

ON THE MOVE WITH JESUS

IN MARK

(DAY 19)

*A unique, verse-by-verse,
life-application commentary
by Terran Williams*

DAY 19 – WHEN STORMS COME (4:35-41)

COLOUR-CODE SUMMARY (THE FOUR MAIN WAYS GOD SPEAKS TO US THROUGH THE GOSPELS):

- **Blue** - something about Jesus' uniqueness and Lordship that shows he is worthy of our devotion, trust and surrender
- **Green** - something about Jesus' character or ministry that we can imitate
- **Red** - something Jesus taught that we can understand or apply to our lives
- **Orange** - insights we can apply based on the way various people responded to him

Jesus calms the storm

35 That day when evening came, he said to his disciples, "Let us go over to the other side." 36 Leaving the crowd behind, they took him along, just as he was, in the boat. There were also other boats with him. 37 A furious squall came up, and the waves broke over the boat, so that it was nearly swamped. 38 Jesus was in the stern, sleeping on a cushion. The disciples woke him and said to him, "Teacher, don't you care if we drown?"

39 He got up, rebuked the wind and said to the waves, "Quiet! Be still!" Then the wind died down and it was completely calm.

40 He said to his disciples, "Why are you so afraid? Do you still have no faith?"

41 They were terrified and asked each other, "Who is this? Even the wind and the waves obey him!"

Trust Christ when the storms of life come.

- *The storms of life are inevitable (v37).* It's interesting that it isn't their disobedience that got them into a storm (as happened with Jonah in the Old Testament), but their obedience to Christ. Things will go wrong for obedient disciples. Jesus doesn't promise a life of ease.

- *Christ allows storms in our lives so that we rely on him.* Listen to Spurgeon’s commentary on these verses: “I am afraid, too, that we rely too much upon ourselves. The secret of strength in faith in Christ is having no faith in ourselves. I am inclined to think that the secret of weak faith in God is our having a good deal of self-reliance; but when you cannot trust yourselves, then you hang upon Christ, and cling to him as your only hope; then you give the grip of a sinking man, and there is no hold like that.”
- *A lack of trust in Christ is shown when we forget how loving and powerful he is.* In verse 37 the disciples accuse Jesus, “Don’t you care?” We must never interpret storms as Christ’s failure to care for us. Rather we should remember just how loving and powerful he is, to care for us in the midst of the storm.
- *A lack of trust results in fear in our lives.* Jesus wasn’t disturbed by the storm itself, but rather by the effect of the storm on the disciples. He asked them, “Why are you afraid?” A lack of trust is what breeds fear in our lives. The antidote to fear is faith.
- *The key to trusting Christ is to remember his promises.* In verse 35, Jesus made an indirect promise, “Let us go over to the other side.” The disciples should have said to themselves, “It may seem like we’re going to drown, but we will never drown because Jesus said we would get to the other side.” Similarly, we need to hold onto specific promises God has given us in the Scriptures or in whatever way.
- *Another key to trusting Christ is to affirm his presence.* The reason that they should have known that their boat wouldn’t sink is that Jesus was in their boat. In the words of Marshall Morgan, “There are many Christians today who seem to think the boat is going down! I am tired of the wailing of some of my friends who take that view. The boat cannot go down. Jesus is on board.”
- *We should follow Christ’s example of faith.* Jesus slept on the boat not only because he was tired, but also because he trusted his father to look after him. And when he was awake he simply took authority over the storm.

Christ is master of the universe.

- Jesus alone is the Messiah and Son of God who had authority to do this (see verse 41). There’s a funny but true story Gayle Erwin tells of a boat trip across the Sea of Galilee with a tour group when the wind, rain and waves began to kick up. A young man on the boat thought “What Would Jesus Do?” and stood up to rebuke the storm. When he spoke out, “Peace, be still” the rain and wind kept coming but the engine of the boat immediately cut out. I tell this humorous story to show that Jesus alone has the power to command an instant weather change.
- Jesus was fully human. We see this in the way he falls asleep on the boat exhausted after a day of intensive teaching. But then suddenly, we see another side to Jesus. He wakes up and rules the waves. We see Christ operating in divine power. Psalm 89:9 says of God, “You rule the raging sea. When waves rise up, you still them.” Christ was doing here what only God can do. Christ

was fully human yet at the same time fully God. He uniquely combines compassion and power, humanity and deity.

- Here we have an early picture of how Christ will one day wrap up human history and usher in the new heavens and the new earth. He is Lord of the universe.
- It's fascinating that the disciples went from being afraid of the storm (v40) to being terrified of Christ himself (v41). By this stage they may have begun to suspect that he was more than a teacher (v38) and that he was also the Messiah. However, they were far from realizing that he was God in the flesh (see John 1:1 and 1:14). That revelation would come later. By now they were catching glimpses of Christ's divine power. No wonder they were terrified. Wouldn't you be terrified if someone you knew suddenly commanded the weather and it immediately obeyed?