

Jesus Calms the Storm - Mark 4:35-41

Facebook Live, 11:00am

March 29, 2020

Kevin White

What's going on party people? My name is Kevin White and I'm your friendly neighbourhood youth pastor at Cornerstone Christian Community Church in Markham.

In the last few weeks we've gone from having two services with almost 1000 people in our building, to broadcasting live on Facebook because only essential services are open.

If you're an introvert, you feel like you were made for this (except that you have to be with the other people in the house).

If you're an extrovert like me, you go for a walk and you see a person in the distance and you get all excited. A person!

What a time.

There are so many emotions going on right now it's hard to even put it into words.

In this season, where we can't gather together physically, we have to connect more than ever.

It's been really cool to see how people are doing this. Just this past week, someone from our church went on a walk with their kids and made signs for people to encourage them as they looked out of their homes.

During our live broadcasts we've had people taking amazing notes of the service and also some great interactions while the service is going on. Keep it going! Send us pictures of your notes - it's so encouraging. Keep commenting throughout the service.

Last week, Pastor Steve talked about Composure in Chaos. His main passage was Psalm 46 and he talked about how we can have confident composure in chaos.

What was cool about that is that he referred a lot to storms and my sermon - which I prepared in advance of his - is talking about a storm. It even has Psalm 46 in it! For me, I take this as a little God wink that God sees us and knows about this situation. You'll see why that matters as we unpack this message but for now, just appreciate that God sees you.

This is adapted from a message that I shared a couple of weeks ago at a youth conference. I feel like it was a timely message for them and I also feel like it's a timely message for all of us including myself.

So let's get into it!

I'm the kind of person who is afraid of lots of things.

Heights

Mice - actually most animals

Spicy foods - like one time - I'm like what's that? It's so spicy? My wife is like - it's ketchup :)

haha :) - stole that joke from my friend Jean Paul :)

I'm afraid of roller coasters... talk about time at Canada's Wonderland - The Bat :) - goes backwards...

Question: What are you afraid of? Type it in the comments below

Today we're going to talk about a story where the disciples were afraid.

Picture this:

The disciples have been journeying with Jesus for a bit. They've seen him teach amazing messages. They've seen and been a part of incredible miracles and they are learning more and more that Jesus is unlike anyone they have ever met or heard about before. They were going about everyday life when all of a sudden...

... they have a problem. Sound familiar?

Let's read Mark 4:35-41 to see what happens in this episode.

After reading this story, it's really obvious what the disciples wanted. They wanted to be rescued from the storm.

Isn't this a lot like us? We want to be rescued from the storms of life. Everyone has stuff that they go through or are going through. The whole world is going through a pandemic right now that has us all afraid. What's going to happen? How is this story going to play out? The stakes are high and seem to be getting higher and higher every day. It's easy to be afraid.

But like any good story there is tension.

On the one hand, you have this storm that is going on

The Greek word for this storm - means "serious squall." It wasn't just some little thing happening to them. It was a storm bad enough to make these tough, experienced fishermen "afraid." The waves were breaking over the boat - picture it - so much water kept coming in the boat that they couldn't get it out fast enough - if it kept up, the boat would sink and they would drown.

In our Bible story, Jesus is sleeping. There is a storm going on all around and Jesus is sleeping. How do you think the disciples feel? We don't have to guess because the story tells us - they feel like he doesn't care - Teacher, don't you care?

Don't we feel like that sometimes? Jesus, don't you care that we're in a pretty big storm right now? Don't you care about this pandemic? Don't you care that I feel anxious being quarantined at home for weeks? Don't you care that I'm afraid that what's going on is too much for me?

Jesus, don't you care if we drown?

The disciples feel scared and alone

And if we're honest, so do we.

For many reasons, this situation we find ourselves in, unlike any other before, can be something to be afraid of. It seems like too much. It seems overwhelming. But even before this, many of us were going through tough situations. Maybe at school, maybe at home. At work. With our health. It causes us to ask - Jesus don't you care?

You know in your heart that life isn't supposed to be like this. We aren't supposed to be afraid of life.

Just like the disciples. They were fishermen. They weren't supposed to be afraid of a storm. But they were. They were afraid. And so are we sometimes. So are we right now.

When God created the world, fear wasn't a factor - fear factor? :)...It's an old TV show. Forget it... When Adam and Eve sinned, they hid. They hid from God because they were afraid. We've been hiding ever since. Hiding from God, hiding from each other, and even hiding from ourselves.

What about you? When you are afraid, what do you do?

Like Adam and Eve, many of us hide. We hide behind being busy. We hide behind trying to be popular and liked. We hide behind social media. We hide behind buying stuff, eating stuff... anything to distract us from dealing with ourselves, God and others properly. But then a storm happens. And all of a sudden, we're slowed right down to a stop. We're afraid. What we do next is super important.

In times like this many people are tempted to make God out to be the villain. We feel like God is the one that caused the storm in our lives. Why do bad things happen to good people? Why do bad things happen period?

SOME people say that God caused this pandemic to happen to clean the world up. Let me say something about God: God is a good God and he doesn't cause evil. He allows evil to happen but he doesn't cause evil.

God looks like Jesus. If you want to know what God is like, look at Jesus. In Hebrews 1 it talks about how Jesus is the exact representation of God. Let's see what we can learn about what God is really like by looking at Jesus and how he acts in this story - in this storm.

So the disciples are in this storm. They are scared. We can learn from the disciples because even though they are afraid, they did the right thing. They went to Jesus.

And... Jesus is sleeping. He's sleeping comfortably. How do I know? The Bible says he's on a cushion. He probably has an Endy pillow or something. He's in deep sleep. How do I know? Because even though there's a storm going on, he's not waking up.

Picture it... waves, thunder and lightning, the boat rocking back and forth... The disciples yelling and screaming - and yet he doesn't wake up.

Have you ever been in a deep sleep like that before? What do you do when someone wakes you up from a deep sleep before you are ready to get up. I'm a youth pastor so I hear story after story from teens and parents about the drama of waking up. One teen said she has three alarms in her room, each gets louder. She doesn't hear any of them. By the time it gets to the third one, the whole house wakes up and is screaming at her to get up and turn off her alarms. What's up Becky? :)

But look at Jesus. What does he do? This is very important.

The disciples are scared, they come to him and wake him up from his deep comfortable sleep on a cushion and what does he do?

He got up.

Jesus gets up. He doesn't get all mad and ask why they woke him up. He doesn't get mad and turn over and go back to sleep. He doesn't say, "well I'm God so I'm good - good luck to you guys though!"

He gets up.

Jesus gets up. What you believe about God is so important. What you think about God affects how you live. How do you think God reacts to you when you are afraid and you come to him?

The disciples said, "Don't you care if we drown?" They were afraid that Jesus didn't care.

Be honest, at times, don't we feel like Jesus doesn't care?

This story shows us that God does care. God cares so much that he sent Jesus to be with us. He sent Jesus to be with us in the storm. The disciples weren't alone. We are not alone. **Jesus is with us in our storms**

It's great that they went to Jesus. It's even greater what happened next.

Jesus rebuked the wind and said to the waves, "Quiet! Be still!" Then the wind died down and it was completely calm.

Jesus told the storm to be silent. If you study the passage in the original language it says that he put a muzzle on it. The language he used to talk to the storm is the same language used to talk to someone in the New Testament possessed by demons. Jesus has authority over the storm.

If there are storms in your life, bring them to Jesus. He has the power and authority to defeat them. Allow him to say, "Quiet! Be still!" to the storms of your life.

The things you are afraid of are not new to God. In the Old Testament, there's actually a Psalm where it says, "Be still and know that I am God." Ironically, this Psalm is written to people who are in a battle. Pastor Steve preached on it last week - Psalm 46

When the Israelites were in their toughest battle against the Egyptians - after leaving Egypt and Pharaoh was chasing them, they became trapped between the Egyptian army and the sea. They were afraid. Moses went to God with his fears. It's basically like he's saying, God, don't you care if we drown?" The Lord told Moses to tell the Israelites - The Lord will fight for you - you need only to be still - EXODUS 14:14

I don't know if you've ever been in a fight before - but the worst strategy ever when you are in a battle is to be still. Why? Because the enemy can do whatever they want to you. The worst strategy is to be still - unless someone else is fighting for you. If the person fighting for you is stronger than the battle you're fighting, then you're safe. Then you'll win!

In this story, Jesus shows that he has the ultimate authority. In story after story in the Bible, we see that God is the hero. He's in the business of rescuing people from their storms. We see that most in Jesus.

It's right to be afraid of this pandemic. Fear will keep us social distancing and flattening the curve. But I want to encourage you today by letting you know that storms are no rival for Jesus.

Storms are no rival for Jesus.

In this passage, after Jesus calms the storm, he asks them “Why are you so afraid? Do you still have no faith?”

For me, if I’m a disciple, I’m like - I was afraid because the storm was so big. I was afraid because I thought I was going to die.

It might seem like the disciples forgot who Jesus was. I don’t know if I see it like that. I think they were still learning who Jesus was.

This taught them a little bit more.

I wonder if this situation is an opportunity for us to learn a little more about God. More about Jesus. It’s a chance for us to actually experience for ourselves that Jesus is more powerful than any storm.

By putting your trust in him, you can experience this.

The disciples asked, Who is this? The answer is - God.
And God is more powerful than our storms.
Storms are no rival for Jesus.

What is your storm?

For many of us, COVID-19 is the biggest storm in our life right now.
For some of us, we have even bigger storms.

Health concerns.

Financial

Emotional and Mental health

Marriage

Family

School

What are you afraid of?

What are the storms in your life?

We learn that storms are no rival for Jesus.

Trust him with your storms.

Can we make it through this storm?

Yes. Because we are not alone.

Jesus is with us in our storms

And Jesus is more powerful than our storms.

Storms are no rival for Jesus.

God bless you