



Faith Over Fear

As Coronavirus Attempts to Dominate the World



Adapted from devotional by Antioch Community Church, Waco, Texas

Mark 4: 35-41

On that day, when evening had come, he said to them, "Let us go across to the other side." And leaving the crowd behind, they took him with them in the boat, just as he was. Other boats were with him. A great windstorm arose, and the waves beat into the boat, so that the boat was already being swamped. But he was in the stern, asleep on the cushion; and they woke him up and said to him, "Teacher, do you not care that we are perishing?" He woke up and rebuked the wind, and said to the sea, "Peace! Be still!" Then the wind ceased, and there was a dead calm. He said to them, "Why are you afraid? Have you still no faith?" And they were filled with great awe and said to one another, "Who then is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him?"

A Profound Lesson Challenging Our Response to Fear

- The Fear in this story is valid.
 - Not a story of irrational anxiety
 - A great windstorm
 - Waves beating the boat.
 - And the boat was already being swamped.
- This was real!
 - The disciples were lifelong fishermen.
 - They knew the sea and recognized genuine danger
 - They were convinced they would die.



Recognize the Remarkable Contrast with Jesus

- Look at how Jesus Acted.
 - *“He was in the stern, asleep on a cushion.”*
 - Mark paints a picture of serenity, but it was surrounded by chaos.
- How do you think the disciples viewed Jesus at this moment?
 - Jesus was one of the few in the boat that was not a trained fisherman!
 - Did the disciples think that his nonchalant attitude was a symptom of ignorance?
 - Did they not recognize it was a sign of enduring faith?
- The disciples were facing real danger, one they expertly understood.
 - Their teacher seemed oblivious and out of touch.



Jesus Responds

- It was at that moment that Jesus awoke.
 - Picture Him slowly sitting up.
 - Maybe he was stretching for a moment.
 - He then steps out to command the waves: “be still”
 - Instantly the wind died and the seas calmed.
- At his word.
 - The very word that spoke the sea into existence!
 - His question is one we must all answer:

Why are you afraid?



Take a moment to ask yourself “Why are you afraid?”

- Fear can be a symptom of lack of faith.
 - It is human to imagine a worst-case scenario occurring in the future.
 - Whether a pandemic, economic collapse, or something else.
 - Do we remember that God will be with us in that future?
 - Do we only see waves.....
 - Or is our attention fixed on Jesus who still rests in the boat?
- Fear is a form of thinking in which we imagine a future without God.
- Even in a “worst-case scenario”,
 - Jesus has funny habit of showing up
 - And transforming the situation into something else entirely



Jesus Knows How We Feel

- This does not negate the reality of human suffering and grief.
 - Jesus repeatedly demonstrates His compassion for those suffering.
- We should not feel condemned for the fear we feel.
 - It is natural to worry, no matter how strong your faith is.
 - You will probably still deal with it to some extent.
 - It does challenge us to lift our perspective so that we are not *defined* by fear.
- No matter what occurs in this life:
- **Jesus – the very Word of God- is still with us.**
 - He has authority over the storm.
 - And he has conquered death itself.
 - We may go through trials, but we live in hope



Facing the Challenge

- It is all-too-easy and all-too-human to let fear grow bigger than God.
 - Like the disciples we follow Jesus during everyday life.
 - But what happens when storm appears out of nowhere and threatens to swamp us?
 - How do we view Jesus?
 - As a man who doesn't understand the dangers of the situation?
 - Or as the God who reigns over all earth?



Our Perspective Changes Everything!