

Title: The Book of Mark: Part 12, Be Still  
Speaker: Kevin Norcross  
Passage: Mark 4.35-41  
Big idea: You can be still because Jesus is in the boat.



I have had the opportunity to be able to preach the 1st Sunday of the new year two years in a row. So, I am going to use the same joke back-to-back. “This is the best sermon you have heard all year!”

This cold weather has me longing for summer. As a family we enjoy the summer for the times we get to go out on the boat to go fishing and tubing. We love it when the water is calm, it is not so fun when the waves are big, and you feel seasick. Or when waves come in over the front of the boat - not fun.

In this passage in Mark, we find the account of when the disciples were in the boat with Jesus.

<sup>35</sup> That day when evening came, he said to his disciples, “Let us go over to the other side.” <sup>36</sup> Leaving the crowd behind, they took him along, just as he was, in the boat. There were also other boats with him. <sup>37</sup> A furious squall came up, and the waves broke over the boat, so that it was nearly swamped. <sup>38</sup> 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?” <sup>39</sup> He got up, rebuked the wind and said to the waves, “Quiet! Be still!” Then the wind died down and it was completely calm. <sup>40</sup> He said to his disciples, “Why are you so afraid? Do you still have no faith?” <sup>41</sup> They were terrified and asked each other, “Who is this? Even the wind and the waves obey him!”

Mark 4:35-41

My prayer for us as we study this passage is that God would help us to learn from His Word and hear from Him. And that He would help us to learn from the lives of the 12 disciples, causing us to grow deeper as His disciples.

# BIG IDEA

You can be still because  
Jesus is in the boat.



Here are some ways we can learn from the disciples and their response to Jesus in the boat.



## Their Obedience

Mark 4.35-36, “That day when evening came, he said to his disciples, ‘Let us go over to the other side.’ Leaving the crowd behind, they took him along, just as he was, in the boat. There were also other boats with him.”

The disciples were willing to go to the other side of the lake. They were willing to go wherever Jesus wanted them to go. They had surrendered their lives to follow Jesus. They were willing to do whatever Jesus wanted them to do. Immediately they were willing to do what they were told and to be obedient.

Jesus is asking you and I to “go to the other side”. To go deeper in your relationship with Him, to pursue God every day, to follow him to the other side each day. We cannot stay satisfied with where we are at, but we must hunger for more of God.

Jesus does not ask without offering anything. There is something deeper for you. Resist the pressure to be complacent, to sit on your hands and do nothing. Take action and follow Jesus.

There is a parallel between the disciples getting in the boat and you walking in obedience to God and going deeper in your relationship with Him.

As you follow Jesus and go deeper with Him, there is a new level of understanding, integrity, trust, and intimacy with God

The temptation is to just stand on the shore and watch others go with Jesus and miss out. Don’t let fear prevent you from pursuing God. Don’t miss out on awesome experiences with God for fear of what could go wrong or what others might think of you or the potential storm.

Yes, you miss out on the storm, but you miss the miracle as well. It is the miracles that make the storm worth it. As you pursue God, there will be storms, but there is peace within the storm.

The second lesson we learn from the disciples is through their storm.



## Their Storm

Mark 4.37, “A furious squall came up, and the waves broke over the boat, so that it was nearly swamped.”

The disciples faced a squall as a direct result of their obedience to Jesus.

There will be storms that come in your life as a direct result of pursuing God and walking in obedience to God. There will be storms that come into your life just because life happens.

The storms of life can come in many different forms, but they aim to do the same things:

- to stop you
- to fill you with fear
- to make you believe lies

The devil will try to deceive you and make you believe that the storm is bigger than God. Sometimes it feels as though the waves of life are coming over the edge of your boat and threatening to take you down. The temptation is to “abandon ship,” but scripture reminds us that Jesus is in the boat.

Today's big idea: *You can be still because Jesus is in the boat*

Within the storm, we can allow fear to disable, or we can choose the peace of God that can overwhelm.

In life, when tough times come, you and I need to anchor deep and hold on to Jesus through the storm. We need to take hold of the peace in the fact that Jesus is in the boat with us and that everything is going to be okay.

## Their Faith



Mark 4.38, "Jesus was in the stern, sleeping on a cushion."

Are you a light or heavy sleeper?

Sometimes in your storm, it may seem as if God is asleep, or unavailable. The devil will lie to you and make you think that God does not care.

Remember this promise from Philippians 4:19:

"And my God will meet all your needs according to his glorious riches in Christ Jesus."

God cares for your needs, God cares deeply about your pain whether you feel to be true or not, God cares deeply about what you are going through. He cares about your thoughts, how you feel about yourself, your situations at home, your insecurities, your issues.

No matter how bad the storms get, you need to have faith that things are going to be okay. This assurance is something that you can bank on and find rest in ... even in the midst of the storm. God never promised that a life surrendered to Him would be one big party, but He does promise that He will be with you through the good and the bad.



## Their Prayer

Mark 4.38, "The disciples woke him and said to him, 'Teacher, don't you care if we drown?'"

The disciples could not handle the stress and the wind and the waves and the fear and the chaos, so ... they cried out to Jesus and woke him up.

The cries of the disciples were heard by Jesus. You need to remember that your prayers are heard by God. In times of need, don't let your voice go silent.

Prayer is something that is more important than you and I could ever comprehend. It is bigger and more powerful than we understand. It is this tool that God has put into our hands that we can use.

Take an axe as a comparison to prayer.

An axe is needed to split wood. It is vital to one's ability to cut down and split wood. It is something that you need to learn how to use but can really only learn by trying. You might mess up a few times, but eventually you will figure it out. It requires upkeep and muscle to adequately do the job. We have to put in effort to ensure the axe is used rightly and is properly sharpened.

Prayer is similar in the regard. It requires us to use it and to put in the work to ensure that our prayer life remains sharp.

I will be the first to admit that I have been given this tool of prayer and I do not utilize it like I could or like I should, but I am reminded today that God has given us prayer and the possibilities are endless and I challenge you guys to pick it up and use it

While in Bible college I volunteered at a church as their Jr High pastor. I was encouraged to spend 3 hours a day praying. This felt overwhelming. I thought I could never pray that long. But, like most things, it was a process.

I don't want you to feel overwhelmed, but I want you to understand that it is important, and God wants you to figure prayer out.

So, start small with a few minutes a day.

Refuse to let that tool sit there unused. You were created for relationship with God. God sent His Son to die on the cross so that you and I can know Him.

You and I need to embrace the gift of prayer and relationship with God and if we do, we will never be the same. Prayer is an incredibly rich and powerful opportunity for you and I to have conversation with almighty God and the more you discover how amazing prayer can be, the more you will develop a love for it that will grow and increase for the rest of your life.

Here are a few reasons why prayer is so important and vital:

- **You can be encouraged through prayer**
  - God always 'has our back', He is for us not against us.
- **God will strengthen you through prayer**
  - God fills us with His spirit to empower us and allow us to accomplish much for His Kingdom.
- **Your needs can be met through prayer**
  - "You do not have, because you do not ask." James 4:2
- **Your faith can grow through prayer**
  - As you build a relationship with you, you become dependent on God and rely on Him more.
- **Your trust in God is strengthened through prayer**
  - As you share your heart with God, you leave the outcome with Him, and build up your trust in Him.
- **Your perspective is shifted through prayer**
  - As you see God at work in your life, you begin to see His perspective and begin to pray for His will to be done not yours. 1 John 5:14, "according to His will".
- **You are cleansed through prayer**
  - When we pray, we are confronted with God's holiness. The blood of Jesus has cleansed us, and the confrontation of God's holiness reminds us of the cleansing blood of Jesus that is constantly at work within us.
  - 1 John 1.9, "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness"
- **You are humbled through prayer**
  - As we confront God's greatness, we are humbled by our need and reliance on Him.
  - James 4:6, "God opposes the proud, but gives grace to the humble"

Take the opportunity *right now* to pour your heart out to God and tell Him what you are going through and what you desire. Ask Him to form in you a desire to be like Jesus.

Your prayers may not be answered the way you would like them to, but scripture commands us to bring them before God, and to seek Him in prayer.

## Their Miracle



Mark 4.39-41, “He got up, rebuked the wind and said to the waves, “Quiet! Be still!” Then the wind died down and it was completely calm. He said to his disciples, “Why are you so afraid? Do you still have no faith?” They were terrified and asked each other, “Who is this? Even the wind and the waves obey him!”

Imagine this scene, imagine being there!

When Jesus spoke, peace came to the storm, everything stopped, and instantly the chaos ended.

Let me remind you today; if Jesus cares about wind, rain, and waves ... how much more does He care about your situation? When Jesus Christ speaks into your situation just as He spoke to the wind and the waves peace comes. Despite whether He answers your prayer the way you think He should or not peace comes.

Today there is peace for you in your situation,  
Peace that passes all understanding,  
Peace that calms the storm,  
Peace that makes the waves stop,  
Peace that takes away fear,  
Peace knowing that Jesus is in the boat!

**Everything** changes when Jesus speaks.