

Whom Do you Fear?

(Mark 4:35-41)

Introduction

Good morning Lighthouse, are you ready for the Word of God? Whom do you fear? Maybe its not even at a whom but a what. I don't believe I've known anyone personally that has no fear or worry to an extent. There are rational fears and irrational fears. Rational ones can be such finances, family matters, relationships, health losing someone or something. Maybe receiving troubling news from the doctors. It is a human response to trouble. Irrational fears sometimes called phobias are fears that are unlikely to cause any harm. I only want to give a few irrational fears. Common ones include Aerophobia – fear of flying. Hydrophobia – fear of water. Ophidiophobia – fear of snakes. Some very unusual ones now: alektorophobia – fear of chickens. – pogonophobia – fear of beards. My personal favorite: Consecotaleophobia - the fear of chopsticks. There is just about a phobia for about the crazy and weirdest things to be afraid of. A new one that psychologist and other mental health doctors are adding to the list. It is called Coronaphobia. I did not make it up. Many here probably have witness of it. If you have any doubts, go on social media and look at topics that mention Covid 19. Its especially in the responses to Governor Abbot lifting the mask mandate this upcoming Wednesday. He has mix responses. Some are grateful they are given that freedom and choice to wear as mask or not. Others have responded with not so much kind words to say. Ultimately, its fear. Even from those who claim to be born-again Christians. So, what should be our response as a church? Should we fear the change made? Should there be anyone or anything we fear? Let's turn to our passage Mark 4:35-41.

Background

Author: Mark (John Mark) he is the cousin of Barnabas and former missionary companion of Paul before they parted ways as well as close associate to Peter.

Theme: While Matthew intends His Gospel book for His Jewish brothers, Mark's purpose in writing this Gospel book is to provide a narrative on the life of Jesus to primarily Roman – Gentile believers. It is the first Gospel of the 4 we have in our Bible written. Beginning from Jesus' Baptism to the great commission. Ironically, Mark provides the most detail on this one.

Setting: The Sea of Galilee a famous body of water in Israel. Galilee was basically the headquarters for Jesus' ministry on earth. You would think based off its name and accounts in the New Testament that it would an ocean, but it is a fresh-water lake. Only 13 miles in length and 8 miles in width at biggest points. In Israel, I was blessed to sail on the Sea of Galilee with my wife and many of church family. I was not going to attempt to walk on water though.

(Picture of the Sea of Galilee) One of the main highlights was while we were listening to our speaker the night over this passage on the Sea of Galilee, we got hear thunder. It was a cool, you had to be there. Jesus had just finished a long day of teaching and Him and His disciples in the evening were going to sail to other side.

Scripture

Mark 4:35-41 (35) And the same day, when the even was come, he saith unto them, Let us pass over unto the other side. (36) And when they had sent away the multitude, they took him even as he was in the ship. And there were also with him other little ships. (37) And there arose a great storm of wind, and the waves beat into the ship, so that it was now full. (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? (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. (40) And he said unto them, Why are ye so fearful? how is it that ye have no faith? (41) And they feared exceedingly, and said one to another, What manner of man is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him?

Outline

I. The storm rebuked, vv. 35-39.

A. The promise to remember, vv. 35-36.

(35) And the same day, when the even was come, he saith unto them, Let us pass over unto the other side. (36) And when they had sent away the multitude, they took him even as he was in the ship. And there were also with him other little ships.

1. Jesus taught the multitude from a boat just off the shore of the Sea of Galilee.

When the teaching was finished, He didn't return to shore. He just said to the Disciples "Let us pass over unto the other side."

2. This was a promise. If Jesus said they would cross to other side. That should be settled for them.

3. Other smaller ships were there too. Jesus and His disciples were not the only ones on the water that night. I can only imagine the terror of those on the smaller ships.

4. They took Him even as He was. They had not waited till any cloaks were brought. They had not sent a messenger ashore. Weary, and probably hungry, they had taken Him even as He was.

B. A great storm arose, v. 37.

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

1. In Luke's account he writes:

Luke 8:23 But as they sailed he fell asleep: and there came down a storm of wind on the lake; and they were filled with water, and were in jeopardy.

2. Skeptics have ignorantly objected to this event since they suppose the Sea of Galilee is too small for severe waves. However, Galilee is known to have very rough waters in storms as well as storms coming suddenly.
3. Consider this as well, many of Jesus disciples Were these average people with fishing experience in ponds or offshore? These were very experienced fishermen who depended their careers on fishing. They and the sailor would have experience with rough waters and storms. This was no ordinary storm. They were indeed in jeopardy.
4. So where was Jesus throughout all this? The one who claims to be the Son of God, one with the Father and does all these miracles to support that.

C. Jesus' humanity demonstrated, v. 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?

1. Jesus was in the hinder part (back) of the boat asleep!
2. This begs the question; especially from a light sleeper like me, how did He not wake up?
 - a. It could be that He was testing them and already knew the outcome.
 - b. Or it could be that He was that exhausted.
 - c. You may often here the acronym WWJD (What would Jesus do?)
 - d. Pursuing to be more like Jesus. Want to be more like Jesus? Take a nap.
Not in laziness but when the opportunity of rest is there.
3. This shows Jesus had the same needs as we do. He grew weary, he was tired, He knew what it was like to be hungry and betrayed by friends. He rested when He could.

4. A key importance about the humanity of Jesus is it puts Him in position of best qualification as our intercessor.

Hebrews 2:17-18: (17) Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people.

(18) For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted.

5. He understands what He go through. He has been there before. The main difference is He did it all without sin.
6. He slept in peace even though a storm was surrounding Him. He knew His Father was with Him.
7. Sleep for the believer is a wonderful sweet gift from God. It is even sweeter when you sleep as you trust your life in His hands.

Proverbs 3:24-26 (24) When thou liest down, thou shalt not be afraid: yea, thou shalt lie down, and thy sleep shall be sweet. (25) Be not afraid of sudden fear, neither of the desolation of the wicked, when it cometh. (26) For the LORD shall be thy confidence, and shall keep thy foot from being taken.

8. The storm did not wake him. Neither did the arguments and panic of the disciples. They went to Him, woke him and cried to Him “do you care that we are perishing?”

9. Matthews account reads this:

Matthew 8:25: And his disciples came to him, and awoke him, saying, Lord, save us: we perish.

10. In harmonizing the accounts they woke Him, crying “Lord Jesus, save us, do you not care that we are perishing?”

- a. This concerns Jesus as well. He is on the boat, He boat is filling with water and going down. Could they really think the story of Jesus is going to end here in drowning from a boat sinking?

- b. How often in our hearts do we accuse God of not caring when we are in our trials and storms?
- c. He is a God who cares. He never promised for no storms. But He did promise to be with us through it all.

1 Peter 5:6-7

(6) Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time: (7) Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you.

D. Jesus' deity demonstrated, v. 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.

1. Not just Jesus' humanity was demonstrated, who He was and is was also. He is God. Both His human and God nature on display here.
2. He arose and rebuked the wind, and said unto the sea "Peace, be still."
 - a. I don't think it too long for the great calm to come.
 - b. He calmed the storm in simply telling it to stop.
 - c. This same terminology is used when Jesus casts out demons. This was a spiritual battle as was a weather crisis.
 - d. Peace, be still was not just for the storm. His disciples needed it too. He was in control the whole time. How often do we need these words ourselves? Peace, be still. A similar declaration from Psalm 46:10.

Psalm 46:10 Be still, and know that I am God: I will be exalted among the heathen, I will be exalted in the earth.

II. The disciples rebuked, vv. 40-41.

A. The wrong fear of the disciples, v. 40.

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

1. They were rebuked for their fear and lack of faith. In its true core, when we fear these – we are not having faith – trusting in God. The danger was real, the fear was a choice.
 - a. This doesn't mean you shouldn't take any precautions or concerns or dive into danger.
 - b. When the God tells us "Fear not." it means we are not to allow anxiety or fretfulness to rule our lives or take root in our hearts. We are not to be people of panic. We are to be people of faith.
2. The disciples were rightly rebuked for their lack of faith for these reasons.
 - a. First, Jesus had already disclosed they would cross to the other side of Galilee. If they went down in the storm, it would make Jesus wrong. They initially didn't believe His word in that moment.
 - b. Second, they accused Jesus of lacking care for them and their situation. This also is rejecting His words. After all He's already proven to them. Outwardly, it would seem as if He didn't care – He was asleep while water was rising in the boat. They had forgotten in the moment who Jesus is. He wanted them to trust Him. Even when it seems God is not at work in your circumstances, this is the kind of trust God wants to build in you.
 - c. Third, they missed the overall big picture. Would this really be the end of the one who they believed to be the Messiah? – The Christ – The one foretold who would rescue the people of Israel. If Jesus would have perished with them in the storm – He could not be the Messiah.

d. Let's not ever get on a high horse and pretend we wouldn't be afraid in their situation considering the things we get panicked over.

B. The proper fear of the disciples, v. 41.

(41) And they feared exceedingly, and said one to another, What manner of man is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him?

1. Take note of the wording here. The proper fear. At the beginning I asked the question "Should there be anyone or anything we fear? The answer is yes. God should be the only one we fear.
2. Note what Jesus told His disciples here in Matthew 10:28 after He warns them of persecution to come.

(28) And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.

3. Those on that boat were right to fear exceedingly. Jesus had authority over the storm that day. He is Lord, He is in control of the weather.
4. Many like to run to this passage and teach faith over fear and storms of this life, but that is not the central point of this passage. Those are not the meanings but applications. This passage is about proving and showing who Jesus is and His authority. Only God has authority over the weather and seas. Before you start teaching have faith instead of fear or storms of life – teach about God's character – His Lordship and authority over the sea is the central point of this story.

Psalm 89:8-9 (8) O LORD God of hosts, who is a strong LORD like unto thee? or to thy faithfulness round about thee? (9) Thou rulest the raging of the sea: when the waves thereof arise, thou stillest them.

Application/Conclusion

In conclusion, so who or what do you fear? I don't want anyone to misunderstand when it comes to fearing God. The fear of the Lord is a good thing. Proverbs calls it the beginning to both knowledge and wisdom. For the believer, the fear of the Lord is a reverence for Him. We do not fear the Lord will take away our salvation because that would require Him to remove His promise. Hebrews 12:28-29 lays this out perfectly: (28) Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear: (29) For our God is a consuming fire.

Some attempt to redefine the fear of God for believers to simply "respecting" Him. While respect is included in the concept of fearing God, it is bigger than that. A biblical fear of God, for the believer, includes understanding how much God hates sin and fearing His judgment on sin, even in the life of a believer. The Bible describes God's discipline for the believer. While the Lord does it in love, it is still a fearful thing.

When I was a little kid under my parent's rooftop. I feared my parents. Not that I dismay or was always in a state of anxiety around them, but I the feared the consequences of wrongful actions and discipline laid out. My parents would agree I probably pushed it a bit. The disciplines from our parents no doubt prevented some evil actions. I obeyed out of fear, but as I grew, I also obeyed out of love. The same should be true in our relationship with God. We should fear His discipline, and therefore seek to live our lives in such a way that pleases Him, but we ultimately should obey because we love Him So, what will you fear? One thing that COVID-19 has revealed when it comes to fear is on those refusing to come to church because of the possibility of getting sick. I don't expect to be popular over this: but COVID-19 has revealed who will not give their lives and stand for Christ if heavy persecution came our way in our time. This already

is happening around the world. If you're afraid now, what makes you think you'll stand for Christ if persecution were here?

For those who do not know the Lord as their Savior and have never dealt with their sin problem, the fear of the Lord the fear of God is the fear of the judgment of God and eternal death, which is eternal separation from God. But you don't have to have this fear – The same one who calmed the storm is the same one who gave His life for you on a Roman cross. Where He bore your sin. Not only that, but He defeated death by rising on the third day. That anyone who puts their trust in Him to will be saved from the penalty and have everlasting life. At Lighthouse we strive to make that message clear and help you understand and know whether you are truly saved or not. Let us help you with that.

There are many things that will come at me that the flesh would fear, but because of who are Savior is, because I know He is in control, I will not live my life in fear of man or the world. Let us strive to fear the Lord and Him only. I want to close with this Psalm.

Psalm 27:1. The LORD is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? the LORD is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?
