

Mark 4:35-5:43 | Truths, Proofs and Fears

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Neflix recently offered me a free month, and I jumped at the opportunity to do it for one reason: The Office. I love The Office, but my wife had never really seen it, so this month we have been trying, and failing miserably to get through all nine seasons. We just started season four.

And one of the things I love about The Office is the Jim/Dwight story line. Jim is always trying to con Dwight into believing something, and Jim goes out of his way to prove his trick to Dwight. Whether it is that Jim is telekinetic, or a vampire, or that Thursday is actually Friday, Jim's goal is to prove to Dwight that his prank is the truth.

The interesting thing about Dwight is that most of the time he believes Jim's foolish truths, but chooses to disregard common sense truths. This is what makes Dwight, Dwight. He thinks the world is ruled by robots, but he doesn't think he can get sick because he is naturally immune to weakness.

Dwight's truth, regardless of the proofs, ultimately comes down to Dwight's desire to believe as truth. This is largely true of our culture today. We all want proof, but ultimately we feel like truth is also relative. What is true for you, may not be true for me.

And tonight, we are going to see Jesus presenting proof of his validity, and we are going to see the reasons for people to believe or not to believe in his truth claims.

We are going to be looking at most of chapters 4 and 5 of Mark today, and one line we will see in this story comes after Jesus calms a storm. All those around Jesus look around and say: "Who is this man, that even the winds and the waves submit to him."

In true Markian fashion, Mark is going to answer that question tonight, not by telling us who Jesus is, but by showing us who Jesus is. We are going to look at a lot of text tonight, but if I could sum it up, in order to create an outline for us, this would be it: Jesus is the awesome Lord over the sea, over Satan and over our terminal state of death.

Let's **pray**.

The first proof which Jesus gives us in our passage tonight is that He is **the awesome Lord over the sea**.

Here is the story: **Mark 4:35-41**.

Sarah and I once watched a documentary on the great tsunami which hit the south pacific islands in 2006. And in this documentary you saw the dichotomy of man. Because on one had you see this vast dense jungle, but then you see this amazing 5 star resort in the middle of it. The landscape is immaculate, the buildings are pristine, the paths are lined with palm trees and artificial sea walls have been made to create a space for snorkeling.

But then you see the footage of the waves coming in, and all that man had manicured was washed away by the sea. That's because God gave man the ability to tame and till the land, but man has no control over the sea. I can plow, tame and harness the soil. I cannot tame the sea.

In fact after the fall of man in Genesis three we see the Hebrew word for “sea” or “ocean” being used primarily in reference to tumultuous chaos. The sea is unknown and man is utterly unable to harness it.

But we also see a few important passages about the sea: Look at **Ps 95:3-5**. While man is unable to keep the sea, God is Lord over it. The sea is God sea. Another interesting passage is Psalm 89. And in Psalm 89 the Psalmist is singing of God’s faithfulness to the line of David, the great King of Israel. But look at what he says: **Ps 89:3-4, 24-25**. Here we see God promising that someone from the line of David will have his hand on the sea. He will control it.

But in the Old Testament we never see this. Moses parted the Red Sea, but only after he appealed to God. Jonah calmed the sea, but only because he threw himself overboard. But Jesus calms the sea in this passage because he is the true King from the line of David. Jesus calms the sea in ways Old Testament prophets couldn’t because he isn’t just a man. He is God. Jesus brings peace to that which was untamable. Jesus is not only Lord over the sea. He is Lord and controller of all things.

That’s why we see the disciples and the other boaters say: What manner of man is this? Who is it who can bring peace to the sea? Jesus can. Because Jesus is not like the rest of mankind.

Secondly we see: **Jesus is the awesome Lord over Satan.**

Pay very close attention to this story and focus on the language of death and violence used in this passage: **Mark 5:1-20**

Mark 5:1-6. Do you see the helplessness of the situation? Immediately, as if Jesus had no time to prepare, this monster of a man emerges from the tombs. Creepy stuff huh? Halloween is tomorrow, this is the kind of experience Halloween seeks to replicate. Fearful, spiritual, terror.

No one was able to subdue this man. And the table is set for his confrontation with Jesus.

Mark 5:7-13. This man was not possessed by one demon, but by 2,000. This man symbolizes the ultimate mastery of Satan. He is ruled and he is reigned by a legion of Satan’s minions. And yet with a word Jesus destroys the demons. And the demons thinking they could escape Jesus’ wrath ask to be cast into pigs, but even when Jesus does this they still end up dying. Satan cannot escape the power of Jesus.

Mark 5:14-20. Everyone marveled at this awesome Lord. This Lord who had the ability to bind those who were unbindable. This is the proof that Jesus is who he says he is. Remember **Mark 3:26-27**. Jesus has come to bind the strong man. Jesus is the stronger man.

Jesus has proven that not even the most powerful spiritual forces here on earth can compare to his power. Unbelief, violence, demonic forces, Satan himself are all pawns compared to the God Man, Jesus Christ.

And the final proof: **Jesus is awesome Lord over our terminal state, death.**

Mark 5:21-43

Mark 5:21-24. So Jesus is driven from one side of the sea to another, and he is met once more by crowds and is presented with another problem. A man’s daughter is dying.

Mark 5:24-29. Jesus pressing his way through the crowds is touched by a desperate woman. A woman who has a disease which she has spent her entire life savings, and all of her energy on fixing and nothing and no one has been able to help her. But she sees this Jesus walking towards her, and she reaches out and touches his cloak. And she is healed. Imagine the joy she experiences. What a wonderful mercy!

But imagine how her stomach sank...Mark 5:30-33. The woman, terrified that she had robbed the most powerful man came before him in fear and trembling. Not knowing what she had just done. Her terminal disease had been cured, but now she has to come face to face with the man who healed her.

But Jesus is gracious to her: Mark 5:34

Mark 5:35. While this miracle of mercy is happening. Jarius' servant comes and delivers the biggest gut punch a parent can receive. His daughter had died. His daughter had exceeded the state of the woman Jesus just healed, and her terminal state had become a permanent state. What can anyone do!

Mark 5:36-43. Jesus not only has power over the earth, and Satan, but death is Jesus' fool. Death may think it has laid claim on someone, but the powerful working of Jesus will always overcome the grave.

And what Jesus signified physically with this girl, is something that is readily available eternally for all whom Jesus heals. For those who are in Christ Jesus we will die, but we will live. The same faith which brought this girl from the grave is the same faith which will bring us up from our spiritual grave.

We have nothing to fear, not even death. Why, because Jesus is Lord over it. Jesus is calling you to rise out of your grave, and follow him. Jarius was helpless towards his daughter, Jarius' servants could do nothing, the girl was incapable of saving herself from the death which had claimed her. But Jesus speaks the words of life.

So here we see three proofs of Jesus' power. He is Lord over the untamable sea, he is Lord over the unbindable man, and he is Lord over the most terminal disease, death itself.

And typically when someone proves something, the result is that people believe it. And yet, as we will see more next week, the typical response to Jesus miracles and proofs is unbelief. Why?

In the age of modernity, proofs like these had to be believed. Truth statements were undeniable. So when opponents of Christianity discovered these stories they would try to attack the Biblical source and say that they were not credible accounts of history, and therefore they are not true.

But in today's post-modern world, people aren't attacking the source as much as they once were. Why? Because truth is now relative. A Christian may see these amazing proofs of Christ and believe, but someone else may say, your truth is not my truth. But why would they do that? If this is a Biblical truth, if this is a saving truth, if this is the only truth, why would people choose not to believe it?

Because they fear it. You see in the story of Jesus calming the storm, a great fear came over the disciples and the other boaters due to the storm, but after the storm what kind of fear remained: **Mark 4:41**. The fear of this new man was more terrifying than the storm.

Likewise when the man was delivered from his demons, the townspeople came from all around to hear and see what this God man had done: **Mark 5:15-17**. The fear of a monster in the hills was surpassed by the fear of a man who defeated the monster.

The woman who was healed from her bleeding, even after she was healed answered the call of the savior in fear: **Mark 5:33**.

And when Jarius was told that his daughter was dead, what was his response: **Mark 5:36**.

Why fear? Why not confidence in the face of Christ's proofs? Why not certainty? Why not boldness? Because if this man is Lord over the sea, over Satan, and Lord over death....who am I.

The disciples and boaters would have loved a sign of Jesus' power, but they would have rather witnessed it from the shore. The townspeople would have loved to see the monster man defeated, but would have rather not had it affect their lively hoods. Jarius would have loved to see the life giving power of Jesus, but never had to see his dying daughter.

But Jesus is not a Lord left to be experienced at a distance. This Jesus entered into our world and took on our flesh so that we may see a God who is near to us in all of his power and holiness.

We cannot walk through this world and only encounter Christ from the shore, but we all have witnessed the work of Christ and we have two options. Look back at **Mark 5:16-17**. This is option one: fear what you do not know, and let your sinful heart reject that which we know to be true.

Or option two: **Mark 4:18**. Experience the salvation of Christ, and cling to him. Fear Christ in a beautiful way.

Jesus is not a safe God. If you want safety, go to med school, but if you want salvation turn to Jesus.

For those who are not Christians in here, it is a frightening thing to fall into the hands of Jesus. It is frightening to see your own sin, frightening to not rely on your own power, frightening to know the cost of following Christ. But it is a far more frightening reality to be caught without Jesus. Trust that this Jesus will respond to you in the same way he responded to the woman whom he healed. Come with fear and trembling, and leave with immeasurable confidence.

You Christians. Does your fear of Christ, does the reality of this incomparable Lord shape your affections for this world? Does the fear of the God who saved you, and the reality of the God who is on your side give you a confidence to do things you once were terrified of?

Labor knowing that Christ is Lord over it all. Labor in the confidence that nothing you will be presented with is outside of our good Christ's ability.

I want to leave you with this quote from *The Lion the Witch and the Wardrobe* which so captures the tone of Mark's writing: "Aslan is a lion- the Lion, the great Lion." "Ooh" said Susan. "I'd 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? 'Course he isn't safe. But he's good. He's the King, I tell you."