

The Storm Mark 4:35-41 New American Standard Bible (NASB)

Jesus Stills the Sea

*³⁵ On that day, when evening came, He *said to them, “Let’s go over to the other side.”³⁶ After dismissing the crowd, they *took Him along with them in the boat, just as He was; and other boats were with Him. ³⁷ And a fierce gale of wind *developed, and the waves were breaking over the boat so much that the boat was already filling with water.³⁸ And yet 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?” 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. ⁴⁰ And He said to them, “Why are you afraid? Do you still have no faith?” ⁴¹ They became very much afraid and said to one another, “Who, then, is this, that even the wind and the sea obey Him?”*

Introduction

This morning, I am going to talk about ‘fear’ and ‘anxiety.’ We are living in an age where almost everyone is negatively affected by fear and anxiety. Old and young, male, and female. The news in media don’t help much. Covid made it worse.

Of course, with one sermon, I cannot equip you with all the tools for life’s problems. However, I will guide you to God’s Word, the time proven divine way of handling life’s challenges. Indeed, God’s Word is the way and the source of wisdom and strength. With His Word, we can effectively tackle and even overcome fear and anxiety. So, please listen carefully.

Question: are you free from fear/anxiety? If not, where can we find the best remedy for fear and anxiety? The answer is: Jesus whose name is ‘Immanuel.’ God with us. With His presence in our hearts, fear and anxiety subside. When we realize who Jesus is and what He can do for us, we become free indeed from fear and anxiety. When we practice His presence and His power daily in faith, we will overcome fear and anxiety. Faith in Jesus casts away fear and anxiety from our heart. We will discover that truth in today’s text.

Content

Once again, I will lead you through today’s Scripture lesson verse by verse. First, verses 35-37.

*³⁵ On that day, when evening came, He *said to them, “Let’s go over to the other side.”³⁶ After dismissing the crowd, they *took Him along with them in the boat, just as He was; and other boats were with Him. ³⁷ And **a fierce gale of wind** developed, and the waves were breaking over the boat so much that the boat was already filling with water.*

A fierce gale wind (λαίλαψ): *Squall, as used by weather forecasters, a sudden wind-speed increase of 8 meters per second (18 miles per hour) or more, for one minute or longer* (Britannica.com).

Like the storm that night in the Sea of Galilee, a sudden storm arises in our lives from time to time. Unexpectedly. It pounds on us with wind, waves, and waters that would knock us down or drown us. It scares us to death (E.g., My drowning experience). Sometimes, the life's scare falls upon us without warning even when we are with Jesus. Even when we have been faithful to God. Even when we have been good, a storm still arises in our lives. Welcome to the real world.

Let me tell you this: That evening, Jesus planned this trip with one thing in mind. He wanted to increase the faith of His disciples by teaching them the true identity of Jesus their Master. Jesus knew all about the storm in advance. The disciples didn't. Jesus could've exempted them from the storm scare, yet He didn't. He just let them go through. Why? Because He wanted them to discover who Jesus truly was through their trouble. It would scare them for sure, but He wanted to strengthen their faith than before.

Likewise, God knows everything about our future and what's ahead of us. We don't. Some of them are not pleasant. Others are scary, yet He just lets us go through. All of us. Why? Because He wants us to discover how mighty Jesus our Lord is. He wants us to be stronger in our faith and become closer to Him. For that purpose, He uses life's storms. He uses our circumstances to strengthen our faith in Him and to build up our character.

I hope by now you have realized that your life is not trouble free. Mine isn't, either. No one's life is perfect, right? In fact, it has been that way, it is, and it will be so. For everyone. One thing I noticed in the Scriptures is this: God never promises a trouble-free life. Neither does He exempt us from life's challenges. Afflictions await all people even those whom God considers righteous. Listen. Psalm 34:19 says, *Many are **the afflictions of the righteous**, But the LORD delivers him out of them all.* Even Christ the sinless has suffered in His flesh (1 Peter 4:1).

Get this picture: God never intends to keep us in life's greenhouse all the time. Rather, from time to time, He takes us outside and trains us in all-weather conditions. *Rain, snow, heat, scorching Sun, wind, and even storm.* All for our own good. For our character building. For our spiritual muscle building, if you will. The Lord is not most interested in our comfortable life, but rather He wants to build in us "God-approved character" ('dokimos' in Greek). Such thing can be only achieved through life's hard training, a.k.a. afflictions. Remember: God never promises a trouble-free life. However, for difficult times, He promises two things: His presence and deliverance.

v. 38: *And yet 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?"* --- Interesting, when our life's boat is filling up with waters, when we are so scared of dying, and when we are so

desperately trying to survive, Jesus seems so calm. So quiet. Sound asleep! Comfortably! On the cushion! How can He be asleep? Why doesn't He wake up right away? Why is He doing nothing? As if He doesn't know what's going on. As if He doesn't care.

It's not that Jesus doesn't care. He does. Rather, it means two things: first, the violent storm is no match to Jesus. No matter how scary our life problem seems to us, to Jesus, it is nothing. Nothing can scare Him. He is *that great*. He is *that mighty*. It is always good to know *that truth*. Let us never forget! Secondly, He is waiting for us to come to Him in prayer, as His disciples did. Currently, if you are not relieved from fear/anxiety, there are two possibilities. Either you don't know Christ yet, or you haven't cried to Jesus to wake Him up.

So, the disciples go to Him and scream, "*Lord, You sure care, don't You? We know you do!*" (literal translation).

By the way, it is a good prayer: *Lord, do You not care that we are perishing?* In trouble, let us wake up our Lord with this prayer. It will get His attention.

v. 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.* ---Jesus wakes up, stands up and speaks up. He speaks two sentences (two words in Greek): *Hush. Be still.* And the wind immediately died down and the waters became perfectly calm. Wow! Once again, I am most impressed with the power of the words spoken by the Lord. So, folks, amid storm, let Jesus speak for you! Wake Him up and let Him rebuke the storm with His own words. The storm will calm down. He will do it for you, Amen?

v. 40: *And He said to them, "Why are you afraid? Do you still have no faith?"* --- After such a terrifying experience (don't we call it trauma?), Jesus turns to His disciples and ask questions. This is the teaching moment that He was waiting for. About the faith and trust in Him amid storms.

Two questions: *Why are you afraid? Do you still have no faith?* Fear and faith. Faith and fear. Do you see the inverse relation between fear and faith here? The stronger faith is, the less fear we have. The less faith we have, the more fear we experience. Let the faith control over fear, not the other way around.

By the way, what kind of faith is Jesus talking about? He's not talking about our head knowledge with which we confess that He is our *Savior and Lord*. Rather, the faith that works in life's tough situations. The faith that surpasses the intellectual understanding of who He is. The practical faith that we apply to our daily situations. The faith that helps us to overcome fear and anxiety. The faith that will keep us calm in a storm. The faith that works, not just in words, but in real life situations. So, when you are afraid, fearful, terrified, or dying, ask yourself: *Why am I afraid? Do I still have no faith?*

v. 41: *They became very much afraid and said to one another, "Who, then, is this, that even the wind and the sea obey Him?"* --- The disciples newly discover here who Jesus is. He is much more than a good moral teacher or healer. He is the Lord of nature whom even the wind and the sea obey. When you are overwhelmed with life's forces beyond your control, remember where Jesus is, who He is, and what He can do for you. He is with you and in you (never left you). He is the Lord of all. Every creature in the entire universe obeys Him. E.g., During the Covid in 2020, whenever I was afraid of the virus, the Lord taught me to declare to the virus that it had to fear the Lord inside of me, not me to fear the virus! That totally cast away the fear from me. Indeed, Jesus is the Lord of all to whom every knee shall bow (Romans 14:11). He is greater than any problems in the world. He will calm down the storm for you. That Lord of all is with you. What and whom shall you be afraid of, then?

Conclusion

Wrap up:

1) No one is exempt from life's troubles. God lets us go through afflictions from time to time for our own good. Therefore, let's take it as it is with the conviction that the LORD delivers us out of them **all**. Not just from a few, but from **all**. He will see us through.

2) Trust in Jesus amid storms. Remember where He is. He is with you in your heart. Remember also who He is: He is the Lord of all. Know what He can do for you. He can silence the violent storm in our lives. Every single one of them. He is in control. Cry out to Him. Wake Him up and let Him stand and speak out for you. Let Him calm down the storm for you. It will obey Him.

3) Recite verse 40 daily: "*Why am I afraid? Do I still have no faith?*" (v. 40). Here's another one. Philippians 4:6-7. ⁶ *Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God.* ⁷ *And the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.* **Stop** worrying (like the sign of crossing guard). **Be** thankful (trust in God, not complain). **Cry** out to Jesus (wake Him up). **Experience** Christ' peace and deliverance.

Let us pray.