

Scripture Reading: Mark 4:34

“But without a parable [Jesus] did not speak to them. And when they were alone, He explained all things to His disciples. 35 On the same day, when evening had come, He said to them, “Let us cross over to the other side.” 36 Now when they had left the multitude, they took Him along in the boat as He was. And other little boats were also with Him. 37 And a great windstorm arose, and the waves beat into the boat, so that it was already filling. 38 But [Jesus] was in the stern, asleep on a pillow. And they awoke Him and said to Him, “Teacher, do You not care that we are perishing?” 39 Then He arose and rebuked the wind, and said to the sea, “Peace, be still!” And the wind ceased and there was a great calm. 40 But He said to them, “Why are you so fearful? How is it that you have no faith?” 41 And they feared exceedingly, and said to one another, “Who can this be, that even the wind and the sea obey Him!””

“Jesus, the Lord of Creation”

As you may have noted in the order of worship, I have a second text this morning that I will be reading in just a moment, so don’t think that I forgot. Going from Epiphany Sunday through Easter this year I am doing a short series of topical sermons from the Gospel according to Mark. After Easter we will have the next installment from Mike’s series on Philippians and then I will return to my exegetical preaching with the Book of Beginning: Genesis! This morning I will be dealing with Jesus as the Lord of Creation and so I have to be careful not to steal all of my own thunder from that study in Genesis

When we began this series I made the point that the Angel Gabriel announced the Gospel just before the birth of our Savior when he told Joseph in a dream, “Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take to you Mary your wife, for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit.

21 And she will bring forth a Son, and you shall call His name Jesus, for He will save His people from their sins.” 22 So all this was done that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the Lord through the prophet, saying: 23 “Behold, the virgin shall be with child, and bear a Son, and they shall call His name Immanuel,” which is translated, “God with us.”

- **I stressed the fact that Jesus coming to save His people from their sins is both simple and profound.**

It can be expressed in the words of a children’s song like Jesus Loves Me or with the words of the very challenging Athanasian Creed. This important creed in part teaches us what we must rightly know about the two natures of Christ: Declaring that Jesus is both fully man and fully God:

Jesus is the Son of God & the Son of Man:

- **All of this is expressed by the Apostle Paul when he declares right at the beginning of his Epistle to the Romans:**

“Paul, a bondservant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, separated to the gospel of God 2 which He promised before through His prophets in the Holy Scriptures, 3 concerning His Son Jesus Christ our Lord, who was born of the seed of David according to the flesh, 4 and declared to be the Son of God with power according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead.”

- **Jesus began His ministry with the call to repent and belief the Gospel which entails accepting who Jesus is and what He came to do.**

This morning we come face to face with the reality of why Gabriel said that Jesus would be called Immanuel:

- **He is truly God with us and thus He is the Lord of Creation.**

We read the account of His creation together this morning & His calming of the storm in our first text reminded us that He is still in control of His creation! Our second text is found in the sixth chapter of Mark's account where we see Jesus feeding the five thousand.

While this is one of the most famous accounts from the life of Jesus, I want us to remember this morning that it clearly teaches that God's creative works have not ceased: Jesus brought forth bread & fish in abundance! As we listen to this very familiar text, be sure to note the compassion that we see in Jesus as the Son of Man, how Jesus uses His Disciples as a means to serve others and of course the clear demonstration of His creative power, something that the Disciples at that point could not comprehend fully:

Mark 6:30: "34 And Jesus, when He came out, saw a great multitude and was moved with compassion for them, because they were like sheep not having a shepherd. So He began to teach them many things. 35 When the day was now far spent, His disciples came to Him & said, "This is a deserted place, and already the hour is late. 36 Send them away, that they may go into the surrounding country and villages and buy themselves bread; for they have nothing to eat." 37 But He answered and said to them, "You give them something to eat." And they said to Him, "Shall we go and buy two hundred denarii worth of bread and give them something to eat?" 38 But He said to them, "How many loaves do you have? Go and see." And when they found out they said, "Five, and two fish." 39 Then He commanded them to make them all sit down in groups on the green grass. 40 So they sat down in ranks, in hundreds and in fifties. 41 And when He had taken the five loaves and the two fish, He looked up to heaven, blessed and broke the loaves, and gave them to His disciples to set before them; and the two fish He divided among them all. 42 So they all ate and were filled. 43 And they took up twelve baskets full of fragments and of the fish. 44 Now those who had eaten the loaves were about five thousand men. 45 Immediately He made His disciples get into the boat and go before Him to the other side, to Bethsaida, while He sent the multitude away."

➤ Later that night Jesus walks out to the disciples on the water and calms yet another storm.

So here in Mark's account we have two instances of Jesus showing His control over the creation by calming storms at sea surrounding the account of His feeding of the five thousand. After the first storm, Jesus rightly chastises His disciples for their lack of faith in Jesus, as the Lord of Creation who had already demonstrated His great power with the miracle of turning water into wine, by casting out demons and healing many of the sick.

They had seen the compassion of Jesus as he healed the leper or the paralyzed man brought on a stretcher by his friends and yet here they have Him with them in the boat and worry that He does not care that they might die. They were anxious about the storm! Just as we are often anxious about the trials and challenges that come to us in this life, forgetting that we are in Christ and that Jesus is always with us!

Obviously, this is a very important lesson for us to remember today and one that the Apostle Paul reminded the Saints at Philippi about when he said, "4 Rejoice in the Lord always. Again I will say, rejoice! 5 Let your gentleness be known to all men. The Lord is at hand.

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

So the next time you face a situation that causes you be anxious, remember Jesus who was asleep in the boat with His disciples and just how calm the storm was when He was finished with it!

➤ Believing & trusting that Jesus is the Lord of Creation is vital to our Christian walk.

In part this is why we introduce the Creation account when we read it responsively in our order of worship with Paul's admonition to the Saints at Colossi.

With these accounts that we have read from Mark fresh in our minds, listen to the full context of what Paul teaches those early Saints, and all of us today.

“Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. 3 We give thanks to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, praying always for you, 4 since we heard of your faith in Christ Jesus and of your love for all the saints; 5 because of the hope which is laid up for you in heaven, of which you heard before in the word of the truth of the gospel, 6 which has come to you, as it has also in all the world, and is bringing forth fruit, as it is also among you since the day you heard and knew the grace of God in truth; 7 as you also learned from Epaphras, our dear fellow servant, who is a faithful minister of Christ on your behalf, 8 who also declared to us your love in the Spirit.”

- Paul is thankful that God has poured out His grace on these believers
- Paul is also confident that God’s grace will be productive because he knows God’s power and that their hope lies in Jesus who is seated in the heavenlies, and not in man.
- However, just as we see Jesus as fully God and fully man in His earthly ministry, Paul does not rest in the knowledge of the security of their salvation, but rather lifts up prayers on their behalf, as we should for each other!

“ 9 For this reason we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you, and to ask that you may be filled with the knowledge of His will in all wisdom & spiritual understanding; 10 that you may walk worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing Him, being fruitful in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God; 11 strengthened with all might, according to His glorious power, for all patience and longsuffering with joy; 12 giving thanks to the Father who has qualified us to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in the light. 13 He has delivered us from the power of darkness and conveyed us into the kingdom of the Son of His love, 14 in whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins.”

- Paul eloquently reminds us that Jesus has come to save His people from their sins!
- Paul then goes on to show just how powerful this Jesus is...

15 “He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. 16 For by Him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created through Him and for Him. 17 And He is before all things, and in Him all things consist.”

- Paul confirms that Jesus is the Lord of Creation and then shows why it is so important to us...

18 And He is the head of the body, the church, who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in all things He may have the preeminence. 19 For it pleased the Father that in Him all the fullness should dwell, 20 and by Him to reconcile all things to Himself, by Him, whether things on earth or things in heaven, having made peace through the blood of His cross.”

- Yes, Jesus is the Lord of creation and just as he calmed those seas and fed those hungry people, the power of His salvation makes things calm, fulfilled and right!

And that brings us to some important applications for today: Why is it important for us to know that Jesus is the Lord of creation and how do we practically experience this truth? It is important because ALL of us have storms and hungerings in our lives.

We might have financial storms in our individual families or even as a nation and we all know how much stress and anxiety such matters can cause. We can be so focused on the winds and rain that we forget who is in the boat!

We may be struggling with a loved one who is not working with the Lord and in such cases we soon realize that we can no more feed their soul properly than we could have fed five thousand with seven loaves of bread. We are helpless in the midst of such need and must depend on the Lord of Creation to provide what is needed. Of course, this is something that should always be on the minds of those parents that have been entrusted with the care of God's covenant children.

- **We can feed and cloth them and even give them an education and gainful employment, but we cannot save them from their sins!**

Here we must heed the Savior's command to His disciples when of the children He said: 'bring them unto me.' I could go on with many other examples, but if we are honest we should all recognize our need for the power that Jesus brings in our lives. AND when we are tempted to doubt that Jesus is sufficient for our needs, or when we forget that He is in the boat, we must turn again to the reminders that we have regarding His power, We must remember to take regular comfort from the Scriptures:

- **They clearly present Jesus as the Lord of Creation, as the maker and sustainer of all there is!**

This is why we focus on singing many of the Psalms here at Church of the King! Our hymn of response this morning is based on Psalm 65: It is a challenging song, but a powerful reminder that Jesus is the Lord of creation: It begins by declaring:

'Tis by Thy strength the mountains stand, God of eternal power.'

We often think of mountains as majestic, but the Scriptures focus on their power, which is very evident when we have an event like the eruption of Mt. St. Helens. The Psalmist then gives a prophesy of sorts about our Lord's work on earth when he says, 'The sea grows calm at Thy command & tempests cease to roar.' The final verse should remind us of Jesus feeding the hungry masses: 'The thirsty ridges drink their fill, & ranks of corn appear; Thy ways abound with blessings still, Thy goodness crowns the year.'

- **We must never tire of singing such glorious truths & we must teach our children to love them as well.**

Seeing Jesus as Lord of Creation must be central in our instruction of our children or new believers.

This is something that the Westminster Divines understood well. Many of you are using their Children's catechism for such instruction, so let's see how they are doing...

Children: Who made you? What else did God make? Why did God make you & all things?

Their instruction begins with the truth of God as Creator!

The Bible begins with the truth that God is the Creator, as we will certainly see when I begin Genesis!

The Bible often focuses on God as the creator which is why we must take those early chapters of Genesis so seriously!

I would commend to your study those final chapters of Job where God confronts His friend as the true Lord of Creation.

We see God as creator often in the Book of Isaiah: Consider this from chapter 45:

"11 Thus says Jehovah, The Holy One of Israel, and his Maker: "Ask Me of things to come concerning My sons; And concerning the work of My hands, you command Me. 12 I have made the earth, And created man on it. I--My hands--stretched out the heavens, and all their host I have commanded. 13 I have raised him up in righteousness, and I will direct all his ways; He shall build My city And let My exiles go free, Not for price nor reward," Says Jehovah of hosts."

- **Here we clearly see the Gospel of Grace from our Creator God!**

We focus on these great truths each week in worship as we hear the Good News of forgiveness and ascend to the heavens singing, Come Bless the Father which is a New Testament paraphrase of Psalm 134.

We are the exiles who have been set free by God's grace and we are called by the Spirit into God's very presence where He sees us only in the righteousness of His beloved Son. The Psalmist commands us to lift up our hands and to bless our God... This is an amazing concept and we should be in awe each and every week when we think about this truth... We bless God because He sees us as those exiles who have been freed by His beloved Son and He sees us as fully righteous!

- **This truly blesses God!**

Then the tables are turned and we receive a blessing from God... [explain the importance of our hands]

BUT the Psalmist does not simply say, God bless you, but rather He says "Jehovah who made heaven and earth Bless you from Zion!" Jehovah, the Great I AM who has always existed and is the creator of all there is will bless us through His Church in the power of the Spirit!

- **What a great reminder this should be for us each & every week!**

It is a very practical way for us to remember who is in control... This is often the hard part and one that is different for each of us I am sure! IF we do not know and trust Jesus as the Lord of creation, there will soon be areas where we blame God, or we begin to forget that God is involved or we simply do not have the faith we should regarding His control.

It helps to remember that this is what the disciples forgot when they rode with Jesus right there in the boat.

- **They took Him into the boat Mark tells us 'just as He was.'**

We should rejoice that Jesus is always with us, just as He is...

- **The Lord of Creation who came to save us from our sins!**
- **The Lord who made heaven and earth and desires to bless us!**
- **The Lord who said that He came to give us life and life abundantly.**

It is difficult to find anything that we can rightly be anxious about when we meditate upon such great truths!

Communion Meditation: Colossians 1:16

As we approach the Table, I want us to hear one more time the words of Paul to the Saints at Colossi:

"For by Him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created through Him and for Him. 17 And He is before all things, and in Him all things consist.

18 And He is the head of the body, the church, who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in all things He may have the preeminence. 19 For it pleased the Father that in Him all the fullness should dwell, 20 and by Him to reconcile all things to Himself, by Him, whether things on earth or things in heaven, having made peace through the blood of His cross."