



VERSE BY VERSE MINISTRY
INTERNATIONAL

TEACHING THE WHOLE COUNSEL OF GOD

Mark - Lesson 4D

Chapter 4:35-41

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- Last week we dove into the Parable of the Mustard Seed.
 - And it was there where we discovered God’s unfolding plan of the Mystery Kingdom (The Messianic Kingdom).
 - Due to Israel’s rejection there would be a pause placed on National Israel receiving the Messianic Kingdom.
 - So until they reach repentance and accept Christ as Messiah, the present age (Age of the Gentiles/Church Age) is open to the Gentiles (You and I).
 - This will be a time where the Gospel continues to be preached and many will come to faith in Jesus Christ.
 - We spoke to how the unfolding of the Mystery Kingdom would have small beginnings.
 - And as it grows, as compared to the mustard seed, Christendom would become this huge monstrosity, but will face much adversity.
 - We learned that birds would use Christendom as shade and refuge.
 - We discovered that within understanding the first parable the birds give way to two categories.
 - In one sense, due to the parabolic symbology of the birds in the first parable, the birds symbolized evil forces using Christendom as a means of cover.
 - This results in us seeing today the growth of false teachers, improper doctrine being taught, growing apostasy in the church, etc.etc.
 - And on the other hand we discussed how the birds also represent the Gentiles coming into the faith and accepting Jesus as Messiah.
 - And in assessing them both, I concluded that these realities are ever present in Christendom, today.
 - Tonight, we will discover Jesus’ power and authority over nature as He calms the sea.
 - If I were to outline tonight’s teaching in a train of thought, we will see the following:
 - 1. A Fierce Storm
 - 2. A Frustrating Question
 - 3. A Firm Rebuke
 - 4. An Unfolding Faith
 - If I were to put a tag on tonight’s text it would simply be this: “Who is this man?”
 - I invite you to open your bibles and read with me our text tonight, Mark 4:35-41.

Mark 4:35 On that day, when evening came, He *said to them, “Let us go over to the other side.”

Mark 4:36 Leaving the crowd, they *took Him along with them in the boat, just as He was; and other boats were with Him.

Mark 4:37 And there *arose a fierce gale of wind, and the waves were breaking over the boat so much that the boat was already filling up.

Mark 4:38 Jesus Himself 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?”

Mark 4:39 And He got up and rebuked the wind and said to the sea, “Hush, be still.” And the wind died down and it became perfectly calm.

Mark 4:40 And He said to them, “Why are you afraid? Do you still have no faith?”

Mark 4:41 They became very much afraid and said to one another, “Who then is this, that even the wind and the sea obey Him?”

- Let’s pray
- Pain and peace somehow are able to coexist with each other without ever interrupting the one.
 - This perplexity of peace in the midst of the storm almost seems unorthodox at best.
 - Yet we see the beauty of its coexisting ability in one of the most well-known hymns in the church today written by Horatio Spafford
 - I’ll just recite the first half:

**When peace like a river attendeth my way
When sorrows like sea billows roll
Whatever my lot, Thou hast taught me to say
It is well, it is well with my soul**

- Tonight’s section of scripture is no exception.
 - Tonight’s text takes us into a closer and more intimate look at Jesus.
 - His closest followers including the twelve will have their minds rocked as they witness the very power of God demonstrated in the very person of Jesus Christ.
 - They will come face to face with yet more illumination as to the very identity of Jesus Christ.
 - If you thought the disciples had an idea or an inkling about Jesus before, then it’s about to get even more interesting.
 - Pick me up at verse 35

Mark 4:35 On that day, when evening came, He *said to them, “Let us go over to the other side.”

- As we come to the end of Mark 4, Mark begins this section in a very peculiar way.
 - Notice, the text begins with the phrase, “On that day, when evening came...”
 - As a good bible student, we should recognize that the start of the sentence begs a question:
 - “What day is Mark referring to and why would he begin the sentence in this way?”
 - And if we follow the narrative up to this point, we see that, apparently, the day in

which Mark is referring to is the same day that Israel (nationally) committed the unpardonable sin.

- This was the day in which Jesus pronounced judgment upon that specific generation in Israel for the rejection of their Messiah and His Kingdom.
- It was also on that day that Jesus introduced the aspect of the mystery Kingdom in which He explained in Parables.
- We discovered that Jesus speaking in parables would be His new method of teaching, communicating truth about the Kingdom.
 - He would no longer speak openly about the Kingdom, but only in parables.
- However, for those considered an insider, He would explain to them the meaning of the parable.
 - Just to refresh our memory, without going into too much detail, the parables we discussed were the following:
 - 1. The Parable of the Soils
 - 2. The Parable of the Growing Seed
 - 3. The Parable of the Mustard Seed
 - Again, if you have not had the chance to hear those teachings, we encourage you to go to the ministry website or the ministry app for those teachings.
- So, all in all, this day, that Mark mentions at the top of our text tonight is quite a significant day.
 - The day was filled with rejection, much teaching, and will ultimately explain Jesus' pattern of reaching others with the message of the Kingdom.
 - As a note, while we move throughout this section of scripture, we will see, yet again, another dimension of Jesus' identity.
- Mark follows up his opening line by mentioning that, when evening came, Jesus told His disciples and the twelve, "Let us go to the other side."
 - Remember that the context of this scene is taking place near the coast of the Sea of Galilee.
 - We can confirm this in Mark 3:7, Mark 4:1, and here in Mark 4:35. There is repeated phrases of "by the sea" or "near the sea".
- We can assume from Luke's gospel that Jesus is located in the area of Magdala which was not too far from Capernaum off the Sea of Galilee.
 - The question that may be spinning in our minds at this moment may be, "What city is across the way on the other side that Jesus and the insiders will travel to?"
- Well, if we continue reading a bit past our selected reading tonight, into Chapter 5, we find our answer in Mark 5:1. Check out what the text says.

Mark 5:1 They came to the other side of the sea, into the region of the Gerasenes.

- Jesus tells His disciples and the twelve that they needed to travel over to the region of

Gerasenes.

- What is most interesting about this particular region is that most of its inhabitants were Gentiles.
- We know this because as we move further along in our study in Mark 5, more specifically Mark 5:19, Jesus gives us clarity on this reality.
- Check out really quickly Mark 5:19:

Mark 5:19 And He did not let him, but He *said to him, “Go home to your people and report to them what great things the Lord has done for you, and how He had mercy on you.”

- This trip to the other side of the Sea of Galilee speaks to the reality that Israel (nationally) has rejected their King and the offer of the Kingdom to come right then and there.
 - Friends: Could travel to the other side potentially begin the message of the Kingdom being made known to the Gentile people? I do believe so.
 - Whatever the case may be, it is clear that Jesus will be making His way to the other side of the Galilee to continue in His teaching Ministry.
 - It is apparent that although there is a rejection of the message from the many (the religious leaders) the message must and will continue to go forth.
 - Mark mentions in verse 36 that Jesus and His disciples begin to make their move towards the next destination. Check out verse 36 with me.

Mark 4:36 Leaving the crowd, they *took Him along with them in the boat, just as He was; and other boats were with Him.

- Mark’s account at this point paints a picture that the departure across the way was an immediate one, almost with sudden haste.
 - Remember that this scene is upon the evening of the following events:
 - The religious leaders having blasphemed Jesus and Jesus’ mother and brothers assuming He was a fanatic.
 - Along with scribes continually trying to find a way to undermine Jesus’ ministry, Matthew’s Gospel tells us around this same evening Jesus was faced with two other issues:
 - Jesus is faced with a scribe trying to publicly pledge His life to become a disciple of Christ along with a disciple who had not quite counted the cost of following Jesus. (Matthew 8:18-22)
 - One could see that by the end of this day, Jesus would have been physically exhausted with this crowd of people.
 - It is after this series of events that Mark mentions that the disciples took Jesus along with them on the boat, “Just as He was”.
 - I emphasize, “Just as He was” because Mark 4:1 lets us know that Jesus was already in the boat due to the large crowds gathering. His floating pulpit if you

will.

- So with the time of the departure needing to happen now, Jesus and His insiders had everything they needed right there in the boat.
 - No need for prepping off shore or gathering of people and supplies, why? Because Jesus had those in whom would join Him with Him.
 - One intriguing detail we could potentially skip over is at the end of verse 36, the text mentions that the twelve and other disciples were with Him.
 - But then the text say, “and other boats were with Him”.
- It’s almost as if not everyone who was following Jesus could fit on one boat, therefore requiring multiple boats for travel.
 - I don’t want to speculate too much but there could be an indicator that those in the other boats were willing to follow Jesus across the Lake.
 - Let's keep moving to verse 37.

Mark 4:37 And there *arose a fierce gale of wind, and the waves were breaking over the boat so much that the boat was already filling up.

- Mark tells us that as Jesus and His disciples, the twelve, and potentially the others that followed, began to sail across the Sea of Galilee.
 - And while they were sailing across the way a mighty storm arose.
 - For us to truly appreciate Jesus’ demonstration of authority and power in these next few verses, we need to speak to some geographical context.
 - In order for us to do this, we will briefly speak to the following items:
 - 1. The boat
 - 2. The Sea of Galilee
 - 3. The Galilee’s weather conditions upon the Sea of Galilee.
 - Let’s begin with the boat: The boats themselves are around 30 feet long, 8 feet wide, and approximately 5 feet deep.
 - They had a flat bottom design which allowed the boat to easily come to shore.
 - On either end of the boat were benches covered with cushions of sorts for reclining in the boat.
 - These boats, although not huge, were able to carry a dozen men in calm seas.
 - And with the size of the boat and the average weight of the men, it would result in the boat being approximately 12-18 inches above the water line.
 - So as they are traveling from Magdala to Gerasenes, they would be cutting across the northern tip of the Lake.
 - It could be estimated that sailing across the lake in a west to east direction would have taken a couple of hours.
 - The Sea of Galilee itself is a freshwater lake about 80 feet deep.
 - Now for the geographical and environmental implications that arise from the unique lay of the land in the Galilee.

- With the lake being below sea level, combined with the mountainous surroundings, on top of the prevailing wind over the hills in the area, it would tend to cause fast rising storms.
 - This mixture of geography, topography, and prevailing wind conditions would contribute to the violent weather pattern that Jesus and His disciples were experiencing.
 - According to Mark’s account, this storm came through in the evening which explains the choppy nature.
 - Matthew’s gospel says this was a “great storm” whereas Mark and Luke say it was a “fierce gale of wind”
- Apparently, the storm was so torrential, that the waves were breaking over the boat to the point that the boat was beginning to sink.
 - Clearly this storm was unlike what these men, especially the fishermen, were used to.
 - And while all of this is going on, notice Jesus’ disposition. Check out verse 38.

Mark 4:38 Jesus Himself 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?”

- As all of these conditions were unfolding, winds roaring, boats filling to the point of sinking, the text tells us that Jesus was sleeping.
 - For a moment, let’s understand the situation these men are in.
 - At best they are panicked because their lives are on the line, facing death.
 - Most of these men are fisherman which means that they are quite familiar with the lay of the land but most importantly, the Sea of Galilee.
 - One would assume as fishermen they could navigate through this trying situation, however their very skills and abilities go out the window.
 - These men are at a loss, yet their only hope is sound asleep in the stern of the boat.
 - This begs the question: How in the world is Jesus able to sleep during a time like this?
 - We can assume that Jesus is getting wet from the raging waters of the sea.
 - And the sound of fierce wind being felt and heard, yet none of this wakes up our Lord and Savior.
 - Maybe Jesus has reached a point of exhaustion after having done ministry and teaching back-to-back, on top of constant confrontation with the religious leaders.
 - On one end the disciples are trying not to die and are on the brink of perishing, while on the other hand, Jesus is resting in the stern.
 - Verse 38 is an interesting text because these men are on the brink of losing their lives, and it seems as if their last resort is to wake Jesus up.
 - And rather than waking Jesus up to help them in this situation or to deliver them from this storm, they ask Him a strange question.

- They ask Him, “Teacher, do you not care that we are perishing?”
 - Do you see the question they asked Him? Their line of questioning is fixed upon their current condition rather than their present position.
- The disciples see their daunting circumstances; life literally flashing before their eyes
- Isn't it funny how we too can find ourselves in these unplanned situations?
 - Feeling helpless, alone and as if God is nowhere to be found – somehow inattentive and unavailable?
- This text brings us to a similar reality even today.
 - We mistake God's silence or lack of immediate response as if somehow He is unable to meet us right where we are.
- I believe this speaks all the more to the reality that God is right there with us in the storm.
 - Maybe it is our response to the storm that must be realigned with the proper response of our Savior's while in the storm – at peace in God.
- As we read this, it should also draw us back to the condition of the original audience in whom this account was written to:
 - Roman believers facing death and being killed in the streets of Rome for their belief in Christ.
 - These men and women hiding in the catacombs of Rome hoping to not be killed, but if they were, Christ was theirs and they were Christ's.
- Rather than the disciples and the twelve trusting in the One who is with them, they appeal to their feelings and surroundings.
 - And how often do we find ourselves in this situation today; overwhelmed with the weight and worries of our circumstances.
 - We rather hone into what we are going through rather than resting in the One Who is in it with us.
- As I heard one preacher say: “Emotions are great passengers, but they are terrible drivers.”
 - As believers in Christ, we must trust in the One Who is with us in the storm and not our emotions gauging the storm.
 - Christ is with us because of the Father's immense love for and towards us.
 - Let us keep moving. Check out verses 39 and 40.

Mark 4:39 And He got up and rebuked the wind and said to the sea, “Hush, be still.” And the wind died down and it became perfectly calm.

Mark 4:40 And He said to them, “Why are you afraid? Do you still have no faith?”

- Here is where Mark's account shows us the dynamic power and authority of Christ but most importantly Jesus' deity.
 - He mentions that Jesus rises from His sleep and rebukes the wind and sea with a simple command.

- And proceeds to respond to their previous question with a question.
- If you were to picture this chaotic scene that Mark has described, this scene can become a bit comedic.
 - Jesus is waking up from what seems to be a deep sleep, given the condition of this storm.
 - And He is woken by what seems to be a question of great concern.
- I can imagine Jesus getting up from the stern, maybe whipping His eyes with a brief yawn.
 - He looks around, sees the chaotic conditions, sees the disciples' faces of fear, then proceeds to lift His hand and voice and rebukes the winds and waves by saying "Hush, be still".
- The Greek words here for "Hush, be still" are two separate words.
 - "Hush" is *siopao* which means to be silent.
 - "Be still" is *phimo-o* which means to shut up as with a muzzle. As if placing control upon the mouth of an animal.
 - In other words, Jesus speaks to this great storm and the wind and seas and they immediately obey Him.
 - This happens so suddenly that Mark says that the storm immediately became calm.
- There are 3 big picture items that we see between verses 38 and 39 that we must point out. We see the following:
 - 1. Jesus exercises authority over nature
 - 2. Jesus responds to the needs of His disciples
 - 3. Creation responds accordingly to its Creator in perfect obedience.
- You may have noticed that this situation contains some interestingly similar circumstances from that of one particular Old Testament book.
 - If you are familiar with the book of Jonah, we could literally put up similar passages and see similar content yet completely different responses from the main characters (Jonah and Jesus).
 - Although the causes of the storms are different, both situations produce a common theme.
 - The common theme in both is that both Jonah and Jesus trusted in the Lord knowing that there was no need to fear the storm.
 - This is why both Jonah and Jesus were able to rest in the boat while everyone around them were in great panic.
- The reality was whether the storm led to their dismay or to their lives being spared, there was no need for fear for they belonged to the Lord.
 - Friends, this was the faith Jesus was looking for from the insiders!
 - This is why Jesus' question to these men was: "Why are you afraid? Do you still have no faith?"
- This very question demonstrated Jesus' growing frustration, yet at the same time it exhibited immense patience.

- Why are we able to come to this particular conclusion?
- Well, if we look at the word “afraid” in Greek from Jesus’ line of questioning, we find our answer there.
- The word for “afraid” in this verse is *deilos* which means cowardly or timid.
 - In other words, do you not see that I am in this storm with you?
- Understand that the issue here is not that these men don’t believe that Jesus is Messiah.
 - They recognized Jesus as the promised Messiah and their faith was in Him, however, their faith required more development into Who He truly was.
 - To put it plainly, they still displayed insufficient faith.
 - This is what prompts Jesus’ second half of the question; “How is it that you have no faith?”
- Can you sense the frustration and maybe even disappointment in Jesus’ line of questioning here?
 - Recognize that by this time the waters have ceased its crashing and the winds have ceased in their roaring.
- Jesus’ point here is, you have seen me provide for others who simply wanted to be healed because I can, yet you don’t believe enough to know I care about your very needs?
 - The disciples have seen Jesus respond in various ways over and over again and yet they panic as if He was incapable or unable to meet the need.
- If this storm was a test of where the disciples were in their trust in Messiah, they have failed miserably, however, in Him there is no failure.
 - Deuteronomy 31:8 says it this way speaking to Joshua succeeding Moses.

Deuteronomy 31:8 The Lord is the one who goes ahead of you; He will be with you. He will not fail you or forsake you. Do not fear or be dismayed.”

- The real question that begs to be asked is: “What did the disciples see that moved them from cowardly fear to marveling at Messiah?
 - Check out our last verse for tonight, verse 41.

Mark 4:41 They became very much afraid and said to one another, “Who then is this, that even the wind and the sea obey Him?”

- Mark wraps it up here by telling the reader that after Jesus displays His power and authority over nature itself that it caused the insiders to be afraid.
 - Friends, these men were so afraid that they had to completely rethink the very identity of Jesus.
 - Reason being was because His very actions, authority, and power were beyond what Messiah could do.
 - Notice that Mark uses emotional wording here regarding the insiders’ responses

to Jesus' demonstration of power, he said "They became afraid..."

- Before we make the assumption that this is the same afraid as in Jesus' line of questioning, we have to examine the language here.
- This afraid is not the same. The word for "afraid" here in Greek is *phobeo*. It means a heightened fear in the sense of high reverence or respect.
- In other words, their regard for Jesus went from where it was to a Holy reverence.
 - The question that comes to mind here is, "Why now?" Why does the disciple's sense of Jesus change at this point?
 - This has all to do with Jesus' command over nature!
- To really understand this one needs to have a connection to that of the Hebrew scriptures.
 - Within the Old Testament, the Only One who had the power and authority to command nature itself was Yahweh.
- Seeing this display of power was something they had heard before from generations past, such as how God split the Red Sea and allowed the children of Israel to pass over dry land.
 - Check out what the Psalms say about this experience:

**Psalm 106:9 Thus He rebuked the Red Sea and it dried up,
And He led them through the deeps, as through the wilderness.**

- If that doesn't show you the display of the power that was witnessed in those boats maybe this will hit the nail on the head.
 - Check out Psalm 107:23-32

**Psalm 107:23 Those who go down to the sea in ships,
Who do business on great waters;**

**Psalm 107:24 They have seen the works of the Lord,
And His wonders in the deep.**

**Psalm 107:25 For He spoke and raised up a stormy wind,
Which lifted up the waves of the sea.**

**Psalm 107:26 They rose up to the heavens, they went down to the depths;
Their soul melted away in their misery.**

**Psalm 107:27 They reeled and staggered like a drunken man,
And were at their wits' end.**

**Psalm 107:28 Then they cried to the Lord in their trouble,
And He brought them out of their distresses.**

**Psalm 107:29 He caused the storm to be still,
So that the waves of the sea were hushed.**

**Psalm 107:30 Then they were glad because they were quiet,
So He guided them to their desired haven.**

**Psalm 107:31 Let them give thanks to the Lord for His lovingkindness,
And for His wonders to the sons of men!**

**Psalm 107:32 Let them extol Him also in the congregation of the people,
And praise Him at the seat of the elders.**

- What those men witnessed on that boat was only a work that Yahweh could perform.
 - This is why those men were moved to Holy Fear! Could this man not only be the promised King, but God in the flesh!?
 - They have once again witnessed another dimension of Jesus' identity.
 - In one sense the Messianic miracles were in a category of their own; I see you Jesus, you are Messiah.
 - But now they witness Jesus control the things that only God can control.
 - Their knowledge of Who Jesus is unfolds all the more as they experience Him more and more.
 - And may I say, this is the reality of our walk with Jesus!
 - The more you walk with Jesus the more He shows you another dimension of His love, grace, and truth.
 - I love how Mark ends Chapter 4 because He ends the chapter with the question that all are left with after seeing Jesus command the winds and waves.
 - “Who then is this, that even the wind and the sea obey Him?”
 - And I leave us with this question tonight: Do you know Him as the God-Man? Do you know Him as the Christ, the Son of the Living God?
 - Let's pray.