

## Mark 4:35-41 – 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. Just a little earlier, the Bible records that “Jesus went home, and the crowd came together again, so that they could not even eat” (Mark 3:20). It’s a busy time!

### 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 behind, 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 back of the boat, 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? Do you still have 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?”

**Read or have someone read the passage aloud.**

### Questions:

1. *Let’s review: What do we know that Jesus did with his time during his days?*
  - a. Teaching, healing; dealing with large crowds! Jesus has been teaching huge crowds; in this case, out by a large lake.
2. *(Read v. 35.) 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. It’s evening at the end of a long day. They are probably all exhausted!
3. *What does Jesus say at the end of the day? “Let’s go across the lake.”*
4. *(Read v. 36.) So what do they all do?*
  - a. The disciples start heading across the lake, with Jesus in the boat.
5. *(Read 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 ....
6. *How do you think you might be reacting if you were one of the disciples in this sinking boat? Let’s think for a second: I wonder if anyone knows what some of Jesus’ followers used to do as a job?*
  - a. Several were fishermen, spending all day, every day, in boats on this very lake.
  - b. And how are these experienced, seafaring workers feeling in this storm?
    - i. They are terrified! They know the dangers. “We’re going to drown!”

7. *(Read v. 38.) What is Jesus doing while the disciples are freaking out?*
  - a. Snoozing in the back of the boat!
8. *What do the disciples do at this point? What do the disciples say?*
  - a. They wake up Jesus and say, "Don't you CARE that we are PERISHING??"
9. *Why do you think the disciples 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. "You're not paying attention!"
10. *(Read v. 39.) What is Jesus' response? What does Jesus say first?*
  - a. Jesus wakes up and rebukes (speaks sharply to) the storm: "Peace! Be still!"
  - b. *What happens?*
    - i. The wind ceases; "and there was a great calm."
    - ii. The threat (waves filling the boat) stops.
    - iii. *Let's try to picture that; imagine the sound and the scene suddenly shifting so dramatically ... How might that feel?*
11. *(Read v. 40.) After the storm stops, what does Jesus say to his followers?*
  - a. "Why are you so afraid? Do you still have no faith?"
12. *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.
13. *I wonder what Jesus means by "Do you still have no faith?" Is this the first day the disciples have ever been with Jesus? Is Jesus a new friend to them? What sorts of things have the disciples seen Jesus do so far?*
  - a. Jesus is not new to them; the disciples have been with Jesus for a long time now.
  - b. They have seen lots of healings and teachings of Jesus, day after day after day.
14. *But up until now, what must the disciples think is beyond Jesus' power?*
  - a. Controlling the weather; that is GOD'S realm. No human could possibly do that.
15. *So after Jesus calms the storm just by speaking to it, what is the disciples' reaction?*
  - a. *(If people don't answer, read v. 41.) "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?'"*
    - i. In other words: Who IS this guy??
  - b. *Who are the disciples talking to? How are they feeling?*
    - i. They're talking to each other – and 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.
16. *Who here knows what it feels like to be in a storm, either a real storm or a storm in your heart or in your life? 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, what should we do?*
    - i. Look to Jesus. Jesus cares and he calms!
  - c. *Where is Jesus in this story? Is Jesus absent, far away from the fearful disciples?*
    - i. Jesus is 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!
    - ii. 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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