

Mark 4:35-41 – Jesus In The Storm

Leader's Guide

February 10, 2019

1. Read Mark 4:35-41 to familiarize yourself with the passage. How did these verses change your thinking about the greatness of Jesus? How did they change your thinking about facing life's storms?

Jesus Calms a Storm

³⁵ On that day, when evening had come, he said to them, “Let us go across to the other side.” ³⁶ And leaving the crowd, they took him with them in the boat, just as he was. And other boats were with him. ³⁷ And a great windstorm arose, and the waves were breaking into the boat, so that the boat was already filling. ³⁸ But he was in the stern, asleep on the cushion. And they woke him and said to him, “Teacher, do you not care that we are perishing?” ³⁹ And he awoke and rebuked the wind and said to the sea, “Peace! Be still!” And the wind ceased, and there was a great calm. ⁴⁰ He said to them, “Why are you so afraid? Have you still no faith?” ⁴¹ And they were filled with great fear and said to one another, “Who then is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him?”

2. In calming the raging wind and waves, Jesus revealed his authority over creation. What do these verses tell us about the relationship Jesus has with creation? How do they expand your thinking about Jesus' greatness? (John 1:1-3 with Psalm 33:6, Isaiah 44:24, 1 Corinthians 8:6, Colossians 1:16-17, Hebrews 1:1-3)

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made. John 1:1-3 (ESV)

By the word of the Lord the heavens were made, and by the breath of his mouth all their host. Psalm 33:6 (ESV)

- Jesus made all things on the earth. When the Old Testament talks about the word of the Lord making all things and the breath of God's mouth making the angelic beings, we know from John that this word is referring to Jesus. God the father willed the creation of all things. Jesus carried out the creation of all things.

Thus says the Lord, your Redeemer, who formed you from the womb: "I am the Lord, who made all things, who alone stretched out the heavens, who spread out the earth by myself, Isaiah 44:24 (ESV)

- Isaiah emphasizes the one who made all things is the one who redeems us and saves us, which is what Jesus came to do. This verse also emphasizes that Jesus made everything by himself. All of creation was a solo job by Jesus.

Yet for us there is one God, the Father, from whom are all things and for whom we exist, and one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom are all things and through whom we exist. 1 Corinthians 8:6 (ESV)

- Paul emphasizes that God the Father is the ultimate source and designer of all things. Jesus is the one who carried out his Father's creative desires. He is also the one who created each one of us.

For by him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things were created through him and for him. And he is before all things, and in him all things hold together. Colossians 1:16-17 (ESV)

- Paul again emphasizes Jesus creating all things and being before all things. He also emphasizes that he is the glue that keeps all things together so nothing flies out of control.

Long ago, at many times and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets, but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed the heir of all things, through whom also he created the world. He is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature, and he upholds the universe by the word of his power. After making purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, Hebrews 1:1-3 (ESV)

- The writer of Hebrews also emphasizes that Jesus created the world and he sustains the universe by the power of his word. This control of the universe by the word of Jesus is the control Jesus displayed over the wind and the waves.

3. God doesn't promise Christians a trial-free life. God promises to use trials for a good purpose in our life. What do these verses teach us about enduring trials and the good God does in our life through them? (Psalm 55:22-23, Psalm 56:3-4, 1 Peter 4:19, 1 Peter 5:7, 1 Peter 2:23, James 1:2-4, James 1:12, 1 Peter 1:6-7, 1 Peter 4:12-13)

Cast your burden on the Lord, and he will sustain you; he will never permit the righteous to be moved. But you, O God, will cast them down into the pit of destruction; men of blood and treachery shall not live out half their days. But I will trust in you. Psalm 55:22-23 (ESV)

- As we call out to God in the trials and storms of life, God promises to sustain us. It is the peace of God through the Holy Spirit that carries us through trials.

When I am afraid, I put my trust in you. In God, whose word I praise, in God I trust; I shall not be afraid. What can flesh do to me? Psalm 56:3-4 (ESV)

- When we are afraid, we put our trust in God. We must remember that man can do nothing to us unless God allows it and has a good purpose for it. None of the hardships that come my way are out of God's control. He has a good purpose in all of them even when I can't understand that purpose.

Therefore let those who suffer according to God's will entrust their souls to a faithful Creator while doing good. 1 Peter 4:19 (ESV)

- When suffering in trials, trust God and continue to do good. Don't let your suffering turn you into a person of anger and revenge.

...casting all your anxieties on him, because he cares for you. 1 Peter 5:7 (ESV)

- When suffering, give your anxiety and worry to God in prayer. Know he loves you and cares for you.

When he was reviled, he did not revile in return; when he suffered, he did not threaten, but continued entrusting himself to him who judges justly. 1 Peter 2:23 (ESV)

- When in times of suffering, Jesus is our model. He did not threaten those who hurt him or return insult with insult, but entrusted himself to his father because he knew his father would judge him justly.

Count it all joy, my brothers, when you meet trials of various kinds, for you know that the testing of your faith produces steadfastness. And let steadfastness have its full effect, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing. James 1:2-4 (ESV)

- James tells us to be thankful for life's trials because they are the tool God uses to develop spiritual maturity in our life.

Blessed is the man who remains steadfast under trial, for when he has stood the test he will receive the crown of life, which God has promised to those who love him. James 1:12 (ESV)

- James describes trials as a test of our faith. They prove the genuine nature of our faith. When we are squeezed in a trial, the true nature of our spiritual life is displayed for all to see. In addition, we need to remind ourselves that God will reward us in heaven for how well we suffer the trials experienced in our life on earth.

In this you rejoice, though *now for a little while, if necessary, you have been grieved by various trials, so that the tested genuineness of your faith—more precious than gold that perishes though it is tested by fire—may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ.* 1 Peter 1:6-7 (ESV)

- Peter tells us trials will come our way. They will prove that our faith is genuine and our perseverance under trial will lead to praise, honor and glory when Christ returns. When we face times of suffering in this life, we keep our eyes on the reward Jesus promises us in the next life.

Beloved, do not be surprised at the fiery trial when it comes upon you to test you, as though something strange were happening to you. But rejoice insofar as you share Christ's sufferings, that you may also rejoice and be glad when his glory is revealed. 1 Peter 4:12-13 (ESV)

- Peter reminds us not to be surprised by storms in life. Expect storms in life. They are the way God tests our faith. As we faithfully share in the sufferings of Christ, we will experience more of the glory of Christ in eternity. For those who suffer well, there is a great reward.

4. To Jesus' apostles in the boat, it felt like Jesus was ignoring them in the storm. The feeling that God is silent when we are suffering is a common theme in the Bible. What do these Bible characters and verses teach us about God's apparent silence and the wisdom of his timing for rescue? (The Israelites were in Egypt for 400 years - Exodus 3:7-9, Job lost everything for many years, Joseph was sold by his brothers into Egyptian slavery and it was years before God rescued him from this situation, David was anointed king but spent years of his life running from King Saul who wanted him dead.)

Then the Lord said, "I have surely seen the affliction of my people who are in Egypt and have heard their cry because of their taskmasters. I know their sufferings, and I have come down to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians and to bring them up out of that land to a good and broad land, a land flowing with milk and honey, to the place of the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Amorites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites. And now, behold, the cry of the people of Israel has come to me, and I have also seen the oppression with which the Egyptians oppress them. Exodus 3:7-9 (ESV)

- The Israelites thought God forgot about them in their suffering. This passage in Exodus tells us God did not forget about them. God heard their cries. While we don't know why God didn't rescue them from slavery sooner, we know God has wisdom we don't understand in the timing of his rescue and he didn't forget them.
- Even though Job was the most righteous man on the face of the earth, he lost everything and experienced some of the greatest suffering and loss on the face of the earth. Job didn't know why God allowed him to experience loss and Job didn't know why God remained silent and refused to rescue. At the end of the book, we see Job's life was on cosmic display in heaven as a demonstration of someone who could still love God without his many blessings. At the end of his life, God restored double of what was taken away. Sometimes God may let us suffer for a period of time because our lives are displaying what it means to love God without his blessing. Sometimes God appears silent and doesn't rescue in the time frame we expect because, like Job, there are reasons beyond what we can understand.
- Joseph was sold by his brother into Egyptian slavery. The Psalms talk about Joseph crying to God on the long walk to Egypt with his neck, ankles and wrists rubbed raw by the chains. Joseph remained in slavery for many years. It wasn't until he was almost thirty that the wisdom of God's plan was revealed and God moved him from the dungeon to second in command over Egypt. For years, God appeared silent. Like Joseph, it may be more than a decade for us to understand the wisdom of God's ways in our suffering.

- David was anointed king by Samuel but he spent many years running for his life and narrowly escaping death. As we look back on David's life, those years of suffering were used by God to grow his relationship with his God to great depths. Had David instantly and easily been crowned king, he wouldn't have grown nearly as close with God and mature in his leadership.