

## Mark 4: 35-41 (ESV) – Jesus Calms the Storm

**Main point:** The Lord is not asleep; he is with us, and he will calm our storms.



**Open with a short prayer, inviting God to teach us.**

**Background:** Jesus has been teaching large crowds and his disciples by the Sea of Galilee.

### Focus of the study:

<sup>35</sup> On that day, when evening had come, Jesus said to his disciples, “Let us go across to the other side.” <sup>36</sup> And leaving the crowd, the disciples took Jesus with them in the boat, just as he was. And other boats were with him.

<sup>37</sup> And a great windstorm arose, and the waves were breaking into the boat, so that the boat was already filling. <sup>38</sup> But Jesus was in the stern, asleep on the cushion. And the disciples woke Jesus and said to him, “Teacher, do you not care that we are perishing?”

<sup>39</sup> And Jesus awoke and rebuked the wind and said to the sea, “Peace! Be still!” And the wind ceased, and there was a great calm. <sup>40</sup> Jesus said to his disciples, “Why are you so afraid? Have you still no faith?” <sup>41</sup> And the disciples were filled with great fear and said to one another, “Who then is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him?”

### Questions:

1. *What have Jesus and the disciples been doing? What time is it when this story starts? How do you think Jesus and his disciples might be feeling? How would you feel if you had been teaching people all day, around huge crowds all day?*
  - a. Jesus has been teaching huge crowds out by the seaside (where everyone, including the poor and excluded people, could hear him); lots of effort for all of them.
  - b. They are probably all exhausted!
2. *What does Jesus say at the end of the day?*
  - a. “Let’s go across the lake.”
3. *Why do you think they might “go to the other side”?*
  - a. The story doesn’t say... possibly because there are more people on the other side to teach and heal? Maybe Jesus thinks they are done on this side.
4. *v. 37: What happens when Jesus and his friends are out in the middle of the lake? How bad is it?*
  - a. A great windstorm arose
  - b. Waves are breaking into the boat and filling it up
    - i. *What happens when a boat fills up with water?? Yikes ....*
5. *How do you think you might be reacting if you were one of the disciples in this sinking boat?? I wonder if anyone here knows what several of these men used to do as a job?*
  - a. Several were fishermen ... so they know the dangers of this kind of storm.
  - b. And they are terrified! “We’re going to drown!”
6. *v. 38: And what is Jesus doing at this time?*
  - a. Snoozing in the boat stern! He must have been VERY tired.
7. *What do the disciples do at this point? What do the disciples say?*
  - a. They wake up Jesus and say, “Do you not CARE that we are PERISHING??”
8. *Why do you think they say this? Do they ask Jesus to do anything?*

- a. No; they want Jesus to know they're dying
  - b. Sounds a bit like scolding! Some anger
9. v. 39: *And what is Jesus' response? What does Jesus say first?*
- a. Jesus wakes up and rebukes the storm: "Peace! Be still!"
  - b. *What happens?*
    - i. The wind ceases; "and there was a great calm."
    - ii. The threat ceases, becomes silent.
    - iii. *Let's try to picture that; imagine the sound and the scene suddenly shifting so dramatically ... How might that feel?*
10. v. 40: *Then, after the storm stops, what does Jesus say?*
- a. "Why are you so afraid? Have you still no faith?"
11. *Does that seem like a fair question to you? Shouldn't the disciples have been afraid? What in their situation caused them fear? What were they focused on?*
- a. Circumstances! The disciples were focused on the wind, the water, the sinking boat. So of course they were afraid; a natural human reaction to those circumstances.
12. *Again, Jesus says "Have you still no faith?" I wonder what Jesus means by that? Is this the first day the disciples have ever been with Jesus? Is Jesus a new friend to them?*
- a. No, not new; the disciples have been with Jesus for a long time now; they have seen lots of healings and teachings of Jesus, day after day after day.
13. *What sorts of things do you think the disciples have seen Jesus do so far? What sorts of things did Jesus do with his time?*
- a. Teaching; healing; performing miracles!
14. *But up until now, what must the disciples think is beyond Jesus' power?*
- a. Controlling the weather; that is GOD'S realm!
15. v. 41: *So after Jesus calms the storm just by speaking to it, what is the disciples' reaction?*
- a. "And the disciples were filled with great fear and said to one another, 'Who then is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him?'" Who IS this guy??
  - b. *Who are they talking to?*
    - i. Each other – they are stunned.
  - c. *The disciples start out afraid of what? And then what do they fear in the end?*
    - i. First, the storm; then, the power of Jesus himself.
16. *Who here knows what it feels like to be in a storm, either a real storm or a storm of trials and tribulations? A situation where you feel like you might drown?*
17. *When you feel overwhelmed, does it ever feel to you like Jesus is asleep?*
- a. We may feel at our wits' end, as if nothing and no one can help.
  - b. When a storm is raging and deafens our ears to anything else, look to Jesus. He cares and he calms!
  - c. *Where is Jesus in this story? Is Jesus absent, far away from the fearful disciples?*
    - i. He's WITH THEM, in the boat.
  - d. *You know that saying, "we're all in the same boat"? Where is the Lord when you feel like he's not paying attention?*
    - i. He's right there in the boat with you! Don't focus on the storm; focus on Jesus.

- Ask for any prayer requests for today.
- Close in prayer, naming people and needs listed.
- End with a song, e.g., first verse of Amazing Grace

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