

## Reflection Guide

### Mark 4:35-41

#### Big Idea

Mark wants us to know that Jesus is the Son of God. (Mark 1:1) And the next four stories are about Jesus' power as God. Power over *nature*, power over *evil* (casts evil spirits into pigs), power over *sickness* (terminally ill woman) power over *death* (heals a synagogue ruler's daughter). Today we see how Jesus teaches the disciples the deserves and expects to be trusted, even when life seems to be lost. In this story, Jesus displays 4 characteristics of his power. Its Real-life, Terrifying, Caring, and Costly.

#### 1) Real-life power.

Is this account historical or legendary? A few reasons why they can only be read as eyewitness accounts. 1) There are spurious details that don't move the story along. Its "evening" "other boats are with him", Jesus is asleep in the stern (back), "on a cushion". 2) Legends and myths were not written from within the story, but from the perspective of an all-knowing narrator. Mark is writing this gospel based on Peter's first-hand, eyewitness account. "So, Peter, what do you remember..."

How about the resurrection account? Many will say the significance of easter is not Jesus actually rising from the dead. Its the hope that spring always follows winter, etc. And it was only after centuries of relaying a feeling about feeling Jesus' presence after the resurrection that...the legend of a physical, bodily resurrection came about and that's what we have in the gospels. Again. The gospel accounts don't read this way. Mark records Jesus walking and talking with 2 disciples. (Luke, name of one, Cleopas. Why? His name is never mentioned again. In antiquity, much like today, names were given as a footnote. You wonder if these things were true, ask him.

If Jesus really did die and rise again then what you or I like or dislike is relevant. Its not a teaching or a principal. Its a fact. It means that he is God, he is eternal. No one has ever done that and we have to deal. There is no negotiation there.

**Which not-yet-believing friend needs to hear this? Why do you think it will help?  
What are some other reasons to trust the gospel accounts?**

#### 2) Terrifying Power

*"a great windstorm arose" 39 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 wind and the water recognized the voice of their Creator.** The same God that said let there be light! Spoke to the wind and waves, like we would a child. "Peace! Be still and stay still." And it obeyed. Stop and consider how unmanageable the sea is. In ancient cultures it was the strongest, intimidating, uncontrollable force.

**So what are disciples really learning here?** Look at them after the storm. You would think that after being brought to point of death and being miraculously saved that they would have been elated. High fives all around. But afterward they were filled with "great fear". Its one thing to fall into the hands of this storm, or cancer, or death or whatever it is that you are afraid of this morning. Its another thing, fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.

**Has this ever been filled with this kind of fear?  
Has the reality of God's holiness and power been so real to you that you were disturbed deeply?  
Take turns describing one of these moments to each other. What were the long-term affects?**

### 3) Caring Power

*38 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?" 39 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. 40 He said to them, "Why are you so afraid? Have you still no faith?"*

"Do you not care that we are perishing"? Disciples were not really asking for information. They were panicked and in their fear they were not coming to Jesus with a prayer... but a request **laced with an accusation**... YOU DON'T CARE we are perishing. We do this when the storms of life roll in. He must not care any more. We let our circumstances come between us and God's promises. God must not care anymore. He must be asleep, indifferent.

*Why are you so afraid? Have you still no faith?* But Jesus expected them to trust him. Even in the face of death. Jesus says that they should have known better. He wants them to know that he takes people I love, I care about INTO storms. AND this is very unsettling. WHY?

Many of us live with the deception that we can manage God and therefore what happens to us. Disciples Premise: If God **does not** love me and care for me, he will let me perish through storms. If he **does love me and care** for me, he will keep me from storms. (how can we manage this?) Religion says: If I obey God enough, he will love and care for me. **But** the message here is not.. Jesus can calm the storms in your life if you are good enough or pray hard enough. He may or he may not. Its entirely possible that these storms you are in could last your whole life.

*"If we are true Christians, we must not expect everything smooth in our journey to heaven. 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 by the way and glory to 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 it we should 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. In the resurrection morning we shall all say, 'it is good for me that I was afflicted.' [Psalm 119:71] We shall thank God for every storm." [JC Ryle]*

**Does this reality encourage you or discourage you?  
Have you been hoping to avoid the suffering that everyone in this fallen world experiences?  
How have you been trying to manage that?**

### 4) Costly Power

We have more reason than these disciples to trust Jesus. This storm, points to a greater storm that's coming up in the story. Its the storm that you and I and everyone is facing and will face:

*[Keller] Jesus was thrown into the only storm that can actually sink us - the storm of eternal justice, of what we owe for our wrongdoing. That storm was not calmed - not until it swept him away. If the sight of Jesus bowing his head into that ultimate storm of is burned into the core of your being, you will never say, "God, don't you care?" And if you know that he did not abandon you in that ultimate storm, what makes you think he would abandon you in the much smaller storms you're experiencing right now? And, some day, of course, he will return and still all storms for eternity. If you let that penetrate to the very center of your being, you will know he loves you You will know he cares. And then you will have the power to handle anything in life with [death-defying, jaw-dropping, God-glorifying] poise.*

Our greatest source of calm in life is that Jesus calmed the sea of God's wrath for us, not by simply speaking to it, but by dying in it.

### **5) Resurrection Power**

How do we KNOW the sea of God's wrath has been stilled for us? How do we know that Jesus death on the cross for us actually accomplished our salvation? And there is no more wrath left for those who would believe in him? We may understand that Jesus was punished for our sin, but how do we know there is NO MORE punishment left? That our sins were **fully** suffered for?

#### **How do we know the cross worked? The resurrection.**

In the same way that the disciples overlooked the promise...."Let us go across to the other side." Later in the story they will forget that Jesus told them he would come back to life after the cross. Yet, after the crucifixion, they were huddled together, in fear. It was not until after he came to them alive did they remember.. he told them he would rise again.

#### **Romans 4:25 Jesus was raised for our justification.**

Here's why Jesus' physical, scarred human body, resurrection matters. If Jesus had simply died. We would never know for sure if our punishment was exhausted on Jesus. We might believe that he had been punished, but there could still be some punishment left for us. We would not know what awaits us. But in the historical **fact** of the resurrection...now we do.

**2 Cor 5: He who knew no sin became our sin.** Because of the resurrection we know he makes it through the storm of the wrath of God and comes out the other side. And if he is no longer suffering the consequences for sin, i.e. death. Then we know there are no more consequences for us. **Romans 8:1 There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.** We know the storm has been stilled.

So if Jesus threw himself into the only storm that could sink us. If he has demonstrated that there is no more wrath for those who believe by rising from the grave. Then we have nothing to fear! Neither life-threatening storms or terrifying guilt from our sin.

**Do we really understand why Jesus was raised for our justification? (to prove it)  
Ho do we still try to make up for our sins as if Jesus had not exhausted the penalty and  
consequences for them?**