

We Need To Know Him To Trust Him

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- [0 : 0 0] I was thinking one of the things that we should perhaps do every Sunday during the sermon! We'll take turns, one person in the congregation will get that stop sign.
- ! And at any moment, if they want to stop me preaching, you just hold it up. We're in Mark chapter 4, just at the end of chapter 4.
- And almost two years ago exactly, I preached a sermon on this passage. And I'm hoping that you forgot it. No, I'm kidding. This time round, I could have plagiarized myself and just printed out the old notes.
- This time round, my word count is shorter, which you'll be glad of. And I think my understanding is a little bit sharper, hopefully. But if you want to compare the recordings later on and tell me if I'm improving or getting worse, you can let me know.
- Or if you're wanting to hear a really good message on this passage, then listen to Sinclair Ferguson, who preached this. But we're in Mark chapter 4, at the end of it, from verse 35 to 41.
- [1 : 1 6] Lord, we are so thankful that these things have been recorded.
- That indeed, your Spirit inspired faithful servants to write down these things for our benefit. That we might grow in knowledge and faith.
- That we might know you and find all our confidence and hope in you. Please, would you speak to us by your Spirit now, in Jesus' name. Amen.
- Amen. After teaching many parables, it says, On that day, when evening had come, 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. And a great windstorm arose, and the waves were breaking into the boat, so that the boat was already filling.
- [2 : 3 4] 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? And he awoke, and he rebuked the wind, and said to the sea, Peace, be still.
- And the wind ceased, and there was a great calm. And 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? Amen.
- This is God's word, and we pray he blesses the reading of it. One day, back in December, there, I took the boys out in the evening to Straven, to experience a stormy night.
- And so with thick jackets and head torches, little legs ascended Monument Hill, which isn't a great hill, but it's a tall point, and a high point in Straven.
- [3 : 4 4] And we ascended Monument Hill, and the wind and the rain. I've been there many times. I've experienced many storms there, many sunsets, and many sunrises.
- And it was a nice moment, where the boys felt as though, what it's like to be, somewhat at the mercy of the elements. Recall a time when you've been, at the mercy of the elements.

Now the rain wasn't heavy, I'm not a terrible father. The rain wasn't that heavy, but the wind was strong enough, that we could barely stand. And in the car, on the way back, Levi said something, that I'm sure, many people have thought, in those experiences.

Levi said, I think that God, was trying to tell us something. Yeah. Isn't that profound? I thought to myself, yeah, he was trying to tell us to go home, and get a warm bath.

It was a profound little statement from him. And I think that part of the reason, is because, in those moments, you feel, something that is, big. Something that's, powerful, and mysterious, and the elements, that is greater than you.

[4 : 59] And you feel at the mercy of it. Humans have been able to, build, build, sails, and windmills, to harness the power of the wind. Dams, and hydro generators, to harness the power of the water.

Solar panels, to harness the power, of the sun, and many such things like these. To harness, the power. In some ways, we've been able to, just grab a little corner, of the weather's power, and hold on for dear life.

But one thing, that we have never been able to do, is to control the weather. Never. I was reading a story, of one of the sailors, who perished, in the Caribbean Sea, in 1999, when Hurricane Lenny, formed, in November.

And this account, was told by, a friend of, one of these sailors, who was supposed to meet him, at his destination. And instead of celebrating, his voyage with him, he delivered a eulogy, at his funeral.

And he wrote, an article, after the event. And it got a big response, this article. And he said that people felt, sad and angry, and confused, that such a thing, could happen, in this day and age.

[6 : 11] But, he said, that modern technology, can create a false sense, of security, among sailors. Experienced or not. He said, technology is great.

The gear is better, than ever. But the ocean, is still in charge. There are many things, in life, that give us, a false sense, of security. So what do you, put your trust in?

Some of Jesus' disciples, were very experienced, sailors. They knew the boats. They knew the sea. Perhaps in this storm, some of the disciples, were putting their trust, in the sailors, among them.

But it seems like, even the experienced, fishermen, were panicking. Yet in the midst, of all this chaos, around them, Jesus is sleeping, at the stern. And there's a little, peculiar detail, in Mark's account, that's not in any, of the other accounts.

Verse 36, it says, just as he was. It says, they took him in the boat, just as he was. That little statement, just as he was. What does that mean? He's been given, of himself, all day long, teaching people.

[7 : 24] And there's been, no preparation, for a voyage like this. They just, go to the boat, and they take him, just as he is. No luggage, no preparation, just as he is. And it is now evening, it says, it says, on that day, when evening had come.

They took him in the boat, just as he was. And so Jesus, finally having a moment to stop, you all know what this is like. And you've been working, really, really hard, and you finally get a moment to stop.

And what do you do? You just want to fall, and crash on the couch, or something. Just fall asleep. So Jesus, is quite exhausted. And he sleeps in the boat.

And he even continues to sleep, when a storm, envelops them. There's another account, in the Bible, of a prophet, who slept through a storm, while everyone else was panicking.

Do you know his name? Jonah. The account of Jonah. And even when Jonah, ends up in the water, he does not perish, does he?

[8 : 30] He's brought back out, on the third day. And Jesus later, points to Jonah, as a sign of his own resurrection. And the point is, that someone greater than Jonah, is in the boat.

Someone greater than Jonah, is in the boat. And like Jonah, he's sleeping, through a storm, while everyone else is panicking. Except, we will see that Jesus, is not just like Jonah, but he is like Jonah's God.

Yahweh, the God of heaven, who made the sea, and the dry land. And so, if the prophet, who was not obeying God, can sleep peacefully, in the storm, how much more, can Jesus, God's son, sleep peacefully, in a storm, when he is perfectly obedient, and well pleasing, to his father.

What can the wind, and sea do to Jesus? And when the sailors, and Jonah, ask him, what to do, they ask Jonah, what to do, and they, trust Jonah, to do whatever, needs to be done, to make the sea, quiet down.

How much more, should the disciples, of the son of God, trust him? Not just the twelve, but you and I. How much more, should we, as disciples, of the son of God, trust in him?

[9 : 54] But why don't they? Why do the disciples, in this account, not trust Jesus? And very often, why do we not? I think, the reason is, because we need to grow, in the knowledge, of who Jesus is.

We need to grow, in the knowledge, of who Jesus is. And in the story, the disciples, are on a journey, of discipleship. They are, growing in the knowledge, of who Jesus is. And two thousand years later, with all this information, we are no different.

We are on a journey, of growing in the knowledge, of who Jesus is. And Peter, who was in the boat, at the time, one of the most experienced men, in the boat at the time, later wrote, in his letter, second Peter, both at the start, of the letter, and the very end, chapter one, verse two, Peter wrote, may grace, and peace, be multiplied to you.

How? In the knowledge, of God, and of Jesus our Lord. And then, at the very end, of the letter, the last words, in chapter three, verse 18, but grow, in the grace, and knowledge, of our Lord, and Savior, Jesus Christ.

Peter's saying, we need to grow, in the knowledge, of Jesus. And this storm, takes these men, from what they thought, they knew about Jesus, back to the question of, who is this?

[11 : 13] Who is Jesus? One thing to note, about Mark's, particular presentation, of Jesus, is that this storm scene, is the first time, in the gospel, when the disciples, make a statement, about who Jesus is.

And you might not, have noticed that, but when you go through, Mark's gospel, this is the first statement, the disciples make, about who Jesus is. And there's been, all sorts of other statements, by other people. So let me quickly recap, right at the start, Mark made a statement, about who Jesus is.

Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God. John the Baptist, made statements, he is the Lord, who John prepares the way for, he is mightier than I, I am not worthy, to untie his sandals, he baptizes, with the Holy Spirit.

So John's made statements, God made a statement, at his baptism, you are my beloved son, with you I am well pleased. Even the demons, make statements, about who Jesus is.

I know who you are, the Holy One of God. And when they came before him, they fell down before him, and cried out, you are the Son of God. His family, made statements, about Jesus.

[12 : 22] He's out of his mind. And the religious leaders, made statements, about Jesus. Who can forgive sins, but God alone? This man is possessed, by Beelzebub.

All these statements, about Jesus, in the Gospel of Mark. And here we come, to the very first statement, by his own disciples. And the first statement, we have, is two questions.

Number one, do you not care? And number two, who are you? They thought they knew, who Jesus was. But this made them, question all of that.

And no matter, where you are, with that question, do you think, any of us know, enough about Jesus, that we cannot be surprised? We cannot be perplexed, or stunned, by who he really is.

I said before, that our culture, is saturated, with information. Not only, can you get, over a million, search results, in a second, on Google.

[13 : 28] A million, search results, in one, less than a second, on Google. But we are, dabbling dangerously, with AI, that is easily, outpacing us, with information, processing.

Yet, does all this information, result in knowledge? No, it doesn't really. See, people talk about, things like these, as though it gives us, knowledge and wisdom, and insight.

But it doesn't really. People talk about, the sciences, like we now know, everything there is to know, now that we are, the enlightened people, unlike our primitive ancestors, who believed in superstition.

But that is, both ignorant, and arrogant. Despite living, in the information age, we know so little. The combined minds, of every human, that has ever lived, on planet earth, still amounts, to a tiny amount, compared with, what we don't know.

And that is, just finite things. How much more then, is there to know, of Jesus, the incarnate, eternal, immortal son of God? You see, you could be a disciple, of Jesus, for a million years, and still be easily, surprised, by who he is.

[14 : 43] You could be, his closest friend, on earth, and be brought, to your knees, when you see him. Just like John, in Revelation 1, 17, when I saw him, I fell, at his feet, as though dead.

But he laid his right hand, on me saying, fear not, I am the first, and the last, and the living one. I died, and behold, I am alive, forevermore. And so, don't discount, the fact, that there is always, more to Jesus, than we could ever imagine.

Always. There's always more, to Jesus, than we could ever imagine. And so, this account in Mark, why does Mark, put this account, in his gospel? It's not included, as a promise, that every storm, will be calmed.

That's not, that's not true. But rather, it is meant, to help us grow, in the knowledge, and confidence, of who Jesus is. So that we don't, place our trust, in false, securities.

But rather, have faith in Christ. What were the disciples, trusting in that moment? Were they trusting, their own skills, as sailors?

[15 : 49] Were they trusting, the boat? Were they trusting, luck? They didn't know, Jesus was going to do that. Why did they wake him up? What did they think, he was going to do?

Maybe they were just, annoyed, that he wasn't, throwing water, out the boat, like they were. But it's so easy, in life, to put, our hope, in things, that are just, false securities.

And so this account, is included, to help us, grow in the knowledge, and confidence, of who Jesus is, so that we don't, place our trust, in false securities, but we have faith, in Christ. In other words, we need to know, who it is, that we can trust, and then trust him, even when the waves, crash into the boat.

And so like, that Stalin story, from earlier, illustrated, with the man, who died, in the Caribbean Sea. There are many things, that can give us, a false sense of security, but Jesus is not, one of them.

There are many good things, that help us, but they cannot save us. They cannot save us. And that might be, modern technology, on a sailing boat. It might be, scientific discovery.

[17 : 01] That could be, just as true, on a sailing boat, as it is, in a hospital bed. Modern technology, and scientific discovery, is a good thing, but it's not going to save us. It cannot save us.

So don't put all your hope, and trust, in these things. Because they will give us, a false sense of security. Many things, can give us, a false sense of security. But Jesus, Jesus will never forget, he will never forsake, and he will never fail, his disciples.

And so this moment, in the boat, is not primarily, a lesson about, Jesus rescuing us, from every storm. That's not what it's about. Rather, it is a revelation, of who he is.

So that the disciples, can grow, in the knowledge of Christ. They had some sort of knowledge, of who the Christ was. They had some idea, of what they thought, the Messiah was like.

But they had no idea, that he was able, to command the wind and sea. And so they had to grow, in the knowledge, of Christ. And this is the first, of three, major boat scenes, in Mark's gospel.

[18 : 06] And each one, of these boat scenes, is a development, in the knowledge of Christ. The first one, asks two questions. Do you not care? And secondly, who then is this?

And each of the three, boat scenes, Jesus reveals, both who he is, and how he cares. And we'll get to that. But if you want to read on, three boat scenes, Jesus answers the question, of who he is, and how much he cares.

In this instance, his care, is shown, not just, in the fact, that he calms the storm. His care, is shown, in the fact, that he is, in the midst of the storm, with them.

Jesus isn't away, in some warm palace, somewhere. He's not only, in the same storm, that they are in, he's in the same boat. He's right there, with them.

He's getting blown about, by the same wind, soaked, by the same waves, and he is wakened, with criticism, by the disciples. And yet, rather than rebuking, them straight away, he turns around, and rebukes the storm.

[19 : 14] He rebukes, the wind and the sea. At this early stage, of discipleship, they cannot have peace, and be still, in the midst of a storm, until the wind and the sea, has peace, and is stilled.

And so, this will not always be the case, for the disciples. But until they grow, in the knowledge, of Christ, and have a secure faith, in him, they are overcome, by both waves, and fear.

And so, perhaps you can look back, at your own journey of faith, and see how, there are times, when, we couldn't have peace, or be still, until the storms, around us, dissipate.

But as we grow, in the knowledge of Christ, we will learn, to be at peace, and be still, even when the storm, is raging round about us. At this point, for the disciples, they need to learn that, they need to grow in that.

But is that not the case? We are all prone, to weakness. But if we are growing, in the knowledge of Christ, we find our faith, in him, to be more secure, despite the storms.

[20 : 24] But we still need, to go to him. We need to remember, to go to him. You see, like the disciples, waking him up. There is no better person, to go to. But the more, we grow in grace, and knowledge of Jesus, the more confident, we are, that he cares.

And so, the first point, when the disciples go to him, they go to him, thinking that he doesn't care. But the more we go to him, and the more we grow in, the grace and knowledge of Christ, the more we will realize, that when we go to him, we understand, that he does care.

He cares. He will not always, remove the storm. But we will grow, into a secure faith, that no longer, accuses Jesus, of not caring.

Because he knows, what we need. He knows, how we think. He knows, who we are. He knows, how to lead us, and shepherd us. Is he not, the good shepherd, who knows his sheep, and lays down his life, for his sheep?

He will not, let you go somewhere, that he hasn't already, gone before you. And for some of you, right now, you feel the storm, forming, in your life.

[21 : 35] You sense it, you feel it. For some others, you feel that the boat, is already rocking. Wherever you are in life, the boat is already rocking. And for some of you, you are beginning to feel, the water, already coming into the boat.

You're feeling that. I know you are. And these things, can cause us to panic. I've been there. Panicked. You've probably seen me up here, panicked. These things, can cause us to panic.

They can cause us to fear. The storm, these disciples face, is not a small storm. The Greek word, in this account, is mega. This is a mega storm.

And the trials in life, can be pretty fierce. The first readers, of Mark's gospel, would have known this. They would have been facing, an increasing persecution, a mega storm.

The early disciples, would have at some point, heard of Peter being martyred. But that's not a surprise. Because, Jesus did not bypass suffering.

[22 : 42] Having the power to command, the wind and the sea, why did he go to the cross? If he can command the wind and the sea, except for you and me. That's why he went to the cross.

And so, look at the cross, and tell me that Jesus doesn't care. In that moment, the disciples didn't understand that. But when he went to the cross, they sure did understand that he cares.

He had no need to go to the cross, except for you and me. And notice, notice something here, that Jesus was not the cause, of the great storm.

But he was the cause, of the great calm. Not a good thing. Storms will come, and he's not the cause of it. But he can bring about great calm.

That's the business that he's in. Jesus is not in the business, of creating storms. Jesus is in the business, of calming storms. And so, it's the same Greek word.

[23 : 44] There was a great storm, a mega storm, and in the Greek, there was a mega calm, because of Jesus. Whether or not he will rescue us, from every trial, we can trust, that with him, there is coming, a great calm.

There is coming a great calm. You can be sure of it. A great calm, beyond all the worst, that the world can throw at us. And the final mega, in our passage, the Greek word, the third and final mega, is the mega fear.

The mega fear, that the disciples have, at the revelation of Jesus. They start out the passage, fearing the storm, but when they see, who Jesus really is, they have even greater fear.

Mega fear. Why do they have mega fear? Well, it's because they realize, that in this man, in him, the whole fullness of deity, dwells bodily.

Who then is this? Commands even the wind and sea, and they obey him. This is not just a prophet, like Jonah. This is one like Yahweh, who made the wind and the sea.

[24 : 58] And like John the apostle, when we see him as he is, we will not be casual with Jesus. We'll not be casual with Jesus, when we see him as he is.

Though he will welcome, those who love him, and long to see his appearing, it will be a sight to behold, filled with awe. We will likely fall at our faces.

And so, wherever you are with Jesus, know that apart from him, there are only false securities. Apart from him, the storm will only rage on.

Apart from him, there is only perishing. Apart from him, there will be no calm. But with him, there is salvation and eternal life.

And so, when they say, do you not care that we are perishing? What does it say about perishing? In John 3.16. For God so loved the world, he gave his one and only son, so that we might not perish, but have eternal life.

[26 : 05] All those who believe in him. In terms of our perishing, we know that he cares, because he went to the cross. And in terms of rescue, we know that he can, because he commands the wind and the sea.

And so, when you have faith in him, you are in the boat, with the son of God. The one who commands the wind and sea, is the one who commands your destiny. So, have faith, and grow in the knowledge of Christ.

And you will find it to be, as Paul says, in Romans chapter 8, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor depth of the sea, nor anything else, in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God and Christ Jesus our Lord.

Is that not good news? We might not always feel like he is with us when the waves crash into the boat, but Jesus is no false security. He can and he will.

He is the rock that we stand on, and he is the anchor that holds. And so we need to know who it is that we can trust. His name is Jesus, Lord of all.

[27 : 17] And then we need to trust him and know him more. Amen. Lord, we thank you so much for this account, but we thank you that these are not just ancient and dead words, but this is your living word, and you are a living saviour, far above every power and rule.

And so, help us to know who you are, that we can trust you, and help us to trust you and grow in the knowledge of who you are. Amen.