

Good morning, church family.

I'm glad to be back. That week off was just weird, wasn't it? Just kind of fell off, didn't it? So I'm glad to be back. Praise God for health for many of us. We still have some that are sick and traveling, those kinds of things. So be in prayer for them. But if you would grab your Bibles, turn to Mark chapter four with me. Mark chapter four. We're gonna be in verses 35 through

41. So Mark chapter four, verses

35 through 41. And the title of the message today

is Lord of Nature. We're gonna be looking at what

I'm sure is a fairly familiar story for many of us. One that I hope has brought comfort in years past, but in this particular retelling in Mark, There's a few extra details and a few things that Mark points us to and has purposely put this particular parable right where it is for a very specific reason. And we're going to look at that today. So I would ask that you would, if you found Mark chapter four, go ahead and stand with me in honor of the one that gave us his word. And we'll read these verses together. Mark chapter four, 35 through

41. And on that day, when evening

came, he said to them, let us go over to the other side. And leaving the crowd, they took him along 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 up. And Jesus himself was in the

stern, sleeping on the cushion. And they got him up and said to him, teacher, do you not care that we are perishing? And he woke up and rebuked the wind and said to the sea, silence,

be still. And the wind died down, it became

perfectly calm. And he said to them, why are you so cowardly? Do you still have no faith? And

they became very afraid and were saying to one another, who then

is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him? This is the

word of the Lord, let's pray. Dear Heavenly Father, thank you so much for the opportunity to gather again as a body. We thank

you for the healing that you've allowed in several members of our congregation, and I pray that those who are not fully

healed will be so very soon. I pray for our meeting this evening,

that you'll be glorified in that as well. In the text today, Father,

I pray that Your Spirit would apply the teachings of this passage

to us, that we would see Christ as sovereign, that we would see

Him as the Lord of nature, and that we'd understand the implications of that and how we can rest in that and be challenged to trust

Him. I pray, Lord, that you remove

the anxieties and nerves for me this morning. You would help

me to focus on your word, focus on the speaking of your word

clearly, and that you remove any obstacles or hindrances and

use me simply as a tool that you would receive all the glory.

We love you and praise you in your holy name. Amen. All right,

you can be seated. So here in Mark chapter 4, we're going to enter another section of Mark. Whenever we started in Mark, I mentioned that he writes in sections, and he very much strategically places things in his book for a very specific reason, and we learned those as we went along. We're about to start another section of Mark where now he's going to record four different miracles that Jesus does. It begins here at the end of chapter four and goes on into chapter five. And each of these miracles makes the person who reads them or who were involved in them come to a conclusion about Jesus. They must come to a conclusion about who He is at the end of each one of these miracles. Basically, what it comes down to in each one of these stories is faith versus disbelief and fear. Each one of these, as we go through them, you'll notice that that's essentially what each one comes down to, faith versus disbelief. Now, the readers of this gospel, both then and now, also had to come to a conclusion. And that's one of the things that we're going to look at today is seeing how Jesus is presented in this story, especially in line with the recent parables that we just went through. And then at the end, we too must make a decision about Christ. And I pray that many of us have done that. But if you haven't, please lean in and really look at who Christ is revealing himself as in this miracle. Now this is likely a first-hand account from Mark, as it includes many more details than Matthew or Luke has. So this is recorded in three of the four Gospels. And Mark has many more details. For example, the time of day, which boat, there's other boats being there. Mark records that there's water coming into the boat. It records that Christ was sleeping on a cushion, not just in the boat. There's extra words that Jesus uses in this rendition, and then the rebuke by Christ and Mark is much more firm as well. So it's very much thought that this is likely a first-hand rendition from Peter himself who was in the boat. Many people think that Mark recorded it straight from Peter's mouth. And then one last thing that I want to introduce and make sure that we're kind of keeping in the back of our mind throughout the text as we go this morning is the similarities to Jonah in this text. And we're going to see the similarities to Jonah between the prophet who failed in Jonah and the prophet who didn't in Christ. So I want you to be thinking about that as we go through this. So as we begin to tackle the text, the first point, if you do have the outline or like to take notes, the first point is the plan. The plan, verses 35 and 36. So I'm gonna reread these two verses. And on that day, when evening came, he said to them, let us go over to the other side. And leaving the crowd, they took him along with them in the boat, just as he was, and other boats were with him. So as we begin to look at this, if you recall over the last few weeks, we studied

the parables that were right before this in chapter four. The beginning of chapter four says, on a certain day, he began teaching by the sea. And that first parable is the only one that is actually him teaching on that day. Mark records the other parables that he taught and put them in there, if you guys remember us talking about that. The first of the five parables was the only one taught that day. The other four were ones that Mark pulled in there to teach a specific lesson. But now we're back to on that day. So we're back to the same day that Jesus taught the parable of the sower. And now that it's evening, Jesus has a plan. Let us go over to the other side. Let us go over to the other side. So Jesus is the one that initiates them staying in the same boat he's already teaching in. So if you recall in the beginning of chapter four, Jesus was teaching from a boat. There were so many people he had to shove off from land to get the acoustics right so that people either weren't touching him and everybody could hear him and they were just such a large crowd that he had to push off in a boat. Now this boat, from an archaeological standpoint, because I want to make sure and set the picture for you so you can see it, this boat, there's been a find in Galilee under feet and feet of mud, but they found an almost fully intact Galilean vessel that's thought to be aged about the time of Christ, about first century. The boat, which is very common in those days for fishing, was 26 and a half feet long, so fairly long, seven and a half feet wide, and four and a half feet tall, so four and a half feet tall. And it was thought to hold about 15 people. There'd be two rowers, one on each side of the boat. There'd be a mast in the middle. The mast is not remaining in this particular archeological find, but that's gonna give you rough dimensions of the boat that they likely were sailing in. And so Jesus in sitting in this boat teaching, he says, let's go the other side. And it records very specifically, very detailed that they took him as he was. In other words, they took the very boat he was sitting in. So likely all 12 disciples were with him and they took the boat and left. And there were other boats with them. Some think that this could have been other fishermen that saw him leave. This could have been the crowd getting into as many boats as they could. But the point is, is that they were going off of the shore, heading to the other side, likely to continue Christ's mission of preaching. Mark recorded earlier in his gospel, chapter one, how he came to preach repentance, right? Christ's mission, he made it very clear, was to preach repentance. And so here he is, he's going to continue to do his mission. He's pushing off to go to the other side. Now, there's a couple of things that we need to note here. When these first couple of verses, when you first read them, you're like, okay, there's nothing really all that

exciting here. Jesus just said, hey, let's go. But there's something that we need to note, especially today, because we're so disconnected from the West and in the West and the ideas of who's in charge and making the plans. This was Jesus's plan to send the disciples to the other side. the God of the universe, the sovereign king, the one who knows all, said, let's go to the other side. Now, those of us who can read this, in the moment, the God was like, okay, great, let's go. We're seasoned fishermen, we've lived our whole lives on this lake. We're the insiders, if you guys recall, there's the outsiders crowd and the insiders crowd from a few weeks ago. We're the insiders, we get to go spend more time with the master without the crowd. but Jesus knew the storm was going to come. In fact, we know from other portions of scripture, God, who Jesus has revealed himself as multiple times throughout this gospel so far already, we know he is sovereign and we know he knows what is going on. And yet Jesus sends them out into the sea anyway. Often this particular passage is preached as or taught as We just don't know about the storms of life where we're just kind of here getting bashed around and God just reacts and helps us, right? God is our safety net when the storms of life come. And yes, we may not know what the storms of life may be, but we need to understand that the plan is God's, even the storms, even the storms. Because ultimately the disciples, as we're going to learn here, are going to see much more about Christ than they've ever seen before. Much more about Christ. And we need to understand that the storms that we see are sovereignly decreed to happen. They are part of the plan. The storms of life that we go through when people are sick, when our cars break down, when our houses have all the elements go out at the same time. Sounds like I'm speaking from experience, doesn't it? All of our things go wrong, that the kids get sick, things happen at school, things that work, I could go on and on. When we feel like the storms of life are coming, what we have to hold on to is that God is not only our rescuer, but he's the one that created the storm. Now, what I mean by that is, yes, sin ultimately creates storms, doesn't it? Doesn't sin create storms? We know that. Sin creates storms. We live in a sin-broken world. We know that the storms of life are a result of sin. And yet God decreed the very things that are happening in our lives. Look at Job as a prime example. But that should not make us bristle. That should calm our hearts. Because there is no meaningless evil in the world when there's a sovereign God in control. There is no sin for the sake of simply sin. When you look at it from a humanistic evolutionary perspective, what you see is the answer, evil is just evil. It just is. It happens because there's no meaning. We don't have any meaning to

it. It's just some people are worse than others. Can you imagine going through something like the sexual assault of a small child or the murder of a family member and thinking that there's no meaning and it's senseless. It just happened because we all came from ooze millions of years ago. But we as believers get to rest in the sovereignty of God knowing that although we may not understand why, he knows why and that he does as he pleases. Now, if you stop there and say God does as He pleases, such as Psalm 135 tells us, Psalm 135 and verse 6 reads, whatever Yahweh pleases, He does in heaven and on earth and the seas and in all deeps. If we stop there with, okay, God is sovereign and He just does as He pleases, there might be a chance to our minds to default back to paganism. Okay, so we just have to appease him and keep him happy. But scripture teaches us that our God is good. And scripture tells us that not only is our God sovereign, but he is good and he loves his children. And so when storms come, we can rest in the fact that God planned for those storms, sent us into those storms, controls those storms, and will get us through according to his good will. And so we can rest in that. So we need to grasp and understand and wrap our minds around this plan, this idea that God It is God's plan. It was God's plan then. It is always God's plan. Everything in history is God's plan, which is a very deep thing to wrestle with. So please understand I'm not saying it's easy to wrap your mind around the fact that there was a Holocaust or that there's children that are murdered or trafficked in our country today. I'm not saying it's easy to wrap our minds around that. But what we as Christians get to have is the foundation to rest on that God is sovereign and that he's in control and he will redeem it for his glory, even if we don't understand what that looks like. And we can trust that. And when I mentioned that Jonah is a parallel to this, let's think about what Jonah was commanded to do. The plan was God told Jonah, go to Nineveh, right? And Jonah was allowed to resist that. to show himself. Anybody ever wondered why Jonah was in the Bible? Right? We always hear, all the whole Bible points to Christ and you read Jonah's four chapters and you're like, does it? Are you sure that it does? But when you understand that Jonah was a prophet sent by God, and that Christ is the great prophet come to reveal God, you can see even after Christ, and we're gonna look at it in a few minutes, Christ compares himself to Jonah himself. And so we have a reason to look back to Jonah when we think of Christ. But Jonah was commanded to go and bring repentance, the message of repentance to his enemies, wasn't he? Think about that. Jonah was commanded to go bring the message of repentance, the revelation of God to his enemies, and yet he didn't. And there was a storm that came.

So there was a plan for Jonah as well. So we're going to see, as we move through this, that resting on God's sovereignty and understanding who Christ is, and that everything in our lives is planned out by God, decreed by him, even in those times where it hurts, we know that he is a good God and we can trust him. Point number two, the storm. So now we're gonna look at the storm. Verses 37 through 39. I'm gonna read that again for us. And a great windstorm arose, and the waves were breaking into the boat, so that the boat was already filling up. And Jesus himself was in the stern, sleeping on the cushion. And they got him up and said to him, teacher, do you not care that we are perishing? And he woke up and rebuked the wind and said to the sea, silence, be still. And the wind died down and he became perfectly calm. So let's set the stage. Let me widen the view a little bit so we know what the boat looks like. It's a fairly large boat for that day. The waves are coming in already. There's water filling up the boat. And these expert fishermen that's lived on this sea their entire lives have begun to get scared. Now I want you to think physically about the Sea of Galilee. The Sea of Galilee is 700 feet below sea level in a basin, essentially. Think of a big washbowl that's surrounded by very high hills on one side and absolute huge hills on the other. In fact, on the northeast corner is Mount Hermon that is 9,200 feet above sea level. So the peak of Mount Hermon is nearly 10,000 feet above the surface of the sea. So you have cool air on the sea with rushing, or excuse me, reverse that, warm air on the sea with cool air rushing in from 10,000 feet up. The Sea of Galilee is known even today for its storms, unprecedented storms that pop up minutes and minutes. You won't even know anything is coming. And so these fishermen that have lived and grown up on this sea are here against what is considered a hurricane. If you look in the text in verse 37, it says a great windstorm. The word in the original language there is a whirlwind sweeping upwards. That's the literal Greek word, a whirlwind sweeping upwards. We could translate that hurricane. So we now have a storm that is hurricane force winds. on a little sea, a basin, nowhere to go, surrounded by mountains. Can you imagine that being pulled up? So now that we've got the physical view, we know what's going on, we know the storm is there, things are sweeping in, the water's coming in, things are starting to get terrifying when the fishermen are scared. And yet, they don't remember what Jesus has just taught them. Mark pulls these stories in for a very specific reason. We talked about over the last several weeks looking at the parables. There's the soil's parables. There's a couple of those. The parable of the lamp and the measure. The parables about the kingdom.

And every one of those centrally focused on the sovereignty of God. We see the sower trusting, the farmer trusting God. The sower being the one who controls which soil is good and which is not. We saw over and over again the sovereignty of God. So Mark has essentially built an argument for us from Jesus's teaching that he is sovereign, that God is sovereign. This is Jesus. We know in chapters one and two, Mark is showing us Jesus is the Messiah and Jesus is God. Then he says, God is sovereign, chapter four, teaching us through the parables. And now Mark is showing us with the actions of Christ that he is sovereign. So the storm and all of its forces coming in, it reminds us so much of Jonah. The storm is coming. The soldiers or the sailors in Jonah's day were scared. They were running. They were trying to find what was going on. Jonah is asleep in the bottom. Him having a false peace of running from God. These fishermen here on Galilee in the passage we have today are scared. Their boat is threatened. This is their livelihood. Not only are they worried about their lives, but their boat. that they have is likely their livelihood. And they look around and they can't find Jesus. And in these boats at each end, in the stern of each end would have been a five to six foot deck built just below the edge of the boat that would have allowed for seating or fishing. And so they look and there's Jesus asleep in the stern, sleeping on one of the cushions. And you think to yourself, how could Jesus be asleep in that kind of a storm? I'm a pretty heavy sleeper. My wife will tell you I can pretty much put my head down anywhere and fall asleep. I don't think I can fall asleep on a boat in a storm. Especially hurricane force winds.

Anybody ever been in a hurricane? I lived in Florida when Hurricane Dennis and Hurricane Katrina both hit right in the panhandle. I've seen palm trees bouncing off the ground, literally 80 foot palm trees just bouncing. Hurricane force winds are no joke. And so you've got this wind, this rain, the water coming into the boat, everything's wet and cold, and here's Jesus asleep. What does that mean? Do you know what he's doing? He knows who's in control. He knows who's in control. He doesn't have to wonder what's going to happen. The plan was his, was it not? The plan was his to send them into the storm in the first place. God doesn't send anyone into something without knowing what's going to happen. He's already decreed both the outcome and the means of getting to the outcome. And so he, Christ, being the one who's in control, yes, he's in control, but he still knows who is. Now, let me ask you, brothers and sisters, when was the last time you could sleep through a storm because you knew who was in control? When was the last time

you rested
in Christ to the extent that you knew it didn't matter what was going on, but you could sleep through the storm? And so as the disciples were running around trying to find out what's going on, they get to him and they wake him up and they say to him, teacher, do you not care that we are perishing? This man that called them from the side of the sea has been pouring into them day after day, even in such a short amount of time, they've already lost faith in the person that they're following. Aren't humans fickle? Aren't we? Everything's fine as long as the sea is glassy calm. We'll trust God all day long. I know who's in control. Look how great my house is. Look how great my car is. My kids are all healthy. God, you are in control. And then the storm hits and we lose our minds. The disciples are a clear picture of us today. When the storms of life come in, we forget who's in control. And there's several reactions we can have. I can imagine some of the disciples, and the text isn't here, but I imagine in a storm, sailors, some are probably wrestling with the sail, trying to make sure it's under control. Some may be trying to roll against the storm and try to fix it. Some of them are probably hiding underneath the decks so that they don't have to deal with the storm at all. Everyone has a different reaction to the storm, but the fact of the matter remains is all 12 of them had the wrong reaction. And so they ran up to Jesus. The only place in scripture that Jesus ever is recorded in sleeping is during storms. Did you know that? The only place that scripture records Christ asleep is in storms. And so they come and wake him up, and their fickle humanity shows through. Why are you sleeping? Don't you care we are perishing? Unlike the farmer in the previous parables that we just studied, who doesn't know how the seed grows and produces fruit, he just trusts that it does. Unlike understanding the sovereignty of God, they come apart. But Christ's faith is absolute. His trust in the Father, his trust in knowing who's in control is absolute. And so he reacts. And the words here are absolutely breathtaking. So in verse 39, let's read it again. And he woke up and rebuked the wind and said to the sea, silence, be still. And the wind died down and it became perfectly calm. So I want us to understand the use of the words here. And then we're going to look at it compared to Jonah. The authority of Jesus is seen in this language. The word rebuked here is the same word in the Greek epitomon that has been used twice already in Mark for rebuking demons. So Mark uses the same language for rebuking demon activity as he does for rebuking this very storm. And this word for rebuking, epitomon,

is not used in any Hellenistic exorcisms. In other words, this is a Jewish-specific word, a Greek word that only the Jews used to explain getting rid of demons by the power of God, essentially. There's a lot wrapped up in that word. But the idea is ridding demons of a particular area, commanding them by the name of God, so that all evil powers are brought into the submission to God himself. The reason why I'm so specific about this word is because we need to understand what Mark is trying to tell us. And this is multi-layered, so hang on with me. Mark is trying to tell us that the evil that is allowed to happen is part of God's plan. That this storm was, in fact, evil. We're not backing away from the fact that this storm has demonic overtones. In fact, in the Old Testament, heavy waters and storms are often used to represent demonic influence in the Jewish mindset, that God overcomes the waters and overcomes the storms throughout the Psalms. If you look in that, you'll see that. And so we see Mark telling us in this story, Christ, in the words that he's using, that he's rebuking the evil that is around them. And not only does he rebuke it, not only is he telling nature itself the evil that had been brought into nature from man himself, not only does he tell it and rebuke it, but he says, silence, be still. And the silence here is the idea of a muzzle, literally muzzling the evil that is there. And the stay still in the original language is in the perfect passive imperative. That's just a fancy way of saying be quiet and stay quiet. So he is rebuking evil in the face of the disciples and telling it to be quiet and stay quiet by his authority. So we've come off of these five parables that have taught the sovereignty of God, and now Jesus is coming in and doing something that the entire Old Testament says only God can do. Only God has control over nature. This would have been an amazing impression to the disciples. But we must not miss that the cosmic overtones of the gospel here as well. Christ came to not only redeem his people, he came to redeem the cosmos. To defeat sin overall. We know there will be a new heavens and a new earth. The idea of the cosmic redemption seen here and him putting down the evil that's seen in nature is astounding. There is so much layered here, it is breathtaking. And so we see, very much like Mark taught us in the parable of the strong man, you guys remember that sermon, that text, we know that Christ is the true strong man that kicks open the door. I'm not gonna high kick again. But he kicks open the door, right? And he comes in and he wrestles the strong man inside the house. The true strong man puts that strong man and binds and throws him out, binds him and throws him out. And so we see Christ exercising that same level of authority here over the storm. There's so much here that we're seeing that Mark layers over and over and over for us throughout

this gospel. Now, write down, you don't have to turn there if you don't want, but Matthew 12, verses 38 through 41. I'm going to show you why I'm tying in Jonah here. Matthew chapter 12, verses 38 through 41. because Christ himself points to Jonah as a foreshadow of himself. Matthew chapter 12, verses 38 through 41. It reads, then some of the scribes and Pharisees answered and said to him, teacher, we want to see a sign from you. But he answered and said to them, an evil and adulterous generation eagerly seeks for a sign, and yet no sign will be given to it but the sign of Jonah the prophet. For just as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the sea monster, so will the son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth. The men of Nineveh will stand up with this generation of the judgment and will condemn it because they repented at the preaching of Jonah and behold, something greater than Jonah is here. So I wanted you to see Christ comparing himself, Christ pointing to Jonah as a foreshadow of himself.

We talked about foreshadow a couple weeks ago. So with the idea of the shadow of Jonah, I want us to see the similarities here. So we have the storm, we've seen the similarities of the storm. We've seen some of the similarities of Jonah asleep and Christ asleep. The next similarity pops up right here. Because as the sailors in Jonah's story in the book of Jonah, they rush and they find Jonah and they cast lots and they find out Jonah is the reason that there's a storm. And so they pick him up and they throw him into the sea. And the moment Jonah hits the water, the entire thing goes silent, complete calm immediately. We see here the same level of angst and worry from the fickle disciples. And they've awoken Christ, and he stands and immediately silences the wind, and it became perfectly calm. I can assure you the disciples knew the story of Jonah. I wonder if they made the connection that fast, because their reaction, as we're gonna see in just a moment, is very similar. But our application from this second point, I've kind of hinted to it a little bit, but I wanna drive it home a little bit more for us, is that in amongst the storm, we must, we must trust the one who has the plan. We must rest in Christ. the one who's already done the work, the one who's redeemed us, the one that we know is taking us out of this evil world one day, and that nothing can take us from his hand. What a beautiful thought. There is nothing that can remove us from the hand of God. Those whom he redeems, he will persevere to the end. And we should be able to weather any storm resting in that. Because the storm has a purpose. The storm has a purpose, and we're going to look at that purpose

next, but we need to understand that every storm in life that we go through, everything that God's plan takes us through is on purpose for a reason for his glory. And we can rest in the fact that we have a good God that we serve. Number three, the maker. the maker. So we've talked about the plan. We've seen Jesus implementing the plan. We've seen the storm and the implications there and the fickle disciples. And now we're going to hone in on the maker, verses 39 through 41. So I'm going to reread 39 so we can see Christ's rebuke and then the rest of the story. Verse 39 of chapter 4 of Mark. And he woke up and rebuked the wind and said to the sea, silence, be still. And the wind died down and it became perfectly calm. And he said to them, why are you so cowardly? Do you still have no faith? And they became very afraid and were saying to one another, who then is this that even the wind and the sea obey him? As if we haven't looked immediately, or already I should say, at all the things that we've seen from God's sovereignty, from Christ's sovereignty here, I want to point out a couple more things that are imminent to this particular discussion. Psalm chapter 107, verses 23 through 32. I want to read to you this rather lengthy passage that gives us almost detailed fulfillment from that psalm and what Christ has just done. So we're gonna see the maker displayed here, Christ fulfilling Psalm 107. There are some, and I haven't done a deep enough study to really be able to argue this one way or the other, but some would argue that every single psalm has a prophecy of Christ in it somewhere. I know there's a lot that have major ones. I haven't quite done the study to put my foot down, but every single one does, but many of them do. But this one certainly points to what would seem to have happened even here. Psalm 107 verses 23 through 32 is gonna give us a glimpse of the maker, the one who is the Lord of nature. Those who go down to the sea in ships, who do business on many waters, they have seen the works of Yahweh and his wondrous deeds in the deep. He spoke and set up a stormy wind, which raised up the waves of the sea. They went up to the heavens. They went down to the depths. Their soul melted away in the calamity. They staggered and swayed like a drunken man and all their wisdom was swallowed up. Then they cried to Yahweh in their trouble and he brought them out of their distresses. He caused the storm to stand still so that it was waves were hushed. Then they were glad because they were quiet. So he led them to their desired haven. Let them give thanks to Yahweh for his loving kindness and for his wondrous deeds to the sons of men. Let them exalt him also in the assembly of the people and praise him at the seat of the elders." It's almost verbatim a description of what's just occurred, isn't

it? Yahweh is the one that brings the storm. He speaks the words and the winds raise The waves rise to the heavens and they go down to the depths. The souls of the people melted and their wisdom was swallowed up. These fishermen who were wise about the Sea of Galilee, they grew up in a boat. They've lived in it for years. Their wisdom vanished. It was swallowed up. But they cried to Yahweh in their trouble. They ran to Christ and they say, don't you care that we're perishing? And Yahweh is loving, kind. We give thanks to His loving kindness because He calms the storm. He takes them to their haven. The very storm that He rose up to get them to run to Him, He now calms so that they can make it to their haven. And we are left to do nothing but praise him, exalting him in the assembly of the people and praising him at the seat of the elders. The maker had a reason. Just as God calms the sea in Jonah, Jesus is doing what only God can do here. But it's interesting, the rebuke that we have, and Mark, contains the extra words, why are you so cowardly? Doesn't that make your hair stand in the back of your neck a little bit, like just stand right up? Ooh, gives you shivers that the sovereign God looks at you and goes, why are you a coward? But how many of us in here have had to have that rebuke? I have. multiple times in my life, in fact. I've been humbled multiple times, praise God, because I can say of the other side of the storm, the other side of not trusting him is a deeper level of trust when he once again proves himself righteous and good. But that should send shivers down our spine. Why are you such a coward? I would challenge you to think of that the next time a storm comes. Because there's such a fine line between disbelief and faith, isn't there? There's such a fine line. Why are you such a coward? Because the beautiful thing is, he asked them, do you still have no faith? Remember, these are the people that he pulled from the side of the sea chose for himself, has shown his authority as the conqueror of demons, the healer of people, the one that does miracles, and then taught them, taught them just before this, that the sower is sovereign. We don't know for sure if the other four miracles, so let's just take those out. Let's not even argue, that's Mark doing that for us as readers. But let's think about in the context of that day, right? Because we know that the day is set back up now. So we know for a fact the only parable that foreshore got taught that day was the first parable of the soils, the good and the bad soils. There is no doubt the sovereignty of God is on display in that parable, is it? There's no doubt, you can't, there's no other interpretation for that. The sower is the one who worked the soil, the farmer,

he's the one that threw the seed, He knows where the good soil is, there's no doubt about it. So they have been given the explanation, they've been taught what it means, we've been shown what it means, and yet they still didn't trust him. So he calls them cowards. But the point here is seen in verse 41, the outcome, all of this leading to this one outcome. Look at verse 41. And they became very afraid, and were saying to one another, Who then is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him? Much like in Jonah, the sailors, when they saw the sea go calm, what did they do immediately? The God of Jonah is the true God, and they worshiped him immediately, on the boat still, probably soaking wet from the storm. But they were so in awe of the supernatural effect of the storm being calmed that they were amazed to the point they could do no other but praise God. The supernatural was so astounding that they had no choice but to do that. And here we see the disciples reaching that same level. The emphasis here in the verse 41, the words very afraid, your translation may be worded slightly different, but they became very afraid. This is a double emphasis in the Greek and an infinitive absolute in Hebrew. Basically what this means is this is next level fear. And what Mark is trying to tell us, they were so petrified, so terrified, that this is a fear above the level of the fear of the storm. This is a different kind of fear. This is something altogether different than what they were just feeling. This is a terrified fear. Because the supernatural miracle that Christ just performed is something that they know only God can do, period. Even today, man cannot, with all of its technology and God's allowed us to have some pretty amazing things over the last 100 years, still cannot do anything about the weather, can we? I still trust a weather rock more than I do KY3, let's be honest. Right? You guys know what a weather rock is? If it's raining, the rock is wet. If it's windy, you get the idea. We still can't do anything about the weather, can we? We know that the nature of the weather is something that is wholly separate and other than man. Man can do nothing about it. The only thing that can be done about it is God. Every, nearly every pagan religion has some sort of a god of nature in those days. The Romans had one, the Greeks had one, the Asians had one, everyone had some sort of a god that controlled nature because they knew it was absolutely beyond human capacity to do anything about the weather. And yet, this man, who's a carpenter from Nineveh, who has done some healings, which is great, but those paled in comparison to what the disciples have just witnessed. He calmed a hurricane on the Sea of Galilee, a sea known for its storms. Who is this man? When I was studying this week,

I couldn't help but think of C.S. Lewis. Anybody here a C.S. Lewis fan? The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe. Anybody? Yes? There's a portion of The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe where Beaver, Mr. Beaver, has brought the kids. If you don't know the context, I'm not going to give you the full backstory. Just hang with me and read it later if you don't know what I'm talking about. But there was enough hands, I think this will stick. Mr. Beaver in Narnia has brought the children into his home, hiding from the wolves. And he tells them that they're gonna go meet Aslan. And the quote from the book is Mr. Beaver speaking, Aslan is a lion, the lion, the great lion. Oh, said Susan, I thought he was a man. Is he quite safe? I shall feel rather nervous about meeting a lion. Safe, said Mr. Beaver. Who said anything about safe? Of course he isn't safe, but he's good. He's the king, I tell you. That right there captures our view of our sovereign king. Is he safe? Of course he isn't safe. God isn't safe. The holy God is holy. And he judges those who are his enemies, but he's good. He's the king. And even in his unsafe demeanor of a lion, get that image in your mind, even how unsafe a lion is, we get to see the picture of Jesus the lion saving the people whom he chose. So even when we see that God brings the storms, he's not safe, he brought the storms, but he's the only safety in the storms. because he's the king. And this is the same thing that Israel did, the same reaction to the supernatural things that God is doing. In Exodus 14, 31, don't turn there, it's a short verse, I'll just read it for you. But Exodus 14, 31, after Israel has been brought from Egypt, we see a record of this verse. Then Israel saw the great hand which Yahweh had used against the Egyptians and the people feared Yahweh and they believed in Yahweh and in his servant Moses. Yahweh rescued the 12 tribes of Israel by his supernatural mighty hand against Egypt. Jesus has rescued the 12 disciples representing the 12 tribes of Israel by his mighty right hand in calming the storm. We serve a mighty king. And Mark is making that point for us. And to tie up the bow of the Jonah similarities, Jonah, if you're familiar with the story, spends three days and three nights, which Christ has already shown us in Matthew, that that's a precursor to his three days and three nights in the tomb. But Jonah goes on and eventually does what God says, but with hate in his heart for his enemies. Because Nineveh were the enemies of the Jews. They absolutely decimated them, tortured them. It was really bad. And the reason Jonah didn't want to go there was because he didn't want God

to have mercy on his enemies. Remember when I was talking about humans being fickle? And so Jonah tried to run from God giving mercy to his enemies. If you read the last chapter of Jonah, that's what he says. I didn't want to go because I knew you'd give them grace because you're good. Yet Christ, the true prophet, the failure of Jonah is seen. The failure of that prophet is seen. The shadow is there, but it's not the reality of the true prophet. And the substance came to redeem his enemies. And he was faithful to that task. You and I are in this room because Christ was faithful, the faithful and true prophet that came to redeem and share the message of repentance to his enemies, and he fulfilled that job. And so we're seeing here the Lord of nature establishing his authority, showing the disciples, and the true prophet we know will later come in Mark and redeem his enemies and fulfill his duty. So this story holds so much more than maybe what we've read or heard taught before. We get to see the sovereignty of Christ here. I'm gonna read you a quote that I found this week about this particular passage that I think summarizes it quite well. And then we'll apply this together. In the account of the subduing of the sea, we are told that Jesus is the living word What is true of the God of Israel is true of Him. At all times and in every sphere, He exercises sovereign control over the situation. The subduing of the sea and the wind was not merely a demonstration of power, it was an epiphany through which Jesus was unveiled to His disciples as the Savior in the midst of intense peril. And very early, this incident was understood as a sign of Jesus's saving presence in the persecution, which threatened to overwhelm the church. It is not surprising that in early Christian art, the church was depicted as a boat driven upon a perilous sea. With Jesus in the midst, there was nothing to fear. This story holds so much more than what we realize at face value. So now when we look at applying what we've learned, we take it all together. And we've made several applications that I'm going to reiterate a little bit here. But the inner circle, the disciples here have gotten to see the sovereignty of God. They've gotten to see the authority of Jesus. And the end of this miracle, they ask themselves, who then is this? That even the wind and the sea obey him. And that's really what we ultimately have to decide, don't we? We're faced with the same decision. We're faced with the same question. Who is this man that did this? Who is this? I pray that The gift of repentance has been exercised in you, and you can rejoice with me and go, this is the sovereign king, and we can rest in that, and we can rest in Christ, and we know who's in control, and we can go into

the new year. The new year starts tomorrow.
How appropriate is this? That literally just occurred to me. The new year is tomorrow. The storms of 2024 are coming. God does what he wants. You see that? We were sick last week, and now the sermon's today. Because there will be storms in 2024. in all of our lives. Some of us think bigger than others, some of them political, some of them financial. Who knows? But there will be storms. And so those of us who have that gift of faith and repentance and have exercised that get to rejoice and go, this is Christ. This is the Holy God. This is the one that Psalm 107 talked about. This is who not only calls up the storms, but calms them and takes me to the haven that he has promised me. But if that's not you, if that's not what you can say, you have to make a decision on who then is this. And I call you to make that decision. and I exhort you to repent and place your faith in Christ as we're commanded to. My brothers and sisters, those who have made that profession, those who are followers of him, be encouraged. I pray that this sermon was encouraging and edifying to you because when I was studying it this week and last week, it was two weeks, but when I was studying it, the sense of calm and understanding Because I have to be reminded of that daily. And you know what we have to do for each other as the church? Remind each other of that daily. Point each other to Christ. When the storm comes up, let's not find some cool colloquialisms or a sunny day calendar that we can pull off for one lining. Point them to Christ. Go to them and let them weep on your shoulder. Weep with those who weep. Laugh with those who laugh. Rejoice with those who rejoice. But in everything, point to Christ. Because the only way that we as a church body are going to weather the storms is together, pointing each other to Christ. Because Christ is in each of us, right? We learned that in Ephesians. We are the body of Christ. Christ is within each of us and we are Christ. So he has given us the means to continue to point each other to one another, or to Christ, excuse me, to get through the storm. He not only gives the storm, but He gets the means through the storm, and that's us. Christ uses us as the means to make it through the storm. So I would ask you in conclusion, what decision have you made about Him? What conclusion have you come to about Christ? Can you answer the question, who then is this? Can you answer that question? Because we're going to look at four more miracles over the coming weeks, or excuse me, three more. Each one of them is going to bring you to a point, bring us to a point where we have to go, who then is this? And we have to look and decide between faith and disbelief. And I pray that that helps our faith grow stronger and who we get to look at as believers. And if you

don't have that gift
of faith, I pray that God uses that to open your eyes. Let's
go to the Lord in prayer. Dear Heavenly Father, we love
you and thank you for the opportunity to see your sovereignty in this
passage. Lord, your sovereignty was even
on display in moving this sermon to when you wanted it. We are
amazed by you, Lord, the one who brings the storm and the
one who takes us through it. And I pray, Lord, that we would,
with excitement, look at the haven that is coming for us when
the final storm clears and we get to see you. We love you,
Lord, and praise you. And I pray that each member here
will unite with the ones around them, point each other to Christ,
and help carry the loads through this new year. In your holy name,
I pray. Amen.