

WHY ARE YE SO FEARFUL

MARK 4:40

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⁴⁰ And he said unto them, Why are ye so fearful? how is it that ye have no faith?

Introduction:

Several years ago, a publication called *USA Weekend* ran a story entitled "Fear: What Americans are Afraid of Today." A poll was conducted, and people were asked to name the things they feared the most.

54% of those surveyed said that they were afraid of being in a car crash. 53% said they were afraid of having cancer. Among other fears listed in the survey were AIDS, Alzheimer's, inadequate Social Security, and natural disasters.

Fear is a subject with which most of us are familiar. Someone once said, "Show me a man who doesn't know the meaning of fear and I'll show you a dummy that gets beat up a lot."

There is a fear that can be beneficial to us.

Psalms 111:10

¹⁰ The fear of the LORD *is* the beginning of wisdom: a good understanding have all they that do *his commandments*: his praise endureth for ever.

While we should reverence and fear the Lord, apart from Him, the Word of God calls upon us to live fearlessly in this world. The phrase “fear not” appears sixteen times in the New Testament alone.

As children of God, our lives are to be lived by faith, not fear.

In Mark chapter four, we find the disciples panic-stricken and frightened during a violent storm on the Sea of Galilee.

After the Lord stopped the storm, He asks them a pair of good questions. In verse 40, He asked them, “Why are ye so fearful? How is it that ye have no faith?”

That night, as the boat began to fill with water, and the disciples envisioned their own burial at sea, they had no faith, just fear.

Notice three truths that we see in this story.

Notice that even in the storm:

1. THE PROMISE OF THE LORD SECURES US

In verse 35, before the disciples began their journey out on to the Sea of Galilee, the Lord Jesus said something to them that at the time seemed insignificant, though it could have helped them had they remembered it in the storm.

Mark 4:35

³⁵ And the same day, when the even was come, he saith unto them, Let us pass over unto the other side.

It was the Lord's plan to go from one side of the lake to the other.

Because the Lord planned to reach the other side, His plan was as good as a promise. Though the disciples thought they were going to die that night in the storm, had they recalled what Jesus had said, they would have known that for them to die in the storm would be for the Lord Jesus to break His word.

Likewise, though the storms of life may rage, we have a word from God regarding our trip through life.

Philippians 1:6

⁶ Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform *it* until the day of Jesus Christ:

We got in the boat with Christ the day we were saved. Though at times the wind blows hard, and the storm rages around us, God has told us where we are going.

Notice a couple of things about the promise that secures us. Notice first of all that this promise is:

A. A Promise for Our Deliverance

There are those who take the presence of a storm in their life as an indication that God has failed them, or that His Word has not come true.

However, in our text, the Lord made no assurances for an easy journey. He did not promise His disciples that there would be no storm, or that the sailing would be easy.

Notice again His words in verse 35. He said, “Let us pass over...” That phrase comes from one Greek word that literally means “to go through.

Nowhere is the Christian given a guarantee of clear skies and calm seas as they journey through life. No, in fact, storms are part of God’s providential plan for the lives of His children.

What *is* promised for the followers of Christ is that regardless of the storm that blows, we are going *through*. We may enter the storm, but the assurance for the believer is that at some point we will exit the storm as well.

We may get wet at times, but we will not drown. We may get soaked by the storm, but we will not sink in the sea! We have a promise for our deliverance.

Notice further that the promise that secures is not only a promise for our deliverance, but it is also:

B. A Promise for our Destination

Notice again in verse 35. Jesus said, “Let us pass over unto the other side...” The destination was the other side of the Sea of Galilee. Though the storm would toss the ship, and turn it from its course, the promise of the Lord Jesus assured the fact that at some point that little ship was going to reach the other side.

The disciples thought the ship was going to end up at the bottom of the lake. The only destination they saw for themselves was a watery grave.

Yet, the Master had clearly stated that they were going to the other side. Their arrival at that destination was certain before the journey even began.

The Word of God tells us that this world is not the final stop on our itinerary. We are pilgrims passing through, in search of another city. Our Savior has promised that we are going to reach the other side some day.

The good news for the believer is that no matter how bad the weather may be in this life, one day, by God's grace, and in fulfillment of His promise, we are going to reach the shores of Heaven. The itinerary of the believer will never be changed by a storm.

We may have to go into the storm, but we are going to make it through, and on to our final destination.

We can have no fear, just faith, because the promise of the Lord secures us. Notice also secondly that:

2. THE PRESENCE OF THE LORD SETTLES US

Mark 4:37

³⁷ And there arose a great storm of wind, and the waves beat into the ship, so that it was now full.

Notice that this storm arose as the boat made its way across the Sea of Galilee.

We are told that the storm became so violent that the waves began to pour into the ship and fill it with water.

When they came to the Lord, rather than wringing His hands, He was sleeping.

Mark 4:38

³⁸ And he was in the hinder part of the ship, asleep on a pillow: and they awake him, and say unto him, Master, carest thou not that we perish?

The truth is that though things looked bad, the disciples could have been at ease as well. Though the Savior may have been asleep, He was asleep on the ship with them. His presence alone should have been enough to settle the scared disciples.

The storms of life may rock our little boats, but we can be settled in the storm knowing that the Lord is with us.

Notice a couple of things about His settling presence. Notice first of all that:

A. His Presence Insured Them

The infamous *Titanic*, built in 1912, was dubbed by some as “unsinkable”. A deck hand was reported to have said, “God himself could not sink this ship.” Unfortunately, on April 14th, on its maiden voyage, the *Titanic* ended up at the bottom of the ocean.

If there ever has been such a thing as an unsinkable vessel, it was this little boat that carried the Lord and His disciples that night on the Sea of Galilee.

His presence in their ship was insurance that they were not going down. No vessel that carries Jesus will ever be overcome by the storm, or buried in the sea.

Notice not only that His presence insured them, but notice also further that His presence had a settling effect on them because:

B. His Presence Instructed Them

The wind was howling, the thunder was crashing, and the waves were spilling over into the boat. The disciples turned to the Lord, only to find Him sound asleep, resting on a pillow.

This was one of those many moments when the disciples were no doubt astonished by the actions of the Lord Jesus.

Jesus rested, not because He was unaware of the storm; He knew about it before it ever began. He rested because He was unafraid of the storm.

We need to look to Him, and learn from Him. Our journey may not always be calm, but that does not mean that we cannot be. We can rest, even in the raging storm, knowing that Christ is with us, and our Father is in control.

Trials will come, but we can be settled by the presence of our Lord Jesus.

There is one more truth we find in this text that enables us to live with no fear, just faith. Notice not

only that *the promise of Jesus secures us*, and *the presence of Jesus settles us*, but notice also thirdly and finally that:

3. THE POWER OF THE LORD SAVES US

Mark 4:38

³⁸ And he was in the hinder part of the ship, asleep on a pillow: and they awake him, and say unto him, Master, carest thou not that we perish?

The disciples, no longer worried about waking the Lord.

This question was answered by the Lord as He stood up and performed a miracle.

Mark 4:39

³⁹ And he arose, and rebuked the wind, and said unto the sea, Peace, be still. And the wind ceased, and there was a great calm.

This story reminds us that our salvation in and from the storm always comes from the power of the Lord Jesus.

Notice a couple of truths about the Lord's power.
Notice first of all:

A. He Can Stop the Storm

With the authority and power that can only belong to God, the Lord Jesus shouted over the storm, and demanded it to settle down and be quiet.

The wind ceased and there was a great calm.

The truth is that our Lord has the power to stop a storm just as quickly as it arises.

The disciples could have stood on that ship and shouted at the wind, and barked at the waves until they were hoarse, but it would have made no difference.

Likewise, all our struggling and worrying over our storms is to no avail. They will blow until the Lord says, "Stop!"

Notice not only that He has the power to stop the storm, but notice also further that:

B. He Can Strengthen the Saint

The Lord's words to the storm had the same effect upon His disciples.

It could be that what you need more than fair weather is a firm heart. Perhaps what Christ wants to do for you is not stop the storm, but rather strengthen your faith.

Albert Einstein once said, "In the middle of difficulty lies opportunity." For the believer, in every storm

tossed journey there is an opportunity to see the power of God displayed in your life.

Next time it is stormy, don't look at the sea; look at the Savior.

Close:

When the winds quit howling, and the swelling sea became a glassy calm, the Lord Jesus turned to those wide-eyed disciples, with their mouths open, and said,

Mark 4:40

⁴⁰ And he said unto them, Why are ye so fearful? how is it that ye have no faith?

Those are good questions. They are good questions for us today. In the midst of our circumstances, when we panic, fret, and fear what might be, the Lord must surely wonder why we are so afraid, and why we have no faith.

When you recall that we have the Savior's promise, the Savior's presence, and the Savior's power, no matter how rough the sea gets, we can live with no fear, just faith.