Me and freak out every time you go through a storm. "Perfect love casts out fear."

And as I say that, let me ask you this question, what does it mean to have faith in Christ? We talk about that quite a bit. But what's that referring to? Well, it refers to the act of trusting in Him, that's part of it. But there's more to it than this. When you have faith in Christ, it actually means you're persuaded of something. So that when you use this in reference to Him, what you're saying is, "I'm persuaded of His power. I'm persuaded of His might. I'm persuaded of His grace, and love and goodness and kindness to me, and I know He won't let me down. Other men may let me down; Jesus Christ will not. Other people may fail me in the midst of a trial, in the midst of a storm, not Him. He has proven Himself faithful over and over and over again." That's what Jesus is chiding the disciples for. Says you men should be thinking like that, but you're not because your faith is so weak.

That's something we can relate to as well. And then we can relate to the disciples over and over again in a story. When troubles begin, what do we do? We're so fickle sometimes, aren't we? We don't remember all the good things Christ has done for us. We throw our hands up in the air and have a panic attack. Do you think you're the first Christian ever go through a storm?

In fact, if you want to get philosophical about this, I think most of us have a pretty good theology of suffering as a church. We believe God is sovereign, we've read books on that, but here's what we struggle with. We have a hard time submitting to that and saying to Christ, "Your will be done in a trial. I'm in a storm right now. Your will be done. There's wind and waves around me. Your will be done. The boat is taking on water. Your will be done." Our theology doesn't penetrate our heart as much as it should. It needs to go past the book, into our mind until it settles deep down within our soul.

It's been said you never know what's in a rag until you squeeze it. That's when the real thing comes out. Trials are like that. Storms are that way. Listen, friends, you can read all the books on suffering that you want to, it won't matter until you learn how to suffer in a God honouring way. That's what's being pointed out to the twelve. Jesus is saying, "You men need to apply this. You say you're My disciples. Act like it. You're telling people you believe in Me. Now prove it. Do it when the rains come. Don't be a fair-weather Christian."

And it brings us to a final stage in all of this and I think this really brings it together and really shows you what's taking place here; it ends with a disciples fearing Him. Did you hear what I just said? It ends with the disciples fearing Him. By the time you come to the end of this passage, you would think it ends with the disciples embracing Him. And after all He just did for them, as you arrive at the close of chapter four, you would expect it to tell you, it stops with them being so excited, they throw a party on the boat, and they have cake and ice cream. It tells you they were terrified, terrified.

You look in verse 41 it just comes right out and says this, "The disciples became very much afraid of Jesus." In other words, they're not afraid of the storm because the storm is over at this point in the story. And they're not terrified of the wind and the waves; that's all calmed down now. They're terrified of the One standing before them. They'd seen Jesus do miracles before, but this was different.

And I haven't said too much about the disciples at this point because Mark does not mention them by name here, but he does earlier. The Gospel of Matthew tells us the disciples were in the boat with Him and Mark alludes to that as well in the previous passage. But earlier in chapter 3:16, you get the disciples' names, and we talked about them several months ago, but there in chapter 3:16, it says, "Jesus appointed the twelve. And they were called," let's do a quick review of them, "Simon, to whom He gave the name Peter," who was a brave man at times. I think Peter gets a bad rap. We often think he was cowardly. He wasn't cowardly. He was a little bit unstable, but he was not a coward. He was the only one who would pull out his sword to defend Christ in the Garden of Gethsemane. I mean, have you done that? He was the only one to get out of the boat and walk on water with Him, on this lake, by the way. That's what he was like; Peter was all or nothing when it came to Jesus Christ. Then it says, "He chose James and John the sons of Zebedee. To them He gave the name Boanerges, which means 'Sons of Thunder.'" It's quite a name. When you're in a storm. This was their personality. They were thunderous individuals who were made out of fire. Strong willed man, they did not have a timid bone naturally in their body. It seems like. Then it says there was Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, who was a fisherman according to other passages, which means he had sailed the Sea of Galilee before; he's been through storms. There was Philip and Bartholomew and Matthew there, there was Thomas and James the son of Alphaeus, and Thaddaeus. And last of all, there was Simon the Zealot, and Judas, and I've told you before, this is not Simon the cupcake, or Simon the marshmallow. He is a zealot. It's a political party in Israel that made their ambition to get Rome out through the use of violence, making Simon a bad man. He was a scary person.

And that's how you like to paint a picture of the people that are in the boat with Jesus here; they're not wimps. Oftentimes, I think we get the talking about the disciples here, they get the impression, they're a bunch of cowards who back down the slightest sign of danger. They weren't like that. They were tough man living in tough times.

But in spite of that, go back to verse 41 again, what it says about them in chapter four, "they were afraid." And that word is *phobos* in Greek from which we get the word phobia. It's not a small amount of fear. The English here it says they weren't just afraid; they were very afraid. And they weren't just very, they're very much afraid. It's like Mark couldn't find all the words to describe how petrified they were.

Because they say, "Who then is this?" In the words of Matthew 8:27, "What kind of man is this that even the wind and the waves obey Him?" They're telling themselves here. "What do we do with this guy? He's like something from another planet. He spoke to the wind, it obeyed Him. He talked to the sea; it followed His command." They knew that sea. Imagine Jesus coming into your job site and doing this? This was a body of water they were very familiar with. It's like in their own backyard.

I don't know about you, I feel this way when I read this story. I went through my Bible this week, trying to find a greater miracle than this. There's probably some that are comparable, but other than the resurrection, I don't think it gets too much bigger than this. And it reminds us, there's only one way to get through trials in life and that is to be shattered by the power of Jesus Christ. Not moved by it, you need to be shattered. And not just touched, but it needs to blow you away. That's how the disciples responded to this. It brought them to their knees. They put their hand on their mouth, and they marveled at the awesome power of God and it should have a similar impact on us. You need to look at the storms of your life and say they are nothing compared to the Lord Jesus Christ, amen? When this story was over, they knew which one was bigger. The storms or Jesus. No one had to convince them.

I was wrong when I told you the scariest thing on the planet is a tornado. It's not. It's Him. He's the one who makes everything bow in the passage; the winds bow, the waves bow, at the end of this the disciples bow, if not literally then figuratively they're bowing in their hearts to Him. They're stupefied by this.

By the way, one day every knee will bow. Did you know that? Philippians 2 tells us exactly that. "God highly exalted Him that at the name of Jesus, every knee will bow." That means one day every saved knee will bow, and every unsaved knee will bow. At the final judgment, every Christian knee will bow and every non-Christian, Muslim, Sikh, and Buddhist knee will bow. Every atheist, agnostic, politician, they're all going to fall over at the mention of Christ. That's why you shouldn't spend so much time worrying about things like the upcoming election. Ultimately, this world is not going to bow to Joe Biden and Donald Trump. Amen? That's what makes Him frightening, Jesus Christ, terrifying.

But the truth is that He's more than just terrifying. He's also good and gracious and kind. He's loving and patient and gentle. And He's willing to save anyone who puts their faith in His name. Which means He's willing to save you today.

If you're not a believer this morning, and you're wrestling with "Is He willing to save me?" Well, let's look at the next story briefly in the Gospel of Mark. This is just a foretaste of what's to come when we're back in the book, but in chapter 5:1, it tells us that after this miracle, they will get to the other side of the Sea of Galilee. Remember, that's what they were trying to do? They were going to the other side. They will get there. And Jesus will meet a man named Legion, who is possessed by several demons, not one, several. And what will Jesus do? He will save that man. How will He respond to this wicked, evil, twisted, depraved, lost individual? He will deliver Him from the evil one. In order to show you He can save anyone. No matter how deep your sin or evil goes, His grace is deeper still. If He can save a man like this, He can save you. Christ will take the same power He used to stop the storm and use it to stop the demons on his behalf.

Going back to how we started all this, I don't know if you can tell or not, but this passage really gripped me this week because it's in the middle of tornado season in Tennessee right now. And they've had

several touchdowns near my hometown, and I've watched on the news. And I can't help but think about the time I was stuck in one. And I can say I have never felt so helpless in my life. I could cry all I wanted to, yell all I wanted to, holler. It didn't matter. That storm was going to have its way with me irregardless. But it's not that way here. In this story, Jesus had His way with it. Just like He's gonna have His way with the demons next time. Just like He'll have His way with the whole world because He's greater.

And if you want to learn more about that, please come back in a couple of weeks and join us next week. Kevin Laser will be bringing the Word of God to us. We're looking forward to that. But for now let's close in a word of prayer and thank the Lord for His Majesty in this passage.

Heavenly Father, Lord, we come to You, and we want to bow in our own hearts this morning as we marvel at the awesome power of the Lord Jesus Christ. Father, we can't stop storms. We can't even stop something as simple as the wind. We're helpless. We're small. We're little people and You are a God who stands over at all. We thank You for that Father.

I pray this morning it would bring a peace and an assurance to our souls because we do live in a world that's topsy turvy and nuts at times. We turn on the news, and it's crazy. We go outside our doors and go to work. And the things that people say and do are just outright bizarre. It's like the world is in a turmoil.

And yet, in the midst of all that, there is a Saviour, and it is Christ. May we walk out of here this morning rejoicing in His name. For those who may not know Him today, I pray they would see that Jesus is there for them to repent and believe. And He did come to this Gerasene Demoniac in chapter five and deliver Him. He can deliver anyone, and I pray they would know that.

For the believers here today, as we often do, Lord, I pray that this story would give them such hope and peace and joy that they have a Saviour who is like Him, Christ alone. We pray this in His name. Amen.