

This morning, we are in the sixth week of a sermon series I am calling “Savior and Lord,” looking at what it means to relate to Jesus as both Savior – the one who died for our sins to give us eternal life – and Lord – the one who we follow and emulate. We are working our way through Mark’s gospel in this series. Mark was Peter’s traveling companion, and the Gospel of Mark is mainly Peter’s eyewitness testimony of Jesus (Peter was first known as Simon before Jesus changed his name). It is also the first gospel written, around 60-70 AD. So far, Jesus has begun to call disciples to him and shown himself to be one who teaches and heals with a divine authority, and run into a number of conflicts with the religious leaders that have left them wanting him dead. Some are claiming he’s crazy, others that he has been sent by Satan, but others are realizing that He could be the Messiah, the one sent by God to save His people and bring justice to the world.

In today’s passage, we will be looking at three events in Jesus’ life, which includes four interactions, and we will be looking at the difference Jesus makes in the suffering we face in this life.

**Mark 4:35 – 5:43** - *That day when evening came, he said to his disciples, "Let us go over to the other side." <sup>36</sup> Leaving the crowd behind, they took him along, just as he was, in the boat. There were also other boats with him. <sup>37</sup> A furious squall came up, and the waves broke over the boat, so that it was nearly swamped. <sup>38</sup> 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?" <sup>39</sup> He got up, rebuked the wind and said to the waves, "Quiet! Be still!" Then the wind died down and it was completely calm. <sup>40</sup> He said to his disciples, "Why are you so afraid? Do you still have no faith?" <sup>41</sup> They were terrified and asked each other, "Who is this? Even the wind and the waves obey him!"* <sup>NIV</sup> **Mark 5:1** *They went across the lake to the region of the Gerasenes. <sup>2</sup> When Jesus got out of the boat, a man with an evil spirit came from the tombs to meet him. <sup>3</sup> This man lived in the tombs, and no one could bind him any more, not even with a chain. <sup>4</sup> For he had often been chained hand and foot, but he tore the chains apart and broke the irons on his feet. No one was strong enough to subdue him. <sup>5</sup> Night and day among the tombs and in the hills he would cry out and cut himself with stones. <sup>6</sup> When he saw Jesus from a distance, he ran and fell on his knees in front of him. <sup>7</sup> He shouted at the top of his voice, "What do you want with me, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? Swear to God that you won't torture me!" <sup>8</sup> For Jesus had said to him, "Come out of this man, you evil spirit!" <sup>9</sup> Then Jesus asked him, "What is your name?" "My name is Legion," he replied, "for we are many." <sup>10</sup> And he begged Jesus again and again not to send them out of the area. <sup>11</sup> A large herd of pigs was feeding on the nearby hillside. <sup>12</sup> The demons begged Jesus, "Send us among the pigs; allow us to go into them." <sup>13</sup>*

He gave them permission, and the evil spirits came out and went into the pigs. The herd, about two thousand in number, rushed down the steep bank into the lake and were drowned. <sup>14</sup> Those tending the pigs ran off and reported this in the town and countryside, and the people went out to see what had happened. <sup>15</sup> When they came to Jesus, they saw the man who had been possessed by the legion of demons, sitting there, dressed and in his right mind; and they were afraid. <sup>16</sup> Those who had seen it told the people what had happened to the demon-possessed man-- and told about the pigs as well. <sup>17</sup> Then the people began to plead with Jesus to leave their region. <sup>18</sup> As Jesus was getting into the boat, the man who had been demon-possessed begged to go with him. <sup>19</sup> Jesus did not let him, but said, "Go home to your family and tell them how much the Lord has done for you, and how he has had mercy on you." <sup>20</sup> So the man went away and began to tell in the Decapolis how much Jesus had done for him. And all the people were amazed. <sup>21</sup> When Jesus had again crossed over by boat to the other side of the lake, a large crowd gathered around him while he was by the lake. <sup>22</sup> Then one of the synagogue rulers, named Jairus, came there. Seeing Jesus, he fell at his feet <sup>23</sup> and pleaded earnestly with him, "My little daughter is dying. Please come and put your hands on her so that she will be healed and live." <sup>24</sup> So Jesus went with him. A large crowd followed and pressed around him. <sup>25</sup> And a woman was there who had been subject to bleeding for twelve years. <sup>26</sup> She had suffered a great deal under the care of many doctors and had spent all she had, yet instead of getting better she grew worse. <sup>27</sup> When she heard about Jesus, she came up behind him in the crowd and touched his cloak, <sup>28</sup> because she thought, "If I just touch his clothes, I will be healed." <sup>29</sup> Immediately her bleeding stopped and she felt in her body that she was freed from her suffering. <sup>30</sup> At once Jesus realized that power had gone out from him. He turned around in the crowd and asked, "Who touched my clothes?" <sup>31</sup> "You see the people crowding against you," his disciples answered, "and yet you can ask, 'Who touched me?'" <sup>32</sup> But Jesus kept looking around to see who had done it. <sup>33</sup> Then the woman, knowing what had happened to her, came and fell at his feet and, trembling with fear, told him the whole truth. <sup>34</sup> He said to her, "Daughter, your faith has healed you. Go in peace and be freed from your suffering." <sup>35</sup> While Jesus was still speaking, some men came from the house of Jairus, the synagogue ruler. "Your daughter is dead," they said. "Why bother the teacher any more?" <sup>36</sup> Ignoring what they said, Jesus told the synagogue ruler, "Don't be afraid; just believe." <sup>37</sup> He did not let anyone follow him except Peter, James and John the brother of James. <sup>38</sup> When they came to the home of the synagogue ruler, Jesus saw a commotion, with people crying and wailing loudly. <sup>39</sup> He went in and said to them, "Why all this commotion and wailing? The child is not dead but asleep." <sup>40</sup> But they laughed at him. After he put them all out, he took the child's father and mother and the disciples who were with him, and went in where the child was. <sup>41</sup>

*He took her by the hand and said to her, "Talitha koum!" (which means, "Little girl, I say to you, get up!").<sup>42</sup> Immediately the girl stood up and walked around (she was twelve years old). At this they were completely astonished.<sup>43</sup> He gave strict orders not to let anyone know about this, and told them to give her something to eat.*

**Two things I want to focus on: the unpredictable chaos of life, and the uncontrollable power of Jesus**

There is an unpredictability and wildness to life. And there is also an unpredictability and wildness to Jesus – not that He is out-of-control, but He is out of OUR control. Both do not operate according to our wishes. Both can inspire fear and anxiety. But only one brings true peace and security.

**The unpredictability of life**

Ever watch the news or read the paper and get depressed by the state of the world?

The passage begins with a storm arising out of nowhere. This was common on the Sea of Galilee. But this storm was so powerful that the disciples, many of whom were experienced fishermen, believed they were going to drown unless Jesus intervened. And Jesus, of course, is sleeping, exhausted by a long day of ministry. **One aspect of the unpredictability of life is natural disaster.** You never know when a hurricane, fire, blizzard, tornado, or some other disaster will wreak havoc. Puerto Rico.

In the second passage, there is a man who has been possessed and terrorized by an evil spirit, which turns out to be a legion of demons. The word legion is a Roman concept for their troops, and brings to mind a large body of troops acting in unison. Satan hates God, and wants to destroy and distort the divine likeness of man. Demons are real. This poor man has been terrorized, and through him, the whole community lived in fear. There was a wild man on the loose. **A second aspect of the unpredictability of life is spiritual oppression.** Satan is on the loose, trying to devour us. **1 Peter 5:8-9** - *Be self-controlled and alert. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour.*<sup>9</sup> *Resist him, standing firm in the faith, because you know that your brothers throughout the world are undergoing the same kind of sufferings.*

In the third passage, there is a woman who has been dealing with uncontrolled uterine bleeding for 12 years. She had spent all her money on doctors but had only

gotten worse. This would not only have been a physical issue, but in their community, a spiritual issue as well, since her bleeding would have rendered her unclean and unable to worship in the sanctuary or be a fully functional member of the community. She would have been very much socially and religiously isolated. **A third aspect of the unpredictability of life is physical illness and injury.** You never know when your body will fall apart or stop working the way it should.

And also in that passage, we have a young daughter who is dying. Her father, an elder and leader in the synagogue, comes to Jesus begging for him to come and heal his daughter. And while Jesus is dealing with the bleeding woman, Jairus' daughter dies. **The fourth aspect of the unpredictability of life is death.** As much as we try to keep it at bay, tomorrow is promised to no one.

Life is unpredictable. It is wild. You do not know what tomorrow will hold. **We know there are so many other things we can add to this list:** the stock market. Our jobs. Relationships. So much is out of our control. There is so much that can provoke fear and anxiety.

**In Mark, Jesus comes into each of these situations and displays his power and authority over the chaos, and brings order.** One of the themes we've discussed in previous chapters has been how Jesus teaches and acts with authority. In this passage, that theme continues:

**He shows his authority over nature,** telling the wind and waves to be quiet. He does not need to call on a higher power, because he is the higher power.

**He shows his authority over evil spirits**

**He shows his authority over physical illness**

**He shows his authority over death**

What does this mean? More evidence that this is no ordinary man. As the disciples ask, "Who is this?" This is no ordinary teacher. He displays a divine authority over evil, over sickness, over nature, and even over death itself. There are other things I want to get into in this passage, but I don't want to skip over this. And at the end of the service, I want to return to this by inviting you up for prayer.

Simple, right? But when you look a little deeper at Jesus in this passage, you see something else. **As powerful and loving as He is, there is also a certain unpredictability and wildness to him as well.** Not wild as in out-of-control, but wild as in untameable, unpredictable. It calls to mind this quote from the Narnia books:

*“Aslan is a lion- the Lion, the great Lion.” “Ooh” said Susan. “I’d thought he was a man. Is he-quite safe? I shall feel rather nervous about meeting a lion”...“Safe?” said Mr Beaver ... “Who said anything about safe? ‘Course he isn’t safe. But he’s good. He’s the King, I tell you.”*

I think this is important to highlight because you may walk away from reading passage like these with the mistaken notion that God just heals and makes everything perfect for us. And that is not how he works. Look more closely:

In the first passage, the disciples wake him up. He speaks to the storm, and tells it to shut up and sit down, basically. And after the wind dies down and the water goes completely calm, he rebukes the disciples for their lack of faith. *Why are you so afraid? Do you still have no faith?* **And then we read that the disciples are terrified – as scared as they were by the storm, they are terrified by Jesus and what He has just done.** And they ask each other, Who is this that can command even nature? Jesus has let them reach the point of desperation, and in their desperation they have seen just how powerful this man is.

In the second passage, something very similar happens. Jesus confronts the evil spirits, and they beg him to send them into the herd of pigs. Jesus gives them permission – we are not told why, so I’m not going to speculate – and the demons drive the pigs mad, over the cliff and into the lake. When the people of the town come out to see what happened, they find the formerly demon-possessed man in his right mind, sitting with Jesus, and their pigs bobbing in the water. And it says they were afraid, and they plead with Jesus to leave their region. The man who had been healed asks to go with Jesus, but he tells him to go home and tell his family all that the Lord has done for him. But as for the townspeople, like the disciples in the first story, **Jesus’ display of power has left them even more terrified than they were beforehand.** Why? Because they just watched their economic livelihood run off a cliff, and they are terrified of who this man is.

And in the third passage, the woman, desperate for healing, touches Jesus’ cloak, believing in her superstitious way that if she just touches the cloak, she’ll be healed. And she is healed. Despite her imperfect theology, she is healed by her faith, her belief that Jesus had the power to heal her. Jesus stops in the crowd to ask who touches his clothes. **And the woman, who has tried to get away, comes, trembling with fear, and falls at his feet.** And Jesus tells her “daughter, your faith has healed you. Go in peace and be freed from your suffering.” This is the only time he calls someone daughter a very compassionate word for her. But again,

notice how she is trembling with fear, afraid that in her boldness she has offended the Lord.

And finally, we have Jairus, pleading with Jesus to come heal his daughter. But Jesus takes a detour, healing another woman, and allows his daughter to die. Can you really trust God's timing? Jesus makes it to Jairus' house, where people are crying and wailing because Jairus' daughter has died. But Jesus goes into her room with Peter, James, and John, along with Jairus and his wife. And he says, "Little girl, I say to you, get up!" The girl wakes up, and **everyone is astonished**.

**What is my point?**

Yes, this world is unpredictable and wild. But there is also a wildness to Jesus, even in His power and authority. He can not be controlled. He can not be manipulated.

**He does not operate according to our timetable.** Would you really be content with God healing someone else and letting your loved one die?

**His working in our lives may cost us greatly in this world.** Would you really value the salvation of one person if it meant losing your job and your financial security? He often lets us reach a point of desperation in the storms of our life.

Storms are unpredictable. Life is hard. It is full of unexplainable suffering. And sometimes it will feel like Jesus is asleep in the storm. Sometimes it will feel like he has wrecked your life, as you watch the pigs go off the cliff. Sometimes it will feel like he has taken a detour and forgotten about you, like it did for Jairus. Sometimes it will be impossible to understand his timing. And like the disciples, you will cry out, "Do you care if I die? Do you love me?"

Nevertheless, there are three things you need to know about Jesus in the storm:

1) He is always with you

*Hebrews 13:5* – *Never will I leave you, never will I forsake you*

Even when you feel like he is asleep on a cushion, he has not left you

*Isaiah 43:1-5* - *But now, this is what the LORD says-- he who created you, O Jacob, he who formed you, O Israel: "Fear not, for I have redeemed you; I have summoned you by name; you are mine. <sup>2</sup> When you pass through the waters, I will*

*be with you; and when you pass through the rivers, they will not sweep over you. When you walk through the fire, you will not be burned; the flames will not set you ablaze. <sup>3</sup> For I am the LORD, your God, the Holy One of Israel, your Savior; I give Egypt for your ransom, Cush and Seba in your stead. <sup>4</sup> Since you are precious and honored in my sight, and because I love you, I will give men in exchange for you, and people in exchange for your life. <sup>5</sup> Do not be afraid, for I am with you;*

## 2) He is always working for our good through the storm

We may not understand his timing. We may not understand why he allows what he allows. But we can trust that He is always at work for our good.

**Romans 8:28-29** - *And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose. <sup>29</sup> For those God foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the likeness of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brothers.*

*“God is God. Because he is God, He is worthy of my trust and obedience. I will find rest nowhere but in His holy will that is unspeakably beyond my largest notions of what he is up to.”*

Elisabeth Elliot

## 3) He will still every storm

There is no guarantee that he will still every storm this side of heaven. But it is guaranteed that they will be stilled.

**John 16:33** - *"I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world."*

**Revelation 21:1-5** - *Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and there was no longer any sea. <sup>2</sup> I saw the Holy City, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride beautifully dressed for her husband. <sup>3</sup> And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "Now the dwelling of God is with men, and he will live with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God. <sup>4</sup> He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away." <sup>5</sup> He who was seated*



*on the throne said, "I am making everything new!" Then he said, "Write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true."*

So how do you know He loves you?

Jonah. In Jonah 1, God has told Jonah the prophet to go to Ninevah and preach against it, but Jonah runs away, because he does not want Ninevah to repent. In v. 4, a violent storm arising, threatening to destroy the ship. The sailors are afraid, and they find Jonah sleeping. They come to him and say, "How can you sleep? Get up and call on your God! Maybe he will take notice of us, and we will not perish!" Jonah confesses that he is to blame, that he is running away from the Lord, and so he tells them to pick him up and throw him into the sea, and it will become calm. Eventually they do, and the raging sea grows calm. Verse 16 – At this, the men greatly feared the Lord.

Jonah had told them, throw me into the raging sea. If I die, you will live. How do we know God loves us, even in the storms?

**Matthew 12:41** -*The men of Nineveh will stand up at the judgment with this generation and condemn it; for they repented at the preaching of **Jonah**, and now one **greater** than **Jonah** is here*

Jesus is greater than Jonah. Just as Jonah went into the water to calm the storm so that others might live, Jesus would go into the depths to calm the storms in our lives, so that we might live. The disciples accused Jesus of falling asleep when they needed him the most, and he saved them. But in the Garden of Gethsemane, the disciples were the ones who fell asleep on Jesus, and he was killed for them out of His love for them.

**The thing that is needed is faith.** You have Jairus and a nameless woman, opposites in every way, but similar in that they both had faith that Jesus could heal them. Even in the face of death, he asks them to trust in Him. As he asks the disciples, where is your faith? In what have you placed it? Put your faith in Jesus. Faith can be as small as a mustard seed, but if you place it in Jesus, it can be powerful.

If you have been healed, go and tell other what the Lord has done for you.