

# **Fear Christ, Not Your Storm!**

## **Three Truths That Free You From Fear**

([Sermon by Reagan Rose](#) — Notes by me, Jean Wilund)

---

### **Trials Often Uncover Treasures**

Four years of a severe drought created the perfect storm for two brothers, Yuval and Moshe Lufan to uncover a treasure.

The year was 1986, and the location was the Sea of Galilee—the same sea (or actually lake) on which Jesus used a trial to uncover a priceless treasure for His disciples.

Want to hear the story about the brothers and their amazing discovery?

Listen to Reagan's sermon. He set the scene perfectly for the message of his sermon from Mark 4:35-41.

### **Mark 4:35-41**

On that day, when evening had come, he [Jesus] said to them [the disciples], "Let us go across to the other side." And leaving the crowd, they took him with them in the boat, just as he was. And other boats were with him.

And a great windstorm arose, and the waves were breaking into the boat, so that the boat was already filling. 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?"

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. He said to them, "Why are you so afraid? Have you still no faith?" 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?"

### **Jesus Christ was Both God and Man**

The book of Mark is divided into two sections: Chapter 1-10 deal with Jesus' ministry in and around Galilee. Chapters 11-16 deal with Jesus ministry around Jerusalem.

Of the 19 miracles recorded in Mark, 16 of them happen in the first eight chapters.

Mark was establishing early on who Jesus was. That He was who He claimed to be: God incarnate.

Jesus demonstrated His power and authority over the elements of nature, demons, sickness, and death. Only God can do this.

Jesus Christ was indeed God incarnate.

Mark also goes out of his way to show that Jesus was also 100% man. He shows Jesus sleeping, eating, drinking, and becoming hungry.

Jesus Christ was both God and man.

## What the Disciples Forgot in Their Trial

This passage in Mark is about Jesus' identity as God. But it's also a story about the disciples.

Mark tells the story from the perspective of how the disciples reacted to this tremendous trial that came upon them as they were crossing over the sea. And how they viewed Jesus in this and what their faith did when trials came.

What we'll see in this passage is that believers can stand firm in our faith even in the fiercest trials of life if we remember three truths the disciples forgot in their trial.

## 3 Truths the Disciples Forgot in Their Trial

1. Christ controls the timing and circumstances of your trials
2. Christ cares for you in the midst of your trials.
3. Christ conducts you through your trials

### 1. Christ Controls the Timing and Circumstances of Your Trials

**“On that day, when evening had come [the end of a long day of ministry], he [Jesus] said to them [the disciples], “Let us go across to the other side” [to the country of the Gerasenes—see Mark 5]. And leaving the crowd, they took him with them in the boat, just as he was [He didn't get out of the boat before heading off to the other side]. And other boats were with him [other fishing boats were in the lake around Him at the same time. These boats most likely turned back and didn't follow Him because there's no more mention of them].” — Mark 4:35-36**

Trials come to all of us. Thus, it's important to remember when they come that **Christ controls not only the circumstances of our trials but also the timing. He controls *when* they come.** *When* He tests us.

There's a purpose in the trials we face in life because God is in control of all things.

This passage opens at the end of a busy day of ministry. The crowds had pressed into Jesus until He made the world's first floating pulpit. He got into a boat, pushed out into the Sea of Galilee, and preached all day.

When Jesus was done preaching, the disciples got into the boat with Jesus, and He said, "Let's go over to the other side." He was taking them to the other side of the lake to the Gerasenes.

The day had worn Him out. He was human after all. (100% man). So, it's no surprise that when they got into the boat, He fell asleep.

**The disciples had no idea what they were about to face.**

They're probably thinking, "Wow! Everything is going great! The ministry is wonderful. We're with Jesus. We've seen Him do miracles. This is amazing, and we get to be a part of this."

They had no idea when they took off that they were about to face possibly one of the most terrifying events of their lives. But Jesus knew. He's God after all. (100% man—100% God).

Jesus initiated this trip. It didn't surprise Him because He controls the circumstances of everything.

Christ has a purpose even for the terror that is for our good and our faith.

Jesus had a purpose for the trial they'd soon face.

His plan was, of course, to demonstrate who He was—that He was truly God and had power over creation. But He could've revealed His great power in a way that wasn't going to scare the living daylights out of the disciples.

He also had a purpose in the trial for their faith—to test their faith.

We'll see at the end of the passage that Jesus questioned their faith because of their reaction to all that happened.

If you're going through a trial now, have ever been through a trial, or are going to go through a trial in the future, know that God is in control of those circumstances.

God brings the precise trial precisely when you need it. And He's doing it, not to punish you or to hurt you, but for your good.

Jesus uses trials to discipline us, make us more like Christ, and help us turn from our sin, but also to grow our faith.

“In this you greatly **rejoice**, even though now for a little while, if necessary, you 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

Christ brings trials *so that* the tested genuineness of our faith will be found to praise and honor Christ through our sanctification.

The trials show us areas of our faith which need to grow. Christ wants to refine and hone us. To make us more dependent upon Him. It's for our good. Believers in Christ want this work done in us! We want to be more like Him.

We don't have to love the trial, but we can and should [rejoice because we know it's testing our faith and growing us.](#)

Bad health, finances, loss, etc. can cause us to spiral into despair, fear, and anxiety. "What's going to happen to me? To my family?" These trials serve to demonstrate that we weren't trusting in God Himself as the one who gave us those things. We were trusting in the things themselves. When they're threatened, we begin to spiral into fear and reveal the weakness of our faith.

Christ controls our circumstances. He takes us into the trials precisely when we need them—and into the precise trials we need—to learn to trust Him at all times.

## 2. Christ Cares for You in the Midst of Your Trials

**And a great windstorm arose, and the waves were breaking into the boat, so that the boat was already filling. 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?”** — Mark 4:37-38

We may laugh at the disciples for being afraid of a storm with Jesus right there in the boat with them. "Hello! You're with Jesus!"

But these were seasoned fishermen. If they were afraid, it was a serious storm.

The Sea of Galilee is like a wind tunnel. Fishermen today call the storms on this lake “Shark.”

The disciples were facing something truly terrifying. And what was Jesus doing? He was asleep. Water was probably already sloshing overboard, and He's still asleep.

The disciples woke Him and said, “Teacher, do You not care that we are perishing?”

That's a loaded question.

The disciples were afraid and angry. "Don't you care!"

Why were they angry?

Why are *we* angry when we go through trials?

We can detect the answer in their question. The disciples had seen Jesus' power. They believed Jesus *could* deliver them, but He was choosing not to.

Why? Because He didn't care.

### **“Don't You care, Jesus?”**

"Don't You care, Jesus?" is a loaded question! And a bad question.

If He is *able* to deliver you from a trial but is *choosing not to*, why? Why would He do this?

This question has two possible answers:

1. He doesn't care.
2. He cares and has a caring purpose for their trial.

The reason He brings trials upon us isn't because He *doesn't* care. It's because He *does* care.

He cares about your holiness. About growing your faith.

Does Jesus care? People say there are no bad questions, but this is a bad question.

Jesus chose these disciples specifically to teach them, to privately explain things to them, to be with them.

Does He care?

This Jesus, who laid aside His own glory to take on humble flesh of man, to come to earth, suffer and die on the cross in the place of undeserving sinners.

Does He care? Yes!

**When you're facing trials, the answer is not that Jesus doesn't care. He has far beyond proven that He cares.**

He who did not spare his own Son but gave him up for us all, how will he not also with him graciously give us all things?

*Romans 8:32 ESV*

If God is going to give His own Son, His precious Son, to die for your sins, then the book on if He cares should be closed.

How will He not also graciously give you all things?

Knowing—and believing—this Truth re-frames how we see our trials.

When we know that He cares and that the world is not a fluke or an unmoored universe where random things happen, but that God is sovereignly in control over everything that happens, then when trials comes, we can bypass that first answer to the question. Yes. God cares.

We can say, "I don't know why this is happening, but I *do* know there's a purpose for it, and Christ cares for me in this trial. He will use it."

When you face trials, remember: Christ controls the circumstances of your trial and He cares for you. And also, Christ will conduct you through your trials.

### 3. Christ Conducts Us Through Our Trials

**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. He said to them, "Why are you so afraid? Have you still no faith?" 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?"** — Mark 4:39-41

In the boat in the storm, Jesus' deity and humanity stood in powerful juxtaposition.

In all of His true humanness, Jesus was asleep in the boat, but then in His divinity, He immediately got up and commanded the elements of earth, "Peace, be still." And they obeyed.

All He had to say was a word because He is God. He made the elements. They know and obeyed their Master. They must.

**It's important we recognize that Jesus was both truly man and truly God.** The incarnation of Jesus was vital.

It matters that **Jesus was truly man** because that's *how* He was able to function as the substitute for all those who would put their faith in Him.

And it matters that **Jesus was truly God** because that's *why* He could perfectly obey His Father, fully bear God's wrath on the cross for our sin, and ultimately overcome death and rise again.

Because **Jesus, the God-man**, overcame the grave, all who put their faith in Him can be forgiven by God and declared righteous, and receive eternal life.

We needed a *person* who could faithfully fulfill all God's commands perfectly.

We failed miserably at living without sin and incurred guilt. That's why Jesus came as a man. He had to live a perfect life as a man so He could pay the price for our sin in our place. Only a sinless person could pay for the sins of another. Otherwise, they'd owe the penalty for their own sins.

It's no dishonor to Christ to say He was God *and* man. It's the basis for His sympathetic intercession on our behalf (See Hebrews 10).

Right now, if you're a true Christian, Christ is bringing your case before the Father and saying, "I have paid for that sin!"

## Peace, Be Still! — Why are You So Afraid?

The sleeping Savior awoke and commanded the storm—something only God can do. Everything in and around the boat was stilled—except the disciples.

"How mighty were his works! There was no trace of storm another moment after he had been awakened. The most blustering of the conflicting winds slept like a babe in its mother's arms. The waves were as marble." Charles H. Spurgeon ([Christ Asleep in the Vessel](#))

Jesus rebuked the wind and the waves, and then He rounded on His disciples. **"Why are you so afraid?"**

This almost seems like an unfair question. Why are they so afraid? They almost just died in the storm.

But then Jesus provides the answer to His own question: **"Have you still no faith?"**

When He called them afraid, it's not a soft word. It's the Greek word *deilos*, mean means "afraid" and is used to express "cowardly fear."

It wasn't an unfair question because of who was in the boat with them. It was unreasonable for the disciples to fear in the presence of Jesus.

But as terrified as the disciples were before Jesus stilled the storm, they were even more terrified after. Verse 41 describes their terror:

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?" — Mark 4:41 ESV

The disciples had been afraid of what was *outside* the boat. Now there were afraid of who was *inside* the boat with them. And now they're thinking correctly. They're fearing the one they should fear above everything else.

The disciples feared Jesus. [The Greek word for *fear* used here [*phobeō*] means "awe and reverence."]

They asked rhetorically, “Who then is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him?” as in, "He really IS God!"

Their terror came from what they knew about the type of person who could calm a storm with His very words.

Did the disciples think about the Red Sea when God parted the waters in wide walls on either side of the Israelites (Exodus 14)?

Did they think about Psalm 89:9?

*You rule the raging of the sea; when its waves rise, you still them (Psalm 89:9).*

Or Psalm 77:16?

*When the waters saw you, O God, when the waters saw you, they were afraid; indeed, the deep trembled (Psalm 77:16)*

Did they remember it was God who did every single one of those and wonder, "Who is this in the boat with us?!"

The disciples thinking shifted concerning the workings of the universe in the face of Jesus' power.

That which was most fearful to them, namely their own death in the storm, just got put in its place by a greater fear.

They had wrongly ordered fears.

## **Shark!**

Thinking about the order of your fears like this:

If you're swimming in an ocean and a tiger shark swims up. That's scary! You don't want to get bit by a tiger shark.

But if a great white shark swims up and eats the tiger shark, you don't say, “Whew! That's a relief.”

Your problems just got bigger!

Your fears are ordered by what's more fearful.

If God is there, He is more greatly to be feared than whatever circumstance you face, including death.



## Fear Christ! Not the Storm

If you will walk by faith with Christ in such a way that you keep this Truth before you that God is more greatly to be feared than anything, **you will fear nothing in this world.**

Nothing.

You will not fear those who can kill the body. You will fear Him who can kill the body and then afterward send the soul on to hell (Matthew 10:28; Luke 12:5)

Christ is the greatest thing to be feared in the universe. But if you are in Christ, He's in the boat with you, and He's on your side. He cares for you.

## Same Fear. Different Reaction

Next, Jesus went to the Gerasene to a man possessed by a legion of demons—a demoniac.

The man was constantly running around naked and breaking things. He caused a continual ruckus. The townspeople kept trying to chain the man up, but he kept breaking the chains.

Then Jesus showed up.

Jesus cast the demons out of this man and into a herd of pigs, so then the pigs went "Wee! Wee! Wee!" all the way off the cliff and into the sea.

Jesus solved the people's problem. The demoniac was restored to a right mind, free of the demons. Yay!

Except the people didn't thank Jesus. They begged Him to leave them.

They reacted this way for the same reason the disciples feared when Jesus calmed the storm. When someone more powerful shows up and gets rid of something that was already powerful, *that* it who is more to be feared.

This was undoubtably God in the boat with them.

## Trials are Serious! But Jesus is In the Boat and In Us

It can sound cheesy to say, "Jesus is in our boat." But we need to hear this message because exactly what the disciples experienced is true of us.

In the early church understood that this event in the disciples' lives is emblematic of the Christian life. Horrible things happen to us in this sin-cursed, fallen world. BUT God is in the boat with us. And it's God. It's God. He is more greatly to be feared than *all* we face. And if you are in Christ because you have put your faith in Him, He is on your side. His power is not aimed against you. He is there to conduct you through their trials. He's going to use it for your good. You're going.

to grow through it. It might not be easy, but it will be for your good and your benefit. He will be there with you.

In fact, we have it better than the disciples did:

But I tell you the truth, it is to your advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away, **the Helper** [the Holy Spirit] will not come to you; but if I go, I will send Him to you.

*John 16:7*

When Jesus rose up into heaven to return to the Father, He sent His Holy Spirit to indwell Christians. We have it better than the disciples because Jesus is *in* us. His Spirit lives inside us.

Jesus is the one who has overcome the world.

These things I have spoken to you, so that in Me you may have peace. In the world you have tribulation, but take courage; **I have overcome the world.**”

*John 16:33*

**He is greater than any trial, and His Spirit lives inside us.**

You are from God, little children, and have overcome them; because **greater is He who is in you than he who is in the world.**

*1 John 4:4*

Our fear of deadly peril doesn't make sense when we really *believe* Jesus is *with* us and *in* us.

If you struggle to understand why missionary martyrs have been able to walk to the gallows in a hostile country with joy or men and women have faced certain death while trusting in Christ, perhaps your faith needs to be strengthened.

"Have you still no faith?" The Lord will use trials to strengthen our faith.

Our fears need to be differently ordered. Death isn't a good thing, but Believers shouldn't fear it. We know who's in control of it and who we'll meet afterward.

Our fear of deadly peril doesn't make sense when we really *believe* Jesus is *with* us and *in* us.

But only if we belong to Him.

Otherwise, be afraid of Jesus.

If you haven't placed your faith in Christ, none of this is for you, and He's not in the boat with you.

Death *should* be fearful for you if you're not in Christ because of what comes after death: "a fearful expectation of judgment" (Hebrews 10:27).

You're going to meet Jesus either way. What's different is the terms on which you'll meet Him. Judgment or acceptance.

Put your faith in Christ. Turn from your sin and turn to Him in faith. Repent and believe. It's a simple proposition.

Is the sin that you love, is it so lovely and enjoyable that you would turn away from an eternity with Christ? That you would go down guilty? That's foolish. You need to have a vision of who you should truly fear, and then run to Him. Run to Him in faith.

**To wrap up**, if you want to have faith in the midst of life's storms, remember what the disciples forgot: Christ controls the circumstances of your trials, Christ cares for you in the midst of your trials, and Christ conducts you through your trials. He's in the boat with you.

**Let's pray:** "Father, we praise you, and we thank you. You truly are more greatly to be feared than anything in this world for You are in charge of all of it. I pray, Lord, that You would help us today to have a bigger vision of You. A greater trust in You. Lord, we know our faith is weak, and we ask for Your help to strengthen it. Help us to see You as You are and to thereby see the world accordingly. Thank You, Lord. Be with us the rest of this week as we go out and to be the light of the world. We pray this in Jesus' name, Amen."

---

## REMEMBER THE 3 TRUTHS THE DISCIPLES FORGOT

1. Christ controls every circumstance of your trials
2. Christ cares for you in your trials
3. Christ conducts you through your trials



---

## About Reagan Rose:



I'm a slave of Jesus Christ, husband, father, and Director of Digital Platforms at [Grace to You](#). I earned my Master of Divinity from The Master's Seminary. You can also find other articles I've written at [The Master's Seminary Blog](#).

Watch my [video testimony](#), or [listen to it](#).

You can follow me on Twitter [@reaganrose](#)

---

Larry and I had the incredible blessing of hosting Reagan when he came to preach at our church, [Grace Bible Church](#). Reagan is a gifted teacher, hilarious storyteller, and devoted to the glory of God and His Word. Our only regret from his visit is that he didn't stay longer and didn't bring his family. Maybe next time?

Check out Reagan's podcast, [Redeeming Productivity](#): "A Christian Approach to Getting Stuff Done. This is [Redeeming Productivity](#), a blog and podcast, where we talk about technology, techniques, and theology in the light of the Bible, to help Christians get more done and glorify God in how they do it."