

Authority Over the Seas
Mark 4:35-41

Amen. It's great to sing Christ-centered songs and to turn to the word of God where we are in the book of Mark focusing on Christ, our Savior and Messiah.

As you turn there, just want to ask you or try and identify with you in the very common way, have you ever known someone that made big claims, kind of these big assertions, these grand statements, and then only to find out they didn't, really, follow through? They don't deliver so to speak? They say or they talk about all these big things they have done or they are doing or they will do? And as you get to know them, over time you start to realize the actions don't, really, correspond with the words. Everything they're saying sounds great, sounds amazing, but the reality is it's just not true. They don't follow through. I had a friend like this in junior high. When I met him for the first time in sixth grade, in junior high, time and time again after he would say these grand amazing things, I would continually respond with, really! No way! That was my continual response to him. Until seventh grade - I did not respond like that anymore. I said, yeah, right. Why don't you go tell someone else that? I wasn't very kind to him. But this was his way of kind of living and what he did. He loved the hyperbole, the exaggeration of himself, and I bought into it at first and then started to realize that the actions don't correspond with what he's, actually, saying.

We come to similar point in the gospel of Mark with Jesus' ministry where Jesus has just made some pretty grand statements if you think about it. If you think about chapter 4, and what we've covered so far in these parables, Jesus has taught in a very kind of bold manner about the kingdom of God. He's taught about the kingdom and how it works and what's going to happen. He's spoken openly, publicly, to people about this kingdom, and He's been preaching in this way. The question is then outstanding; who are you to make such claims? Who are you Jesus to rise up and actually speak about the kingdom in this way? Who is this guy? Can he really just say that? Can he really just start teaching us about the kingdom of God? What authority, what credentials does he have? Does he actually follow through? And what we're going to find in Mark's gospel is, yes, Jesus does follow through. In the next series of passages that we'll cover we're going to see four miracles that just pile on top of each other that just show, more and

more, the authority that Jesus has, and that He truly does deliver. He does speak about the kingdom of God, and He has the authority to do so. He can back up these claims with His life, His very living, His very power... Right? ...His authority. So, we get to see that, this morning, in His authority over nature, specifically, in these episodes, in these stories of Jesus' authority coming out and His supernatural abilities, over and over again. The disciples were satisfied. They believed Jesus and what He was saying. The early church was satisfied, and you and I have come to be satisfied as we study the life of Christ and recognize this is not just a mere man speaking high and lofty, making bold claims and assertions, but actually backing it up and having the authority to do so.

So, join me in looking at Mark 4, and we'll check out verses 35-41 this morning, and I'll begin reading in verse 35; "On that day, when evening had come, he 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. 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 rebuked the wind and said to the sea, 'Peace! Be still!' And the wind ceased, and there was a great calm. 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?' " This morning we will delve back into Mark's gospel and how he's presenting Jesus to his Roman audience, not just the One that can teach about the kingdom of God, but the One who has the power to do so.

And in order to see this, we visit this common story; this story that is well known in the church and even beyond that, abroad. We see this story setup in our first two verses - the setting - the setting of this as it takes place in verses 35-36. Notice, right away in verse 35; "On that day..." ... "On that day..." A hint that there've been other things that have happened today. In fact, the things that take place before this. This's actually been a long day. This's been a hard day, a work day, if you will, for Jesus. Right? He's been doing a ton, not only the teaching in chapter 4, but even going back into chapter 3 and these disputes and kind of these interactions with those that are rejecting Him, the religious leaders. Right? This is a lot of work for Jesus, these interactions that are taking place, these crowds that are swarming Him.

So much so, that He's previously had to request that there would be a boat available to Him so that He can separate Himself from the crowd so He doesn't get crushed by the crowd. This's been busy. Jesus has just been, not only teaching, but being swarmed by people with their problems and their accusations, calling Him one who's in league with Satan even, and His family accusing Him of being crazy. On that day, on this busy day of ministry, we find ourselves at the end of the day, in the evening "...when evening had come..." and He speaks up and says to His disciples after this teaching, after these parables (as Mark mentions there are many more parables than what we've covered), but after all this extended teaching, Jesus prompts the disciples; "Let us go across to the other side..." ... "...to the other side [of the sea]."

As you recall, back in the beginning of chapter 4 at this moment, Jesus was in a boat. Chapter 4:1; "Again he began to teach beside the sea. And a very large crowd gathered about him, so that he got into a boat and sat in it on the sea, and the whole crowd was beside the sea on the land. And he was teaching them many things in parables..." This was where Jesus was. This is the scene. He's in a boat. He's put out a little bit from the land where there's just crowds and masses of people as He uses the acoustics of the water in speaking to the people in these parables. At the end of this teaching time while He's in the boat, He says, "Let us go across to the other side [of the Sea of Galilee]." Why? Why "...go across to the other side [of the Sea of Galilee]?" More than likely, to get away after this extended time of Jesus' ministry and exhaustion that had probably settled in physically over dealing with people, talking with them and healing people, to "...go across to the other side [of the Sea of Galilee]" would actually take them to the side known as the Decapolis, and the Decapolis was a Gentile region, a region that was probably less familiar with Jesus; therefore, Jesus could go there with His disciples and enjoy some type of rest... right? ...not be the celebrity dealing with all the paparazzi and things like that, but actually go and enjoy time with His disciples. And that's what Jesus proposes. So, they do that in verse 36; "...leaving the crowd, they took him with them in the boat, just as he was. And other boats were with him." So, as Jesus was in the boat already, just finishing teaching, they don't even go back to the land to gather things. They just put out from there, and they go from there to venture across to the other side of the Sea of Galilee.

So, what kind of boat were we dealing with here? It's actually kind of interesting. Back in 1986, there was an archeological discovery on the Sea of Galilee. During that year, there was a drought, and so the Sea of Galilee was diminishing and decreasing in its water level. And ironically, two modern day fishermen were walking around, and they found this shell of a boat, and they said, whoa, I wonder how old this is? This is great. Let's check it out, and they did. And they did more testing on it, and after a period of time, they (basically, archeologists) have come to find that this boat is from the first century AD. It's from the time of Jesus. It's actually got its own museum now in Israel, and it's called the "Jesus boat." Do we know if Jesus was, actually, in this boat? We have no idea, but it's actually the same time. It's the shell of what a fishing boat would've been like during this time in the first century. This boat is actually big enough to hold about twelve to fifteen people. So, it's very possible, as we find in our text, that the immediate twelve that were following Jesus, the disciples, were all in the boat with Him.

But notice our text. There's other boats too; "...they took him with them in the boat, just as he was. And other boats were with him." Who were these other people, these other boats that were going with them? More than likely, this is a description of the other followers of Jesus besides just the twelve as we learned back in chapter 4:10; "And when [Jesus] was alone, those around him with the twelve asked him about the parables." So, other people besides the twelve were sincerely interested in following Jesus. They were sincerely demonstrating a desire to follow after Him and have this faith. So, if you go to Israel you can actually go to that museum and see this shell of this boat, and then, you can even see a kind of a modern reconstruction of what it would have been like, and so it wasn't a tiny canoe of some sort that they used when they went out and went fishing. It was a decent size fishing boat that they used, proving that fishing was a legitimate occupation and industry back then in the first century AD. This is what they decide to do, to put out from this boat and "...go across to the other side [of the Sea of Galilee]." A harmless decision to go across to gain rest, to spend time together, and that is the setting. That's the scene that we find ourselves in our passage in verses 35-36.

Things obviously change quite drastically and very quickly in verses 37-38. This is where we find the storm. Verses 37-38, the storm arises. So, as quickly as there was an end to the teaching ministry, now, a storm arises.

Verse 37; “And a great windstorm arose, and the waves were breaking into the boat, so that the boat was already filling. 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?’ ” Next, we find in our story this great windstorm that arises. Notice that it says “...a great windstorm...,” not just your average windstorm, but a great one. The word is literally megas (μέγας). It’s a mega windstorm that comes about. And you might think, okay, is this just, like, a one of a kind? This is something that came out of just, almost, nowhere? The Sea of Galilee didn’t really encounter this type of windstorm and tempest? Actually, that’s not the case. Galilee, if you... even today, if you go there, you see just the way it’s positioned and how it is settled. It’s actually common to have windstorms on the Sea. We see that it’s about seven hundred feet below sea level. So, it’s very low, but around it, what do you have? ...a lot of hills and mountains and even ravines. So, what would happen is, on these hills and these mountains where you have snow fall even, you have cooler temperatures and winds that would come screaming through the ravines and mix with what was on the Sea of Galilee, and you would have these squalls, these tempests, these storms, that would erupt from time to time. Even the modern-day residents of Galilee will affirm this and say, yeah, this is true. This is what happens. Sometimes, these storms come about.

And so, we have another windstorm here; “...a great windstorm...” arises. We see that even in the way that it’s, basically, described - we find even in modern day pictures - here, you can see the ravines and how (this is just the east side of the Sea of Galilee) ...you see the ravines and how the wind can come through, but this is the idea. The Galilee is set low and hills and mountains around it bringing in these winds and providing opportunities for these storms. The text goes on to say it’s not just “...a great windstorm...,” but so much so, that it had developed that “...waves were breaking into the boat.” So that, “...the boat was already filling.” And we already discussed that this boat wasn’t a tiny canoe, a tiny boat. This was, actually, a decent size fishing boat that all twelve of them could fit on, and they’re already taking on water; “...the waves were breaking into the boat [continually]”. And this storm had really escalated quickly that they’re taking on water; “...the boat was already filling.” ...as it says in our verse.

And what do we find with Jesus? He’s asleep. He’s asleep. Amazing that He could go out and do these miraculous things of casting demons out of

people, and then He can sleep during this amazing windstorm. Right? This is just fascinating that you find Him asleep, and why is that? Is He just pretending, waiting for the right time, and then He's going to emerge out and do some crazy miracle, just perfectly timing it? Actually, it's probably pretty simple. We already discussed that it's a busy day. There was a lot happening. Jesus was doing a lot. He was physically exhausted. It's not strange. It's not weird. It actually makes total sense that Jesus would be asleep, that He would be trying to rest. It just affirms what we know to be true about Christ from the Scriptures - that He was a man just like you and I. He needed food. He needed water. He needed rest. This is Jesus. He was a hundred percent man; and in our passage, we have a great kind of depiction of the character and the person of Christ, not just being a hundred percent man as we see here in the fact that He's sleeping, but also this contrast of seeing Him calming the storm where He displays deity, divine powers. You have this collision of Jesus being a hundred percent man needing sleep, but also a hundred percent God, the only One that can speak to nature and nature listens. And it's a beautiful passage for the person of Christ, and not just this passage, but all of Scripture continues to affirm this. Jesus understands what it's like to be exhausted. He understands what you go through in your weakness. He can sympathize with you. He is our great high priest in that sense.

And so, here "...he was in the stern, asleep on the cushion." And we find that the stern was probably in the back of the boat under some elevated platform, and He's exhausted, so He's asleep, but notice that these disciples come; "And they woke him..." and you see definitely a plea in their tone. There's an urgency. They're asking for help, but also, it seems to be a little bit more than that. If you look at it again, it looks like there's almost an accusation here; "And they woke him and said to him, 'Teacher, do you not care that we are perishing?'" But there's not even much hope. It's a hopeless and helpless situation which, by the way, goes to kind of help you see and understand how bad of a storm this was. Jesus' disciples, as you think about it, some of them were fishermen; were they not? So, these fishermen that were accustomed to fishing on the Sea of Galilee were probably also accustomed to different storms, and yet these fishermen, who were accustomed to storms, wake up Jesus and say, teacher, wake up! We're dying. We're dead. We're going to die. Wake up and watch us die, essentially. It's not a very hopeful or nice way to wake up. Right? "...do you not care that we are [about to die]?" Come on, wake up and watch it all

happen. Right? This is hopeless and helpless fishermen recognizing that this storm is kind of, in one sense, unlike anything they've encountered in their fishing.

It's interesting to see how, really, this moment serves to show the disciples' immaturity, still. They still had growth to do. They still had room to increase in their faith. Yes, they'd demonstrated faith thus far. When Jesus called Levi, he left the tax booth and followed after Christ. When Jesus called the two sets of brothers that were fishermen, they abandoned their family. They abandoned the boats, and they followed Christ. They have demonstrated faith thus far. They've actually stayed with Jesus when there's been challenges from religious leaders, and there's been the family rising up calling Him crazy. They have stayed with Jesus, and they've followed Him, and they've listened to Him. They've demonstrated faith thus far, but their faith had a breaking point. It was still immature. It was still in process. It was still growing. That's what you find here. This is a breaking point, and this is how desperate they are. They're not asking Him to solve the situation and fix it. They're waking Him up to say there's no hope. With the Messiah in the boat with them, they wake Him up. They wake up the Messiah that they've seen do these amazing miracles and teach with incredible authority only to tell Him, we're going to die. Their faith still needed to grow. They had reached a breaking point. This was a breaking point for them. They had faith for other certain situations, but something like this was unprecedented, and there was only one response; that is, this is the end, no other hope.

In the same way, you too have a breaking point. I have a breaking point. We encounter this all the time. We encounter the trials and the situations where we think, wow, this is difficult, but, you know what? I'm going to go right to God with this, and that's wonderful when we can encounter the difficulty, and immediately take a moment and just approach the throne of grace and say God, help; I don't know what to do in this. I don't know how to respond right now. This is beyond my ability, but I need Your grace, and I need Your help, and that's wonderful, but at the same time, we know that greater difficulties and trials arise, and you have probably been there. We have been there where there's been those times where the difficulty or the trial is so great that we don't even think to look to God. Some people might even blame God. Great! Thanks for bringing this one along. Some good and nice God You are. How that happens to us... And you might think, well, I don't blame God. I would never go that far. I'm not that lacking in faith. But even

if you are complaining about the situation, say you do encounter some trial that is so massive you've never encountered it before, and so you bring it before other people, and you talk about how terrible it is and how there's no hope at all, and you're completely downcast, and there's absolutely only complaining you have for it, what you're doing in that sense is blaming God because God is the One in control of the details of your life. So, you don't tell God, listen up God! I don't like what you're doing. But you don't like everything that's happening, and, essentially, you're telling the Creator that you're upset with Him. You reach a breaking point. I reach a breaking point. We all do.

We lack in faith. We turn hopeless, helpless, and we sound much like these disciples "...do you not care that [I'm dying]?" Thanks so much. We know God can do all things. Right? We're aware of the truths of Scripture, but we fail to make the application. If the trial's small enough, if it's not that big of a deal, or if we have enough time, then we can make the application, and say, I need to take this to the Lord in prayer. But if it's big enough, something we've never gone through before, all a sudden, we forget everything we know about Christ. We forget everything we've already read in the Scripture. We forget everything we know to be true about who God is and His power and His sovereignty, and instead, we complain. We say woe is me. I'm going to perish. We lack faith. The disciples lack faith, and God uses this overall scene not just to display a glorious aspect of Christ but the lack of faith of the disciples. They still had room to grow as they were reaching this breaking point.

Jesus obviously responds and we get the joy of seeing another wonderful aspect of Christ and His authority in verses 39 and 40, the silencing that takes place - the silencing that takes place. The silencing takes place, really, in two different phrases. In verse 39, He rebukes nature and in verse 40, He rebukes the disciples. Alright? He silences, really, two things; He silences nature, and then He silences those in the boat with Him, the doubters, the disciples.

Verse 39; "And he awoke and rebuked the wind and said to the sea, 'Peace! Be still!' And the wind ceased, and there was a great calm. He said to them, 'Why are you so afraid?' Have you still no faith?' " This is Jesus silencing both nature and His disciples in this moment. You see, when the disciples woke Him up, maybe they thought, okay, Jesus will maybe hop to it and

grab a rope or do some type of act to demonstrate a helping hand. They were not ready for this, for Jesus to wake up and to speak to nature. Think about what an insane act that would be. The disciples were not ready for this, for Jesus to wake up and just speak to the wind. Could they even hear? Think about how loud the crashing was and the howling of the wind; this man's going to rise up and actually speak to it. He does. He doesn't just speak and reason with it, He rebukes nature. He rebukes with this authority. He rebukes the wind and the sea with these two commands, "Peace!" referring to the wind, and "Be still!" to the sea. What's the result? "...the wind ceased, and there was a great calm." It's a two-fold miracle. It's not just a stopping of the amazing and kind of violent winds that are happening, but also an immediate calm on the Sea. We've all been to lakes; and early in the morning when you go to a lake, you've seen that serene kind of picture where the lake is calm. There's no boats on the water. It's perfect. You can skip a rock, and it's the only ripple you see. This is perfect - peaceful picture. And then, we've been to the ocean, and we've seen the waves crashing and crashing, and so, you have this crashing and unsettling lake that all of a sudden becomes serene, perfect, peaceful.

As Jesus rebukes and yells... but then, He can turn around and address His disciples in the most calm tone, barely any volume, because of how peaceful it became. It's not just a silencing of the wind, but also of the water, this rebuke that He gives to nature, and it's immediate. It's an immediate affect that takes place. As we've already noted Jesus displayed His humanity in His sleeping because of how tired and exhausted He was, but this is an undeniable act of His deity. We know that just because you can look at the Old Testament, and who is the One that can speak to nature and command nature? It's God. God alone speaks and commands nature, not only in creation, but even beyond that. Psalm 89:8-9; "O Lord God of hosts, who is mighty as you are, O Lord, with our faithfulness all around you? You rule the raging of the sea; when its waves rise, you still them." That's what God does. Psalm 104:5-7; "He set the earth on its foundations, so that it should never be moved. You covered it with the deep as with a garment; the waters stood above the mountains." It's a reference to the flood when God flooded the earth; "At your rebuke they fled; at the sound of your thunder they took to flight." God is the One who commands nature - only God. God is the only One that has such power and authority over nature.

I add to you Psalm 107 as this almost perfect passage that has been written to set up Jesus for this miracle; “Some went down to the sea in ships, doing business on the great waters; they saw the deeds of the Lord, his wondrous works in the deep. For he commanded and raised the stormy wind, which lifted up the waves of the sea. They mounted up to heaven; they went down to the depths; their courage melted away in their evil plight; they reeled and staggered like drunken men and were at their wits' end. Then they cried to the Lord in their trouble, and he delivered them from their distress. He made the storm be still, and the waves of the sea were hushed. Then they were glad that the waters were quiet, and he brought them to their desired haven.” It’s only God. God is the only One with this kind of authority over nature, and Jesus now stands up and rebukes nature, and nature listens. You can’t miss it. In this passage, Jesus is a hundred percent man, but He’s also hundred percent God. He stands alone as the One who can speak to nature, and nature actually listens and responds. It’s an amazing picture.

After doing this, like I said, He not only silences nature, He then turns to His disciples, addresses them, and He silences them with this stinging rebuke in verse 40; He said to them, ‘Why are you so afraid? Have you still no faith?’” He uses this word “afraid.” Why do you still have fear or, “Why are you so afraid?” It’s the word “deilos” (δειλός). It’s used three times in the New Testament, and one of the times it’s used, it’s in this passage in Revelation 21:8; “But as for the cowardly, the faithless, the detestable, as for murderers, the sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars, their portion will be in the lake that burns with fire and sulfur, which is the second death.” This is not a good fear. This is a bad fear. Their lack of faith became manifest and substituted with this fear that rose up, this fear that overcame them - that they became cowards and said all hope is lost. We’re dead. We’re doomed. And Jesus rebukes this. Despite all that the disciples had seen, all the miracles that Jesus had done already, all the parables and the teaching He had already given - despite all of that, they were not completely mature and convinced in their faith. They needed to grow and that’s what Jesus addresses here. The same thing is true for us.

We can think, come on disciples, you know how this goes - just wake up Jesus, and He’ll fix it all. It’s perfect. We do not have that luxury of what we know and, oh, what we have accessible to us – oh, the plenty that we know of Scripture and God and who He is and what He’s done. He’s proven Himself over and over and over again, and yet we still, too, respond with

fear like the disciples. We, too, become cowards in the time of difficulty and storm. We, too, rise up and say woe is me all hope is lost. You see, the Scripture, the truth, that we have, that we get exposed to regularly at this church, even, it continues to function like, almost like, glasses for us. It helps us to view the world around us. It gives us a world view so that when we see things, when we see suffering in the world, when we encounter difficulty or persecution, when we see what the world is doing, we then have a lens, and we have an ability to see it the way God does.

And it's beautiful to have Scripture to give us that world view, that understanding, but unfortunately, what happens sometimes is the difficulty comes, and we rip off the glasses, and instead we want to see it the way we want to. Instead, we don't see it the way we know we ought to see it, how God has told us, how God has set it up, how God has made known already that difficulties do come, and they produce character in you. They mature you. Difficulties do come, but God is in complete control of all of them. He's not going to give you more than you can handle. Difficulties do come. They are for your good, and they are for God's glory. And we know all that, but then, what we do when we see it, we see trials in someone else's life, and we can see with that lens, - we can see truth and tell other people that - but when it comes to us, and it's bigger than we've known, we take off the glasses, and instead we say all hope is lost. We're doomed. There's no way God can be in this. This is so hard. This is so difficult. This is so terrible. No one understands, not even God. God's probably not even in control at this moment. This is what happens. It's a lack of faith. It's allowing fear to come in instead of faith in what we know to be true. It's a failure to apply what we know and instead to cast it to the side so that we can respond in our flesh. Whenever the trial hits close to home in our own life, we neglect the truth that we know.

We, too, need to grow in faith. We, too, need to increase and have this lesson the disciples needed, that Jesus gave to them. The proper response will be, after we recognize this... will be what happens in verse 41 which is the shock - the shock that takes place in verse 41; "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?' " ... "...they were filled with great fear..." Literally, the text is they feared a "...great fear..." is what it says. They feared a "...great fear..." and you kind of notice the word "great" used multiple times in our text. First a great storm came, then Jesus calmed it, and there was a great

calm, a mega calm, and then He rebukes the disciples, and there was a great, mega fear. And you think wait I thought fear was bad, and He just rebuked them for having fear. Actually, there's a different word used. This is a different word that's used here. It's the word phobos (Φόβος) where we get phobia. Instead, they have a deep-seated fear, a correct fear, an awe of who was in the boat with them, a great, mega fear of Jesus. It's a good thing. It's not a cowardly fear; it's an amazement.

It's a fear much like the Old Testament tells us, "The fear of the Lord..." that we ought to have, that we ought to strive for. "The fear of the Lord..." that becomes the foundation for everything, really; "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge..." in Proverbs 1:7. And as Proverbs 9:10 tell us, "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom..." This is the case. "The fear of the Lord..." is a good thing. It is good when we come to a new level of understanding; how amazing and how powerful and how much authority God has. And this is what happened for these disciples. Not fully developed in their faith yet, they saw a new picture, a new glimpse into the authority of Christ who's in the boat with them, a new understanding that leads them to this new fear - this new place of fear, that has them respond, "Who then is this..." I mean, we thought we knew Jesus. We thought we understood Him as the carpenter from Nazareth. We thought we understood Him as the guy that could teach really well and do a few cool miracles, but now, we've seen Him rebuke nature, and I don't think... I still can't get my mind around this. This is where the disciples are at; "Who then is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him?" This is unheard of, amazing - causing them to fall back in fear, the right fear; "The fear of the Lord..."

This is kind of a theme that will rise up throughout Mark. We've already seen in chapter 1:27 when Jesus taught in the synagogue. The people responded, "What is this? A new teaching with authority! He commands even the unclean spirits, and they obey him." ... "Who then is this [guy]..." doing things we've never seen before? In chapter 2, they claim "Who then is this?" Who "...can forgive sins but God alone?" "Who then is this [guy]..." that's, actually, making these claims that He can forgive sin. And as we find here, "Who then is this [person]..." that He can command nature and it responds? This will continue to unfold in Mark's gospel, continue to see a portrait of Christ emerge as he writes to His Roman audience for them to see the clarity and the truth of who Jesus is, that they, too, and you and I, might respond with fear, "The fear of the Lord..." Jesus is not some casual friend

of ours. He is the authoritative Messiah who spoke all things into existence and maintains complete control over all things, even now.

“Who then is this?” This is a question that everyone must ask. Everyone here this morning needs to ask this; Who is Jesus? Is He your Savior? Is He truly your Savior? If so, then you should no longer be trying to save yourself or justify yourself or make yourself good enough if Jesus really is your Savior. Is He your Lord and Master? If so, then you should no longer be calling the shots in your life, but instead you need to surrender everything you are over to Him, and it’s all in from this point on. Is He the sovereign Ruler of all things? Is He really the sovereign Creator and sustainer of things? If He is, then we go to Him as the One who has control over all things. We no longer cry out and say we are doomed; there’s no hope in life. But we come before Him with any and every trial, and we bow down and we say You are sovereign ruler and You know exactly what I’m going through right now. You ordained it for a purpose, and You know exactly what it will produce in my life. I don’t understand it now, but that’s not the point. I surrender to Your will and Your work in my life. We need to increase in our faith. When we have a better portrait of Christ and who He is and His power and His authority to back up the claims He’s making, then we respond in faith. And that’s what I want to encourage you this morning; if you haven’t already, you must respond in full faith to this Messiah. He has the authority over all. If you are already seeking to follow Him, I encourage you, like the disciples, to increase, to grow, to continue to search out and understand our Savior so that you continue to respond with fear, proper fear, of who He is and increased faith in what He will do.