

Fear Versus Faith

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[0 : 00] Jesus. Typically, Mark's Gospel records less detail about an event than the Gospels of Matthew and Luke. However, the passage we'll cover tonight and the passage we'll cover next time are two exceptions to that. For the next two sections in his Gospel, Mark provides the most thorough accounts of two events that are also documented in Matthew and Luke. So let's read each of the three Gospel accounts of tonight's event before we look at Mark's version in detail.

We'll start with Mark first. Here are Mark chapter 4, verses 35 through 41. The person speaking in Mark 4.35 is Jesus. And Mark 4.35 says, On that day, when evening had come, he said to them, 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 up 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 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? Turn over now to Matthew chapter 8, verses 23 through 27, to see Matthew's account. Here are Matthew chapter 8, verses 23 through 27.

And when he got into the boat, his disciples followed him. And behold, there arose a great storm on the sea, so that the boat was being swamped by the waves. But he was asleep. And they went and woke him, saying, Save us, Lord, we are perishing. And he said to them, Why are you afraid, O you of little faith?

[2 : 21] Then he rose and rebuked the winds and the sea, and there was a great calm. And the men marveled, saying, What sort of man is this, that even winds and sea obey him?

And then for Luke's account, go over to Luke chapter 8, this time verses 22 through 25. Here are Luke chapter 8, verses 22 through 25.

One day he got into a boat with his disciples, and he said to them, Let us go across to the other side of the lake. So they set out, and as they sailed, he fell asleep. And a windstorm came down on a lake, and they were filling with water, and were in danger. And they went and woke him, saying, Master, Master, we are perishing. And he awoke and rebuked the wind and the raging waves, and they ceased, and there was a calm. He said to them, Where is your faith? And they were afraid, and they marveled, saying one to another, Who then is this, that he commands even winds and water? And they obey him. The passages we just read document one of Jesus' best-known miracles. And the miracle also is one of the most misinterpreted sections of Scripture.

Often you will hear a teacher say something such as, This event teaches that Jesus can calm a storm. That means Jesus can calm a storm in your life, too. Well, Jesus can calm the storms in our lives. However, that shallow interpretation of Scripture misses the main point of the text. This passage is first and foremost about Jesus. And only after we see what the text says about him can we see what it has to say to us and about us. In Mark 4, 40, Jesus says to the disciples, Why are you so afraid? Have you still no faith? And that faith question is an interpretive key. Faith is the major theme of the story. God orchestrates an event in the lives of the apostles to increase their faith in the one they should already trust. This account is about the one who is the sovereign and all-powerful Lord, and we should fully trust him. And that leads us into the main idea for tonight's passage. Jesus demonstrates his deity and exposes the disciples' incomplete faith. Jesus demonstrates his deity and exposes the disciples' incomplete faith.

[4 : 54] For the first four chapters in Mark, Mark has been switching between recording Jesus' works and recording Jesus' words. For the most part, in chapters 1 to 3, Mark focused on Jesus'

works.

We read about how Jesus healed numerous people from physical disease, and we read about how Jesus casted out many demons. When we heard Jesus speak in those first three chapters, he usually was responding to a question from his disciples, or he was responding to a challenge from one of the religious leaders. Even this early in his ministry, those religious leaders want Jesus dead. In the first 34 verses of Mark chapter 4, Mark is switched to focusing on Jesus' words. We've seen Jesus teach on the kingdom parables. We learned about the parable of the sower two weeks ago, and that parable is better called the parable of the soils. Last week, we heard Jesus' teaching on the parable of the lamp, the parable of the seed growing, and the parable of the mustard seed. Jesus taught at least the last three parables on the same day as the events that we will cover tonight. Tonight's verses return the focus to Jesus' works. The broader section that we're starting tonight goes from 4:35 all the way to chapter 5, verse 43, and we'll see four miracles that clearly show Jesus' sovereign authority over various hostile powers. We'll see a storm at sea, which is tonight. Next time we're down here, we'll see demon possession. Then we'll see incurable physical illness, and then finally death. Tonight's passage, though, Mark 4, 35 through 41, is marked by a careful accuracy and detail. Almost certainly, we have the recollection of Peter, the eyewitness authority behind Mark's gospel. He remembered the time of day, verse 35 says it was evening. He remembered the cushion in the boat. We'll see that in verse 38.

And he remembered the place where Jesus slept. Further, the less than flattering picture of the apostles talking about their embarrassing fear and lack of faith is not the kind of thing that somebody would make up about himself. So let's start digging into the details now. We'll split Mark's account of the miracle into three sections, starting with Mark chapter 4, verses 35 and 36. And in those verses, we learn about the trip. So the trip is your first blank. Here are Mark chapter 4, verses 35 and 36 again.

On that day, when evening had come, he, that's Jesus, said to them, 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.

[7 : 59] The first words of verse 35 are where we learn that the events in our passage tonight happen on the same day that Jesus taught the previous three parables. You can see that verse 35 starts with, on that day.

That day had been a long day for Jesus. He had been teaching for a long time, relying on the natural amplification properties of the geography around the Sea of Galilee, which we know is actually a freshwater lake, to carry his voice to the crowd. Notice what Jesus told his disciples, though. Mark tells us that Jesus said, let us go across to the other side. We saw in Luke 8, 22, that Jesus said, let us go across to the other side of the lake. And keep those words in mind as we go through the remainder of this passage. Traveling to the eastern shores of the Sea of Galilee, where there were no major cities and fewer people, would allow Jesus and his disciples to get some reprieve from the massive multitudes. Yet there was another reason that Jesus intended to cross the lake. He had a divine appointment to keep in the country of the Gerasenes. There he would compassionately deliver a man possessed by a legion of demons. And we'll see that in two weeks when we're back down here. So leaving the crowd, the disciples took him along with them in the boat, and it says they took him just as he was. That reference to just as he was indicates that Jesus had been teaching from the boat, like we saw him start doing in Mark chapter 4, verses 1 and 2. Rather than having Jesus first go on shore, the disciples just joined him in the boat, and they started across. The boat was likely an open fishing vessel owned by either Peter and Andrew, or perhaps James and John. Those four had left fishing behind to follow Jesus, but we know from other references in scripture that they kept their boats. Several years ago, archaeologists made an interesting discovery along the shores of the Sea of Galilee. In one of the many digs there, they found an intact fishing boat. When carbon-14 dating was applied to the discovery, it indicated that the boat dated from right around the beginning of the first century AD, the very time of this episode we're looking at tonight. The boat was 27 feet long, and if this was the size of the boat that Jesus and his disciples were in, it was not a mere rowboat, but it wasn't an extremely large craft either. The journey started well. We know that from what we read in Luke's account. The first part of Luke 8:23 says that they were sailing along. Put yourself in the position of the disciples now. They probably were at a spiritual high point despite the long day. They had heard Jesus teach, and intermingled with his explanation of the parables, Jesus told the disciples that they had been given

the secret of the kingdom.

So the disciples knew that they were part of the in crowd with Jesus. To top that off, they were peacefully sailing across the lake. The wind was providing the power, so they had no need to sing Row, Row, Row, Row Your Boat as they went across. Even though that song had yet to be written, life probably seemed to be like a dream to them at that point. But the disciples would soon discover that their dreamship was about to turn into a nightmare. The disciples had learned a lot that day, but Jesus knew they needed to learn some other things. The disciples needed to learn more about Jesus's true identity, and they needed to learn about their lack of faith in Jesus. To learn those things, the disciples had to face some adversity. In the second section of the passage, verses 37 through 39, tell us about the trouble. So the trouble is your next blank. Mark 4.37 succinctly describes the trouble.

Listen to Mark 4.37 again. It says, And a great windstorm arose, and the waves were breaking into the boat, so that the boat was already filling. The steep hills and cliffs that surround the Sea of Galilee make it vulnerable to high winds, which can cause sudden, violent storms to develop on the lake. As cooler air travels down from the northern Golan Heights, the cooler air collides with the warm air in the basin of the lake.

[12:47] This creates turbulent conditions that are intensified as the winds force their way through the ravines and canyons of the upper Jordan Valley. In 1992, one such storm generated 10-foot-high waves on the lake, causing flooding and damage in the city of Tiberias.

Mark describes the storm as a great windstorm. We know that it was a serious windstorm for another reason. Perhaps as many as seven of the disciples, and at least four, Peter, Andrew, James, and John, were fishermen who had made their living by working this lake. No doubt they previously had dealt with storms on the lake, but this storm was bad enough to scare even them. One reason why those disciples may have been so scared was the timing of the storm. This storm struck in the evening. That was unusual. The Sea of Galilee was a rich source for fish, and most of the fishing was done at night because the worst winds usually occurred during the day. The fact that this storm arose at night gives us some insight into the exceedingly great fear that the seasoned fishermen had because of the storm. So let's pause to consider a couple of things. What did Jesus say to the disciples before they headed out across the lake? Yes, Mark tells us that Jesus said, let us go to the other side.

Had the disciples obeyed? Yes, they did obey. And would Jesus have known that the storm was coming before they set out on their trip? Well, the answer to that question also is yes. Jesus was training his disciples here.

[14:39] The storm was a part of that day's curriculum. It would help the disciples understand the lesson that they did not even know that they needed to learn. And that lesson is that Jesus can be trusted in the storms of life.

Many people have the idea that storms come to their lives only when they have disobeyed God. But this is not always the case. Think about what happened here. The disciples got into a storm because they obeyed God.

J.C. Ryle said, Let us learn that Christ's service does not exempt his servants from storms. Here were the twelve disciples in the path of duty.

They were obediently following Jesus wherever he went. They were daily attending on his ministry and listening to his word. They were daily testifying to the world that whatever the teachers of the law and Pharisees might think, they believed in Jesus, loved Jesus, and were not ashamed to give up everything for his sake.

Yet here we see these men in trouble, tossed up and down by a tempest and in danger of being drowned. Then Ryle continued, If we are true Christians, we must not expect everything smooth in our journey to heaven.

[15:57] We must count it no strange thing if we have to endure sicknesses, losses, bereavements, and disappointments just like other people. Free pardon and full forgiveness, grace on the way, and glory at the end, all this our Savior has promised to give.

But he has never promised that we shall have no afflictions. He loves us too well to promise that. By affliction he teaches us many precious lessons, which without the affliction we would never learn. By affliction he shows us our emptiness and weakness, draws us to the throne of grace, purifies our affections, weans us from the world, and makes us long for heaven.

On the resurrection morning we will all say, It is good for me that I was afflicted. And that quote comes from Psalm 119, verse 71.

And then he closes by saying, We will thank God for every storm. Hear those last two sentences again. He said, On the resurrection morning we will all say, It is good for me that I was afflicted.

[17:07] We will thank God for every storm. But he doesn't say that we will be thankful for those storms when they are happening. And no doubt the disciples probably weren't too thankful for the storm when they were going through it either.

We may never understand the purpose of trials until that resurrection morning. Some trials are so difficult that we would be crazy to think that those trials are good when they are happening.

Though one day we will have a different perspective. Let's go back to Mark's narrative now. During the major storm, we see quite the contrast between Jesus and his disciples.

The first sentence of Mark chapter 4, verse 38 tells us what Jesus was doing. It says, Remember that the boat likely was an open boat that was filling with water.

Jesus probably was soaked to the bone by this point. But he was so tired that he was still sleeping soundly. We know that Jesus had to have slept at other times.

[18:18] But the accounts of this event are the only times that scripture actually mentions him sleeping. Two categories of regions account for Jesus' sound sleeping.

And those two categories are physical and spiritual. Both categories apply because Jesus was both fully God and fully man. The Bible affirms and the church has always believed that Jesus is both fully God and fully man.

Two natures united in one person. He's 100% divine and 100% human in one person. That's what makes him the God-man.

The only qualification related to Jesus' humanity is that he's without sin. He had no sin nature and he never committed a single sin, not even one.

Two texts make this clear. One of them is 2 Corinthians 5.21. The other is Hebrews 4.15. Here is 2 Corinthians 5.21.

[19:22] Paul wrote, Here's Hebrews 4.15.

Hebrews 4.15 says, On the physical side, Jesus had just finished a long day of teaching like we've talked about, and he was worn out.

During the violent storm, Jesus was in that stern asleep on the cushion, and as the storm raged around him, he remained asleep. So not even the severe rocking of the boat, the thunderous roar of the wind, or the sloshing water in the boat awakened him.

He slept soundly on the hard wooden planks with only a small cushion as a pillow for his head. Perhaps nowhere else in Scripture is the humanity of Jesus more dramatically contrasted with his deity.

The one sleeping in the stern of the boat, exhausted after a day of intense ministry, is the very one who would awaken to stop the massive storm with just a word.

[20:45] Let's talk about the spiritual reasons now why Jesus could sleep so soundly despite the raging storm. In the Old Testament, there's a frequent link between sleep and faith.

Take Psalm 3 as an example of that. Psalm 3 is where David is on the run. He describes how his enemies are pursuing and taunting him.

But then he looks at what God is like, and as a result, David is able to write verses 5 and 6. Here are Psalm 3, verses 5 and 6.

I lay down and slept. I woke again, for the Lord sustained me. I will not be afraid of many thousands of people who have set themselves against me all around.

David slept there because he had faith. The Lord was the one who sustained and protected him.

And in the same way, Jesus can sleep in this storm because his Father sustains him.

[21:48] Jesus knows that his Father has his eyes on him at all times. Jesus sleeping on a cushion is a faith-filled model for all of us to emulate.

It shows that our Father is a shield, a rock, a refuge, and a very present help in times of tumult and trouble. So Jesus has complete trust in the providential care of his Father.

The veteran fisherman may be terrified, but the carpenter from Nazareth sleeps soundly. And here's a quote from Lottie Moon. She said, I have a firm conviction that I am immortal till my work is done.

We all are essentially immortal until our work on earth is finished. Jesus knew he had a work to complete on the cross, and he was confident in his Father's promise to see him finish that.

But Jesus is far more than just the model of faith. He's also the object of faith. He can be the model of faith because he's fully human.

[22 : 58] He can be the object of faith because he's fully divine. And we'll see his divine nature again when we get into verses 39 through 41. To see the contrast between Jesus and the disciples, look at the second sentence of Mark chapter 4, verse 38.

It says, And they, talking about the disciples, woke him and said to him, Teacher, do you not care that we are perishing? Jason Meyer noted that the question the disciples asked could be translated as, You do care that we are perishing, don't you?

The disciples trust Jesus, but suffering introduces dissonance into this trust. They believe Jesus cares, but this storm looks deadly, and he looks indifferent.

So they were starting to doubt. You may have noticed that in Matthew, the disciples addressed Jesus as Lord. In Luke, the disciples called him Master, and Mark used the word Teacher.

Consider the scene here. The disciples were nearly scared out of their minds. They were panicked. They thought that they were about to die. Multiple disciples likely went to wake up Jesus.

[24 : 18] So the disciples almost certainly used all three words. Some probably called him Teacher, some called Jesus Lord, and some called Jesus Master.

Those disciples would have been shouting, and they would have been shouting for at least three reasons. First, they needed to be heard over the storm. Second, they were terrified.

And third, Jesus was sleeping through it all. So if the storm had failed to wake up Jesus, they needed to get Jesus' attention some other way. Never think of this scene as just one of the disciples approaching Jesus and gently saying, Excuse me, Jesus, I'm sorry to wake you.

We have a slight problem, and some of the other guys are scared. We need to understand that all of the disciples were absolutely terrified here. They thought they were coming to an end, and they were coming to an end fast.

But there were at least three good reasons why none of the men in the ship should have been disturbed, even though the situation appeared to be threatening. To begin with, they had Jesus' promise that they were going to the other side.

[25 : 30] He did not promise an easy trip, but he did promise a guaranteed arrival at their destination. Second, the Lord was with them. So what was there to fear?

They already had seen his power demonstrated in his miracles, so they should have had complete confidence that he could handle the situation. Finally, they could see that Jesus was perfectly at peace.

Jesus' calm alone should have encouraged them. Though some disciples called Jesus teacher, we see that they did not yet understand what he'd been teaching them.

Mark 4.39 tells us how Jesus responded to being awakened. Look at verse 39 again. It says, 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. The word translated rebuked there can mean censure. It's the same word used in Mark 1.25 when Jesus rebuked the demon.

[26 : 39] Be still carries the idea of muzzle. So the idea of what Jesus said is, Be still and stay still. The response of both the wind and the sea is immediate because their master had spoken.

In Genesis chapter 1, the pre-incarnate Christ had established the boundaries of the seas with nothing more than a word. And on this occasion, he similarly used a simple command to restrain the waves and restore the calm on the lake.

In the same way that Jesus rebuked demonic spiritual powers and they obeyed him, natural powers submitted to the authoritative command of their creator. Here's our Lord's deity on full and glorious display.

Hurricane force winds are stopped with a single word, and that word is peace. Only God could do this, so Jesus must be God.

And this is the direction in which Jesus seeks to drive his disciples. So far, we've seen the trip and the trouble. In the last two verses of this chapter, we see the terror.

[27 : 54] So the terror is your last blink. We saw in the previous section that the disciples were terrorized by the trouble related to the storm, but the greater terror comes after the storm.

Look at verse 40. Jesus said to them, Why are you so afraid? Have you still no faith? Mark tells us that Jesus referenced the disciples' lack of faith.

Matthew tells us that Jesus mentioned their little faith. And Luke says that Jesus asked, Where is your faith? This could be a case where the references to little faith or no faith could have been directed at different disciples.

Some had little faith. Some, at least for the moment, had no faith. None of them had enough faith. John MacArthur said, Having silenced the literal tempest, Jesus turned his attention to the winds of fear and the waves of faithlessness that had been raging in the disciples' hearts.

The answer to Jesus' first question in verse 40 is implied by the second. The reason the disciples were afraid was because they still had little to no faith.

[29 : 09] They knew that Jesus possessed divine power, having seen him perform miraculous healing for many others. Yet when the disciples' own lives were at stake, the inadequacy of their faith was exposed.

Clearly, Jesus intended to teach the disciples a critical lesson. And that, again, was that they could trust him even in the most treacherous and helpless situations.

Mark 4.41 shows us that the disciples were surprised that Jesus could calm the storm with just his words. Listen to verse 41 again. Speaking of the disciples, Mark wrote, 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? The disciples had been terrorized by the storm. Now they were even more terrified by the thought of who it was who had calmed that storm. You may have heard John MacArthur's famous line about this verse.

He said, The realization that their creator was in the boat was far more frightening than any terror that the disciples might face outside that boat. In other words, the only thing scarier than the storm outside the boat was having God himself in the boat.

[30 : 30] The disciples' response helps prove the Bible's authenticity. Listen to this quote from R.C. Sproul. He said, In all their inventive creativity, the one thing human beings have never done is to invent a God who is more terrifying than the force they want to tame.

Above all, human beings do not want a personal God who is holy. Nothing threatens sinful humanity more than the presence of the holy God. No one would have invented the God of Christianity.

Sproul is correct that nothing threatens sinful humanity more than the presence of the holy God. We see that throughout the Bible. Going all the way back to Genesis, listen to Genesis 18, verse 27.

Genesis 18, verse 27, says this, Abraham answered and said, Behold, I have undertaken to speak to the Lord, I who am but dust and ashes.

Then in Job 42, verses 5 and 6, listen to what Job said to God. Here are Job 42, 5 and 6. I had heard of you by the hearing of the ear, but now my eye sees you.

[31 : 52] Therefore, I despise myself and repent in dust and ashes. In Judges 13, 22, listen to what Samson's father said to Samson's mother.

In Judges 13, 22, we see these words, And Manoah said to his wife, We shall surely die, for we have seen God.

Perhaps the most famous Old Testament reference to fear when encountering the holiness of God comes from Isaiah 6. Isaiah 6 is where God called Isaiah to be his prophet.

And listen to what Isaiah said in Isaiah 6, 5. It says, And I said, Woe is me, for I am lost, for I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips, for my eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts.

We also see the same thing in the New Testament, and we'll only look at one example from the New Testament. In Luke 5, the disciples had fished all night without catching anything.

[33 : 04] Jesus appears and he tells them where to put down their nets. Nothing would have been more annoying to a group of professional fishermen than to have a carpenter tell them how to do their job better.

They obeyed Jesus anyway, and they got a large catch. You would have thought that they would be happy about that, but listen to Peter's response in Luke 5, 8.

Here is Luke 5, verse 8. Peter said, Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord. We could look at many more Old and New Testament examples of how people were terrified when they encountered God, but we need to go back to Mark 4, 41 and consider the question that the disciples asked.

Look at Mark 4, 41 again. 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?

So, should the disciples have known the answer to the question? And they should have known that the answer was Jesus is God? Well, yes, the disciples should have known that Jesus is God. [34 : 17] Aside from all that they had personally seen to this point in Jesus' ministry, the Old Testament provided enough evidence to connect the dots so that they would realize that Jesus is God.

Listen to what David wrote in Psalm 65, verses 5 through 8. Here are Psalms 65, 5 through 8. By awesome deeds you answer us with righteousness, O God of our salvation, the hope of all of the ends of the earth and of the farther seas, the one who by his strength established the mountains, being girded with might, who stills the roaring of the seas, the roaring of their waves, the tumult of the peoples, so that those who dwell at the ends of the earth are in awe at your signs. You make the going out of the morning and the evening to shout for joy. Psalm 89 was written by Ethan the Ezraite.

In Psalm 89, verses 8 and 9, say this, O Lord God of hosts, who is mighty as you are, O Lord, with your faithfulness all around you, you rule the raging sea.

When its waves rise, you still them. And if those Old Testament cross-references have failed to convince you that the disciples should have known that Jesus is God, flip over to Psalm 107.

[35 : 47] The author of this psalm is unknown, but check out Psalm 107, verses 23 through 29. Psalm 107, 23 through 29, Psalm 107, 23 through 29, some went down to the sea in ships, doing business on the great waters.

They saw the deeds of the Lord, His wondrous works in the deep, for He commanded and raised the stormy wind which lifted up the waves of the sea.

They mounted up to heaven, they went down to the depths, their courage melted away in their evil plight. They reeled and staggered like drunken men and were at their wits' end.

Then they cried to the Lord in their trouble, and he delivered them from their distress. He made the storm be still, and the waves of the sea were hushed.

Does that sound familiar? Jesus was giving them a living example of that. So you can see from these Old Testament references that the disciples should have known the answer to the question about Jesus' identity.

[37 : 01] But the pattern of the disciples' confusion will continue for a while. Until they see the resurrected Christ and fully understand what he did for them on the cross, they're going to struggle.

Before we're too hard on the disciples because they should have known better, ask yourself whether you fully trust God when you're in difficult situations. Those disciples had yet to receive the full revelation of God.

Believers today have no excuse. We know that Jesus is all-powerful and all-knowing. We know that he has taken care of all of our sin.

We know that he rose from the dead, and we know that he can be trusted no matter what. Trials and difficulties are divine appointments to strengthen our faith.

So why are we still afraid? Do we still have no faith? Verse 41 has the question that every person on earth must answer.

[38 : 04] And again, that question is this, Who then is this that even the wind and the sea obey him? People who answer that question correctly will spend eternity with God.

People who answer that question incorrectly will spend eternity in hell. We sin against a holy God multiple times a day, especially if we refuse to believe Jesus' true identity.

However, Romans 6.23 gives us both bad news and good news. Romans 6.23 says, For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

And Romans 10.9 tells us, Because if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.

Tonight we've seen Jesus demonstrate his deity and expose the disciples' incomplete faith. Jesus did that by intentionally leading the disciples into a trial.

[39 : 16] Daniel Akin said, We should not be alarmed by surprises in our lives. They are divinely ordained moments whereby God is working in the everyday circumstances of our lives to reveal who he is, who we are, and who we need.

Trials and tribulations, difficulties, and desperate moments are when God does his greatest work in our lives. When he brings us to the end of ourselves, we are driven to him and him alone as savior and rescuer.

If he does not act, we will not be saved. Then he says, Would you really want it any other way? Faith answers a resounding no. Charles Spurgeon said, God is too wise to err, too good to be unkind.

Leave off doubting him and begin to trust him, for in so doing, he will put a crown on his head. So let's crown Jesus in faith and not doubt him in unbelief.

Here's what John MacArthur said about Mark 4, verses 35 through 41. He said, Though this passage exemplifies the divine glory of Christ as the creator and controller of the natural world, it also reveals his compassionate care.

[40 : 38] During a frightening storm on the lake, and despite the disciples' failing faith, the sovereign savior rescued his followers. Similarly, and obviously, believers today can rest confidently in the fact that, through all of life's storms, the omnipotent Lord of creation is willing and able to deliver those who trust in him.

That does not mean Christians will never face trials, but when they do, they can rest confidently in the promises of Scripture. One of those promises in Scripture is Romans 8.28.

And of course, in Romans 8.28, Paul wrote, And we know that for those who love God, all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose.

Notice, though, that this promise applies to only those who love God. If believers truly understand this promise, we will be able to live out more consistently Paul's words in Philippians 4, verses 6 and 7.

Here are Philippians 4, verses 6 and 7. We will face difficulties, trials, and struggles here on earth.

[42 : 10] Regardless of what happens in this life, our destination for eternity is what matters. The Apostle Paul understood that. And here's one more cross-reference from Paul.

It's 2 Timothy 4, verse 18. In 2 Timothy 4.18, Paul wrote, The Lord will rescue me from every evil deed and bring me safely into his heavenly kingdom.

To him be the glory forever and ever. Amen. Amen. Let's pray. Father, we thank you for the reminder tonight that even though we will face difficulties, trials, and struggles in this life, that you are with us as we go through those trials.

Help us use those trials to develop our faith and trust in you. And help us use those trials to be more able to witness to others as they go through trials of their own.

We thank you that no matter what happens on earth, you will see all believers safely to heaven. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen. Amen. Thank you.