

ALL !N WITH JORDAN EASLEY

Why Are You So Afraid?

Questions Jesus Asked | Part 7 | Mark 4:35-41

INTRODUCTION

About a year ago I was on a flight to a conference when the pilot came over the intercom: "We're approaching a storm system — expect a little turbulence." That "little turbulence" turned into the kind that makes you rethink every decision you've ever made. The plane dropped hard, people gasped and shouted, drinks went airborne, and I'm pretty sure the guy next to me gave his life to the Lord. But right across the aisle sat a little girl, maybe six or seven, next to her father — and while the rest of us were coming unglued, she just leaned against her dad, swinging her feet, completely relaxed, like she was on a church pew with a coloring book. I remember thinking, "What a beautiful picture of faith." She didn't understand the storm or the turbulence or what the pilots were doing, but she knew her father — and that was enough. What if we trusted our Heavenly Father like that? What if, when life drops out from under us and fears shake us up, we leaned into Jesus with that same calm, that same trust?

That's the heart of the question we're unpacking today. Jesus asked over 300 questions in the Gospels — not because He needed information, but because we need transformation — and every question is meant to reveal, grow, or change something in us. So when Jesus asks His disciples, "Why are you so afraid? Do you still have no faith?" (v. 40), He already knows the answer; He's inviting them into deeper trust. Remember the setting: this comes after a long, draining day of ministry, teaching crowds so large He preached from a boat. By evening everyone was exhausted, and He said, "Let us cross over to the other side" (v. 35). Notice something important — the storm didn't hit because the disciples were out of God's will; it hit because they were obeying Jesus. Sometimes following Him leads you straight into situations that stretch your faith, not because He wants to scare you, but because He wants to shape you.

KEY POINTS

1. Fear Rises When We Forget Who's in the Boat

They pushed off tired, and "a great windstorm arose, and the waves were breaking over the boat, so that the boat was already being swamped" (v. 37). This wasn't a ripple — Mark uses the Greek *megas*, a mega-storm, hurricane-level, the kind fishermen would talk about for years. And four of these disciples were professional fishermen who knew this sea like the back of their hands, so if they were panicking, you know it was bad. Yet "he was in the stern, sleeping on the cushion" (v. 38). How tired do you have to be to sleep through a storm baptizing the boat every three seconds? Don't miss the symbolism: what terrifies you doesn't trouble Jesus, what wakes you up at night doesn't worry Him, what overwhelms you doesn't overpower Him. He was asleep not because He didn't care, but because He was in complete control.

So they shook Him awake with a question anyone who's lived through a storm understands: "Teacher! Don't you care that we're going to die?" (v. 38). Here's the real issue: your fear is connected to your faith, and fear always grows where faith gets blurry. The disciples weren't wrong about the storm — the waves really were high, the danger really was real — their problem wasn't misreading the storm, it was misplacing their focus. Somewhere between the shore and the center of the sea, they forgot who climbed into the boat with them. Isn't that just like us? When the diagnosis drops, the account dries up, the relationship breaks, the news blindsides us — our eyes shift from the Savior to the storm, and fear fills the places faith used to live. Faith doesn't mean you won't face storms; it means you won't face them alone. That little girl wasn't calm because the turbulence stopped; she was calm because of who she was sitting beside. Your confidence in the storm has nothing to do with the size of the storm and everything to do with the size of your Savior.

2. Fear Reigns When We Assume Jesus Isn't Responding

One of the most overlooked moments in this passage isn't the storm, the panic, or even the miracle — it's the misinterpretation. When the disciples woke Jesus, they didn't say, "Could You help?" or "Do something!" or "We trust You!" They said, "Teacher, don't You care?" That's not a storm problem. They interpreted His silence as absence and His calmness as indifference — and

that is a grave misrepresentation of the heart of God. But we do the same thing: when the bills stack up, when the doctor calls back, when our kids drift, when our marriage shakes, when God doesn't intervene as fast as we want or the way we want, we whisper that same wounded question, "Lord, do You even care?"

Hear this: Jesus' non-immediate response wasn't a lack of compassion — it was an opportunity for revelation. He wasn't ignoring them; He was allowing them to see something they never would have seen without the storm. Sometimes God lets the storm rage so that your eyes will be redirected to your Savior. We pray differently when the turbulence begins; we press into Jesus more intimately when circumstances remind us how much we need Him. Sometimes He doesn't calm the waves around you because He's trying to calm the fear within you. In this story Jesus didn't stop loving them in the storm, didn't leave them in the storm, and didn't lose control in the storm — He simply knew something they didn't: the storm wasn't going to sink what the Father had already sent.

3. Fear Retreats When We Remember His Power

Jesus stood up in that waterlogged boat and spoke to the storm like a child throwing a tantrum: "Silence! Be still." And instantly "the wind ceased, and there was a great calm" (v. 39). One moment chaos, the next moment calm. But watch what Mark says next: after the sea went still, "they were terrified" (v. 41) — literally, they feared with a *mega* fear, the same word used for the mega-storm. The storm had been violent and life-threatening, but that's not what shook them most; what shook them most was Jesus. In one sentence they saw Him more clearly than ever before, and soaking wet with pounding hearts they whispered, "Who then is this? Even the wind and the sea obey him" (v. 41). Every Jewish man in that boat knew the Psalms — only God rules the seas, only God calms the chaos, only God commands the waters — so when Jesus calmed a violent storm with three quiet words, it clicked: they knew who they were dealing with.

Storms on the Sea of Galilee didn't calm like that; normally the water kept churning long after the wind stopped. But when Jesus spoke, there was no slow fade — just instant peace. That's the point Mark wants us to see: the purpose of the storm wasn't only to show what Jesus could do, but to reveal who Jesus really was. Sometimes He calms the storm not to make you more

comfortable but to make Himself more clear; sometimes He moves the obstacle not just to give you relief but to remind you of His authority. If you trace the storms of your life long enough, they all bring you back to the same question: "Who then is this?" Who is this Jesus that sickness obeys, that demons flee, that death can't hold, that silences the storm? When you begin to answer that question, fear begins to loosen its grip — fear retreats when Jesus is revealed.

4. Faith Rises When We Trust Who's in the Boat

When the disciples saw Jesus for who He really was, something shifted. He had quieted the storm outside them, but He was far more interested in quieting the storm inside them, so He asked the question at the heart of this passage: "Why are you so afraid? Do you still have no faith?" (v. 40). He isn't scolding them or disappointed in them — it's more like, "After everything you've seen and experienced with Me, do you still think this storm is bigger than I am?" This was a gentle invitation to trust. Because faith isn't pretending storms don't exist or "faking it till you make it" — faith is remembering who's in your boat. Faith is leaning into the presence of Jesus the way that little girl leaned into her father: not because she understood the turbulence, but because she trusted who was holding her.

Maybe that's the question Jesus is asking you today — not to shame you, but to draw you closer. He's asking, "Why are you so afraid?" — not "How dare you be afraid?" but "What are you looking at that has become bigger to you than Me?" "Do you still have no faith?" — in other words, "Will you trust Me, even here, even now, even in this?" Storms come and go, but Jesus remains; storms shake you, but Jesus holds you. Maybe the waves are high and your faith feels small, maybe anxiety has been loud and fear has been winning — but you are not alone, and you are not sinking, because Jesus is in your boat. The same voice that calmed the Sea of Galilee can calm your heart, the same power that stopped the storm can steady your soul, and the same presence that carried those disciples to the other side will carry you too. When you know who's in your boat, fear loses its voice, faith rises again, and you realize you're going to make it to the other side — not because the storm is small, but because your Savior is big.

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

1. "Fear rises when we forget who's in the boat." What storm are you facing right now, and how has your focus shifted from the Savior to the storm?
2. The disciples assumed Jesus' silence meant He didn't care. Where have you been tempted to whisper, "Lord, do You even care?" — and how might God be using that delay to redirect your eyes to Him?
3. The disciples' fear retreated once they truly saw who Jesus was. How would answering "Who then is this?" for yourself change the way you carry your current fear this week?
