

Anxiety – Calm in the Storm

Mark 4:35-41 On the same day, when evening had come, He said to them, "Let us cross over to the other side." ³⁶ Now when they had left the multitude, they took Him along in the boat as He was. And other little boats were also with Him. ³⁷ And a great windstorm arose, and the waves beat into the boat, so that it was already filling. ³⁸ But He was in the stern, asleep on a pillow. And they awoke Him and said to Him, "Teacher, do You not care that we are perishing?" ³⁹ Then He arose and rebuked the wind, and said to the sea, "Peace, be still!" And the wind ceased and there was a great calm. ⁴⁰ But He said to them, "Why are you so fearful? How *is it* that you have no faith?" ⁴¹ And they feared exceedingly, and said to one another, "Who can this be, that even the wind and the sea obey Him!"

Mark 4:35 On the same day, when evening had come, He said to them, "Let us cross over to the other side."

- Why were they in this situation? Because they were following Jesus.
 - Jesus is the one that put them in that boat.
 - Did God know a storm was coming? Yes!
 - Did He still direct them to go? Yes!
 - Sometimes, following Jesus leads us into storms.
 - Storms are not an indication that we are going the wrong way.

Mark 4:37 And a great windstorm arose, and the waves beat into the boat, so that it was already filling.

- This was not a small storm. This was major. The boat is filling. It looks like they are going down.
 - Storms can feel that way.
 - When we apply logic, or worldly wisdom – there is nothing to be done. Anxiety is the answer.

Mark 4:38 But He was in the stern, asleep on a pillow. And they awoke Him and said to Him, "Teacher, do You not care that we are perishing?"

- They woke up Jesus.
 - It was great that they went to Jesus. But they did not go to Jesus with faith. Do You not care that we are perishing?
 - They did not have faith. So what were they expecting Jesus to do? "Hey Jesus, here's a bucket. At least you could start bailing!"
 - They were fishermen. They knew the sea, they trusted their skill, their boats, their experience.
 - Only when all that they put their trust (faith) in failed, did they turn to Jesus.
 - They had enough faith to cry out, but not enough faith to rest in His presence.
- Going back to Jesus – He was asleep. How is Jesus asleep while everyone else is panicking?
 - They are all on the same boat. They are all in the same situation.
 - The disciples are looking at the situation. That is where their attention and focus is.
 - Jesus went to sleep thinking about the other side because that is where His focus and attention was.
 - Jesus knew His calling at that moment was to go to the other side. That's where God told Him to go, so He trusted His Father completely to get Him there.
 - How difficult is it to trust our Father to get us to where He has called us?
 - Was Jesus being irresponsible? No. He simply knows the goodness of His Father.
 - But wasn't there real danger around? Wasn't the situation real? Wasn't the boat sinking?
 - Yes. But Jesus trusted His Father to take care of the situation. Wake Him if He needed to wake. Give Him wisdom for when it was needed. Whatever.

Mark 4:39 Then He arose and rebuked the wind, and said to the sea, "Peace, be still!" And the wind ceased and there was a great calm.

- Jesus wakes up and takes care of the situation.
- They asked, "Don't You care?" He didn't answer with words. He answered by calming the storm.
- Mark records two commands: "Peace! Be still!" (Mark 4:39).
 - That second word, *pephimōso*, literally means "be muzzled."
- Rebuke = *epitimaō* = rebuke with authority
 - Same in Mark 1:25 when Jesus casts out a demon.
 - He didn't talk to the storm like weather.
 - He spoke to it the way he speaks to the demonic.
 - Also Psalm 106:9 – God rebuked the Red Sea and it became dry.
- That is who was asleep on the boat.
- **Psalm 29:3-4** The voice of the LORD *is* over the waters; The God of glory thunders; The LORD *is* over many waters. ⁴ The voice of the LORD *is* powerful; The voice of the LORD *is* full of majesty.
- The disciples likely knew that Psalm. Yet they panicked.
- The question was never Where is Jesus? They knew He was right there in the boat. Asleep.
- But the question is "Is Jesus' presence enough for you, even when He is not performing?"

Mark 4:40-41 But He said to them, "Why are you so fearful? How *is it* that you have no faith?" ⁴¹ And they feared exceedingly, and said to one another, "Who can this be, that even the wind and the sea obey Him!"

- Now that it is peaceful, Jesus teaches them a lesson.
 - Why are you afraid? Do you not have faith?
 - This is the lesson for our lives today. Do we have faith?
 - Our fear reveals where our faith is.
- He said "Why are you so fearful?"
 - He doesn't use fear (*phobos*). He uses cowardly (*deilos*). Same word in Rev 21:8
 - **Revelation 21:8** But the cowardly, unbelieving, abominable, murderers, sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars shall have their part in the lake

which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death.”

- Now, hear me carefully. Jesus is not rebuking them for feeling afraid. A boat filling with water will make anyone feel afraid.
- He's rebuking them for where that fear took them.
- It took them to "Do You not care?"
- The fear made them doubt who Jesus was and doubt His heart toward them.
- Feeling fear isn't the problem. Letting fear tell you who God is — that's the problem.
- And He said “How *is it* that you have no faith?”
 - No faith = could mean no faith. But according to the Manual Greek Lexicon of the New Testament it actually means ineffective or worthless faith.
 - They had faith the storm could destroy. They had faith that Jesus could do something if He just cared enough.
 - Faith, but in the wrong thing. Something too small.
 - He was saying their fear was a failure to trust the one in the boat with them.
- Now, the disciples that were initially afraid of the storm stand in awe and wonder of Jesus. Their eyes are clearly fixed on Him.

And this is key. Where is our gaze? Is it on the storm – that we can probably do nothing about?

Or is it on Jesus, who can calm the storm and take care of us?

Our faith comes from realizing who He is. We realize who He is by looking to Him, being in Him and experiencing Him.

We skipped over vs. 36

Mark 4:36 Now when they had left the multitude, they took Him along in the boat as He was. And other little boats were also with Him.

And other little boats were also with Him.

- Also note – Other little boats were also with Him. How we respond to the storm will impact others around us.
- Those in the other boats also benefitted from the calming of the storm.
- People around us, when they see the storms we sleep through will also benefit from our ways of going through storms.
- **2 Corinthians 1:3-4** Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort, ⁴ who comforts us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort those who are in any trouble, with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God.

Maybe some of you are thinking, "That's great. But I'm not Jesus sleeping in the boat. I feel it. My chest gets tight. My mind races at 2 a.m."

I want you to know — Jesus felt it too.

Not in the boat. But there was a night when He was not asleep.

Dealing with Anxiety

Luke 22:41-44 And He was withdrawn from them about a stone's throw, and He knelt down and prayed, ⁴² saying, "Father, if it is Your will, take this cup away from Me; nevertheless not My will, but Yours, be done." ⁴³ Then an angel appeared to Him from heaven, strengthening Him. ⁴⁴ And being in agony, He prayed more earnestly. Then His sweat became like great drops of blood falling down to the ground.

- Jesus is experiencing anxiety
 - Sweating blood = anxiety
 - Anxiety itself is not a sin, it is an emotion
 - How we handle that is a choice. Choices have morality.
 - Remember the disciples in the boat? Their problem wasn't that they felt the storm. Jesus felt the garden.
 - The difference is where they took it. The disciples took it to "Don't You care?" Jesus took it somewhere else.

- Where does He take it? He prays
 - What does He pray? Let this cup pass from Me.
 - Is His prayer answered? Kinda. He still drank from that cup.
- Whether or not we get the answer that we prayed for – we always get an answer.
 - Jesus still had to take that cup. Go through Calvary to get to redemption for us.
 - But now He faces it without anxiety.
- After the Garden, we do not see Jesus being anxious. We see Him steadfastly facing the cross. We see Him heal one that came to arrest Him. We see Him calmly answering Pilate and Caiaphas. We see Him forgiving others.
- **Peace is not dependent on the answer you get. It is dependent on the relationship you connect with.**

The formula for dealing with anxiety

Philippians 4:6-7 Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; ⁷ and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.

- This is not a command to not be anxious
- This is a verse saying that when you are anxious, here is the best choice for how to deal with it
- Remember, emotions are not sin. Jesus experienced emotions. God experiences emotions.
- God created our emotions
- We also cannot judge spirituality by our emotions, or someone else's

So what is this verse saying?

- When you experience anxiety, stop looking at what is giving you anxiety, and bring it to God (that's prayer and supplication)
- Then trust God. (That's thanksgiving).

- When we stop connecting with the source of our anxiety and start connecting with our Heavenly Father, then peace comes.
- It is about the relationship. Connecting with God in a pure way – acknowledging who He is (the thankful part) will bring peace
- A peace that passes understanding (doesn't make sense).
- It may not make sense because the storm may not be calmed.
 - It may. Or He may just calm you.

The picture I want to leave you with is the picture of Jesus, asleep on the boat, with the world pounding, beating, crashing and screaming all around Him.

But not affecting Him.

That's who was in the boat with the disciples. And that's who is with you.

Storms will come. That was never the question.

- The question is who you reach for first.
- Your competence, your plans, your ability to manage the crisis...
- or the one who's already in the boat.