

Divine Authority

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- [0 : 0 0] If you have your Bibles with you, I'd like you to open up to the Gospel of Mark. We're going to finish chapter 4 of Mark today. And so we're just going to read a few verses.
- Mark chapter 4, we're going to be in verses 35 through 41. And as you get there, one of the things we like to do as we read the Scriptures, is we like to stand in honor of God's Word.
- So I want to ask you to stand with me as we read. Mark writes, 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.
- [1 : 0 0] And the wind ceased, and there was a great calm. And 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?
- Father, send your spirit now to take your word and apply it to our hearts. We ask in Christ's name. Amen. Y'all can be seated.
- There is absolutely no doubt about the fact that you and I are going to walk down difficult paths. We're going to walk down some dangerous trails.
- We're going to face things that we would rather not face in this world because we live in a fallen world. We live in a world that has gone awry and does not operate according to the original principles by which it was set up.
- In fact, the Apostle Paul says that the whole creation is groaning and is in pains. The world that we live in is not as it was originally created.
- [2 : 1 1] And so we face troubles. We face trials. We face difficulties. And being a follower of Jesus does not lessen that one bit. I know that there are preachers today who would say that if you trust in Christ enough and if you just follow Him and if you just walk in obedience to Jesus, then the troubles of this life will fade away and He will make an easier path for you.
- But that's not the truth. Jesus tells us the exact opposite. Jesus tells us that if we follow Him, we will be persecuted the way that He was persecuted. That if we stand for Him, we will face not less trouble in this world.
- We will face more trouble in this world. That's just a reality. That's the world that we live in. Study the life of the Apostle Paul. Paul lists for us the number of things that he suffered.
- I've never heard of anyone else who's been shipwrecked more than once. And yet the Apostle Paul was. I don't know anyone who was shipwrecked, got on the island and made it to an island and then was bitten by a snake while he was on the island.

I mean, that's not an easy path that the Apostle Paul walked. Jesus Himself did not walk an easy path in life. He didn't have ease and comfort just up until the end when He was crucified.

[3 : 28] The Bible tells us that He had no official home. That He wandered and He roamed and He had to deal with heartache and pain just the way that you and I do.

So that one thing we know for sure is that we're going to face trouble in our lives. And faith in Christ does not lessen the trouble that we face.

Faith in Christ gives us the strength to endure through the trouble that we face. In fact, that's what this Scripture that we're studying this morning is about. Really, all of the Gospels, all four of the Gospels that we find in the New Testament are aimed to strengthen our faith in Christ.

That's why these Gospels were written. The Gospels were not written to give us information about Jesus so that we can know a little bit more about Him. They do that, but that's not the primary reason that they were written. The Gospels weren't written to give us stories about Christ to pass on even though they function in that way.

That's not the reason that any of the Gospels were written. The Gospels were written and all of this information that we have about Jesus is given to us so that our faith in Him might be strengthened and might grow.

[4 : 39] Let me show you what I'm talking about. Hold your place in Mark because that's our focus. But turn over to the first chapter of the Gospel of Luke. It should be just a few pages in your Bibles. Luke opens up his Gospel and he says that he did careful research.

He interviewed a lot of eyewitnesses before he wrote his account of the life of Jesus. And then he says in chapter 1 verse 3, he says, It seemed good to me also, having followed all things closely for some time past, to write an orderly account for you, most excellent Theophilus.

That's what he's aiming. He wants to write an orderly account of the things that Jesus said and did. And then he gives a reason though. He says in verse 4, So that you may have certainty concerning the things you have been taught.

The Gospel of Luke was not written merely to convey all of the information that Luke was able to compile by interviewing eyewitnesses. He says his Gospel was written to give certainty, to strengthen the faith of those who read and hear his Gospel.

But it's not just the Gospel of Luke. Turn over to the Gospel of John. Towards the end of the Gospel of John. There's 21 chapters in John. And the last chapter of John just gives us a few more appearances of Jesus after his resurrection.

[6 : 00] But chapter 20 really kind of begins to give us a close to John. And in chapter 20 verse 30, listen to what John says. Listen very carefully.

He says, John says, The Gospels are here.

We have these accounts of the life of Jesus. Not so that we'll simply grow in knowledge. They're here so that we will grow in our trust of Jesus. And in our love for Jesus.

And the passage that we are focusing upon this morning zeroes in on that purpose. In fact, the end of chapter 4 of the Gospel of Mark is really tied closely together with chapter 5.

So that you have these last few verses in chapter 4. And then you have two stories that take up chapter 5. So you have three stories all together that are all sort of held together.

[7 : 23] They're held together by some common themes. And one of the common themes that sort of holds these three stories together. The reason that Mark put them right here next to each other is the idea of strengthening faith.

Having faith. Being able to trust in who Christ is. So that in the story that we're reading this morning, Jesus looks at His disciples and He questions them. And He says, Have you still no faith?

That's the issue there. In this whole business of calming the storm, the issue is that the disciples still did not have the kind of faith that Jesus required of them. And then as you move on to the second major story in chapter 5, you see the story of a man who's come to Jesus wanting his daughter to be healed.

And in the midst of that story, Jesus heals a woman who's been ill for some time. And when Jesus heals that woman, He says to her in verse 35, Daughter, your faith has made you well.

Your faith has made you well. You're okay. I have restored you because you trusted in Me. So He chides His disciples.

[8 : 33] He rebukes His disciples because their faith was not strong. But He says to this woman, He encourages her because her faith has resulted in her healing. And then later in the story, He raises a little girl from the dead.

This little girl whose father wanted Him to heal her. She passes away and Jesus is going to raise her from the dead. But Jesus says this to her father. He says in verse 36, Do not fear, only believe.

So the story goes from you don't believe enough to you believed and so you're healed to don't fear, just believe. Mark has strung these stories together so that he might increase our faith in Christ.

But I don't think that he means to increase our faith in some generic sort of way. I think that Mark wants us to believe something specific about Jesus in these stories. He wants us to believe that Jesus is filled with divine power.

That Jesus possesses divine sovereignty over all things. In fact, as you walk through these stories, which we will unpack this week, next week, and the following week.

[9 : 46] We'll take three weeks to unpack these stories. But as you walk through them, you see that Jesus has sovereignty over the natural disasters and nature in general that we face.

He has sovereignty over demonic beings. He casts out a whole horde of demons in chapter 5. He has sovereignty over disease. He has sovereignty even over death itself.

Jesus has divine authority over all things. And if you believe that, it will radically change the way that you respond to the suffering that you will face.

It shapes everything about how we view the world. So this morning, I want us to focus on Christ's divine authority over the natural world.

But before we do that, I just want us to walk through the story, try to get a sense of what's happening in the story. So go back to Mark chapter 4 in verse 35. Mark sets up the story for us.

[10 : 46] And he begins by saying, On that day when evening had come. So there's our setting. Now we've been walking through the gospel of Mark. And so if you've been here, you know where we are.

But for those who have not been walking through the gospel with us, let me share with you where we are. In chapter 4 verse 1, Jesus is speaking to a large crowd.

And He's right there beside the Sea of Galilee. Almost sort of with His back to the sea. And we are told that He gets in a boat so that He can have some space between Him and the crowd.

He gets in a boat and He teaches from the boat. And He teaches the crowds in parables. And then we are told that He takes His disciples, He takes the 12 disciples and a group of other disciples around them.

He sort of takes them aside and He explains His parables to them. He helps them to understand what He means when He tells all these stories to the crowds. And then He comes back and He tells two more parables to the crowds.

[11 : 46] So here's how I think... This is what I think is going on here. You try to reconstruct the picture here and get a good mental image. Here's what I think is happening. Jesus teaches the people and He stands in the boat as He teaches them.

He teaches them the parable about the soils, which we studied for the last couple of weeks. He teaches them the parable about the soils. And then He teaches them some more parables. And I think this business about Him explaining the parables is something that He does just after all of that.

Mark kind of puts it in the middle of the story for us, but it probably happened after. After He's finished teaching all the crowds. So I don't think Jesus teaches them a parable, scoots to the side, explains it, comes back, teaches a couple more parables, and then He takes off on the boat.

I don't think that's what happens. I think Jesus is teaching them in parables, and then they get in the boat, and they're going to sail across the lake, which is the story that we come to now. And I don't know if Jesus explained the parables to His disciples while He was sailing across the lake, or after they got to the other side.

I'm not sure exactly when that happens, but I think that the point of this whole story is that Jesus has been teaching the crowds in parables all day long. He's tired. And He stands on this boat, and He's finished teaching, and rather than go anywhere else, rather than try to go back into town or anything else, He just probably very wearily says to His disciples, let's go to the other side, guys.

[13 : 12] Load up in the boat. And let's just sail across the Sea of Galilee to the other side. And don't let that word sea fool you. It's not a long trip. It's just a lake. He says, let's just go, guys.

And that's where we pick up here. He's been teaching all day. It's evening now. And He says, let's go across to the other side. And then verse 36 tells us, they leave the crowd.

And leaving the crowd, they took Him with them in the boat just as He was. What do you mean, just as He was? Tired. Worn out from teaching all day long. Because this, we may be talking about the divine authority of Christ, but we cannot forget for one moment that Jesus is also fully human.

He's a man. He gets tired. He's worn out at the end of a long day. That's why the writer of the book of Hebrews can say that Jesus sympathizes with us.

That Jesus has been tempted in every way that we are, yet without sin. Because Jesus, being fully human, walking upon the earth, facing temptation, but not only temptation, facing the fact that His feet are sore.

[14 : 18] I made the mistake yesterday playing football with Bill and his two brothers. It wasn't really a mistake. It was a lot of fun, all right? I was not very impressive. But this was the mistake I made.

I didn't know. I just thought I was going to a three-year-old's birthday party. I didn't know there was going to be a football game. So I just wore my brand new Converse, right? Those are not shoes well-designed for playing football.

They're not even well-designed for playing basketball. I don't know what people were thinking when they made these things, okay? They might as well just put glass on the bottom of your shoes, okay? They're as slippery as can be. But Bill and his two brothers are going to play football, and I'm the only other adult male there, so I can't say my feet are going to hurt.

I'm going to play football. So I play football with them, and they're brand new shoes, and on top of that, they're Converse. And I got home, and my feet just hurt. I woke up this morning, and my feet hurt.

And I think Jesus probably experienced things like that. I think Jesus, after a long day of standing in a wooden boat and teaching people, probably had sore knees and sore feet and a sore back, and his voice was probably tired.

[15 : 21] He probably just wanted to get away from it all. I think that's the reality. Jesus is fully human. He identifies with us in our pain and our struggle and even our physical weaknesses.

So they take him just as he is, worn out from the day. It says that there were other boats with him. That little detail Mark adds that nobody else gives us. There's other boats with him, and they're setting sail to go across the lake.

And then suddenly we're told in verse 37, And a great windstorm arose, and the waves were breaking into the boat, so that the boat was already filling. Now, you've got to understand a little bit about the Sea of Galilee to understand why this is such a dangerous situation.

The Sea of Galilee, like I said, it's not a big sea. It's a lake. It's about 13 miles from top to bottom, and I think about 8 miles across. Something like that. It's not a huge lake, all right?

But it's surrounded by mountains on nearly every side. So the winds sweep over the mountains, and the Sea of Galilee, which is actually so low it's below sea level, the Sea of Galilee is like a bowl.

[16 : 34] And the winds, when they come in, they just churn the sea up. Even today, fishermen and those who live in that area can tell you about how dangerous the sudden winds can be coming off of the mountains.

It can come just out of nowhere, and all of a sudden you can have waves that are over 5 feet in a little lake. Huge waves. And so these men are crossing the sea in the middle of the night, which is not when you want to face a storm when you're out on the water.

They're crossing the lake at night, and all of a sudden these winds from the mountains begin to blow upon the sea, and apparently it's worse than usual because we're told that it's fierce winds.

This is a very bad windstorm, and the wind comes in, the waves are so bad that they're beginning to fill up the boat. They're in trouble.

These are experienced. There are at least four professional fishermen who spent their entire lives on this sea in boats like the one that they're on, and they're scared to death. This is a very dangerous situation.

[17 : 38] And yet, all along, verse 38 tells us, but He, Jesus, was in the stern, asleep on the cushion. Jesus is just sleeping through it.

He's so tired and He's so worn out that He's in the stern, He's in the portion of the boat that would be the safest from the waves. So He's probably relatively dry, because it's not a rainstorm, it's a windstorm.

He's relatively dry. He's got a pillow, and He's just fast asleep. You can picture it. The disciples are working furiously, probably trying to get the water out of the boat with their buckets, and they're throwing the water out of the boat as quickly as they can, but they can't because the boat's filling up.

The waves are crashing faster than they can move, and they're scared, and Jesus is asleep, and they come to them and they say, Teacher, don't you even care that we're all about to die? Don't you know what...

Wake up, Jesus. Catch a clue as to what's going on here. It sounds like a strange thing to say to Jesus. And even though Jesus, in a minute, is going to rebuke them because they lacked faith, one of the things that I think that we're meant to see in this passage is that they weren't completely bereft of faith.

- [18 : 54] Why else would they go to Him? I mean, if four professional fishermen, and possibly more, if four professional fishermen are at a loss as to what to do to save their boat from the storm, why are they going to the carpenter's son to ask for help?

Unless they believe that He can actually do something. I'm not sure that they have any idea what Jesus might do, but they've seen Him do some pretty incredible things, and so they think that there may be something that He can do, and so they come to Him and say, Jesus, don't you care that we're going to die here?

And Mark tells us that Jesus, He woke up, and this is an interesting way to phrase things. Mark says that Jesus rebuked the wind, and He said to the sea, Peace, be still.

This is an interesting way to word things. The word that's translated peace literally means be muzzled, like you would muzzle an animal to shut it up. If your dog is barking, you muzzle it or whatever.

The way that you would quiet an animal, if you had an animal that was out of control, and you just couldn't get them to obey your commands, you would literally muzzle it. And Jesus rebukes the wind, and He tells the wind to be muzzled.

- [20 : 16] And then He says, And be quiet. Stop. Stop all of your raging.

Stop your onslaught against us. Just stop. And immediately we're told that the winds just stopped, and the sea became calm.

And now we come to Jesus' response to His disciples. He says to them in verse 40, Why are you so afraid?

Have you still no faith? The emphasis here is on the word still. Some of your translations might say yet. Do you not yet have faith?

Because Jesus is not saying that they have no faith. He's saying, After all the things that you've seen me do, do you still not have enough faith to know that with a word I can stop it?

- [21 : 26] Why are you so afraid? They know that, at least they hope that Jesus might be able to do something, but if they really understood the full power of Jesus, they would not have been afraid.

They would not have had fear. They would have just gone and said, Jesus, hey, we tried to bail the water out, but we couldn't. Could you go ahead and take care of this for us? Instead they come and, we're going to die.

Can you do anything? What can you do here? It wasn't that they had no faith. It's that they didn't quite understand fully who He was.

They had some trust in Him. They had some amount of faith in Him. But they didn't really understand His power. They didn't really believe all that was necessary to believe in order to really know Christ.

You see, Jesus, when He calms the storm, He's making an unequivocal claim to divine authority.

- [22 : 33] There's no prophet who can calm the storm. We're told in the Old Testament that Moses raises his staff, but then we're told that God parts the waters.

Over and over, the prophets do amazing things in the Old Testament, but always in response to the direct command of God, so that it's always clear in the context that the prophet themselves, they're not doing the miracles.

It's God who's doing the miracle. But here, Mark wants us to see it's the Word of Christ that calms the wind and the waves. His Word alone is enough.

And there is only one who has that kind of powerful Word. It's God Himself. Turn back to the Old Testament. We, earlier as we were singing, we paused to read from Psalm 104.

I want you to turn there. I want you to listen to what the Old Testament has to say about the power of God over the natural world. In Psalm 104, the psalmist tells us, he praises God, Bless the Lord.

[23 : 41] The word Lord is God's name, Yahweh or Jehovah. Bless the Lord, O my soul. O Lord my God, You are very great. You're clothed with splendor and majesty.

Here it comes. Here's sovereignty over the natural world. Covering yourself with light as with a garment, stretching out the heavens like a tent. He lays the beams of His chambers on the waters.

He makes the clouds His chariot. He rides on the wings of the wind. He makes His messengers winds. His ministers a flaming fire. He set the earth on its foundations so that it should never be moved.

And then he says, You covered it with deep as with a garment. The waters stood above the mountains. At your rebuke, at whose rebuke? At God's rebuke, the waters fled.

At the sound of your thunder, they took flight. And on and on through the rest of this psalm, we are painted a picture of the sovereignty of God the Creator over His creation.

[24 : 46] And then as you turn to the prophets, you find that this sovereignty that God has over His creation is God's by right of His divine power. No one else can claim the kind of power that God has over the natural world.

Turn over to the book of Jeremiah. I want to show you just... We're going to look at two passages in Jeremiah. I think it's important that we see this. Jeremiah chapter 10. Now in these chapters, in this portion of Jeremiah, Jeremiah is...

He's making war, in a sense, on the false gods of the nations that surround Israel. He's mocking the idols of those who worship false gods.

Take a look at what he says in chapter 10. Verse 11. God says this, Thus you shall say to them, The gods who did not make the heavens and the earth shall perish from the earth and from under the heavens.

And then here's what the prophet says about God. It is He who made the earth by His power, who established the world by His wisdom, and by His understanding stretched out the heavens.

[25 : 57] When He utters His voice, there is a tumult of waters in the heavens, and He makes the mist rise from the ends of the earth. He makes lightning for the rain, and He brings forth the wind from His storehouses.

Jeremiah says, The idols of the nations did not make this world. The God of Israel made this world. And when He speaks, the wind rushes forth.

When He speaks, the lightning flashes. When He utters a word, the rain pours down. When God speaks, the natural world responds according to what God commands. And if you turn over just a couple of pages to Jeremiah chapter 14, Jeremiah highlights the fact that this kind of power, the power to command the natural world by word alone, belongs to God alone.

Verse 22 of chapter 14, Jeremiah says, Are there any among the false gods of the nations that can bring rain? Or can the heavens give showers?

Are you not He, O Lord, O Yahweh, our God? We set our hope on you, for you do all these things. You don't find prophets who by their own power and the authority of their own word are capable of affecting the natural world.

[27 : 30] You don't even find angelic beings in the Bible who are capable of controlling the natural world.

God makes the wind and God causes the wind to cease. There's a reason why we still, even today, we still refer to natural disasters as acts of God.

There's a reason for that. He alone makes hurricanes. He made the tornadoes that ravaged the middle portion of our country just a few weeks ago.

He spun those tornadoes. He did that. Every lightning strike that hits the ground, God sends the lightning. Every drop of rain that falls from a cloud, God pieced that cloud together.

He drew the water molecules together to form the cloud until it became so heavy that it drops exactly where He wanted the drops to land. He exercises absolute sovereignty over the natural world.

[28 : 42] Yes, it is a fallen world. Yes, it is a world that is in rebellion against its original created purpose, but it is a world that remains under God's absolute control.

In fact, the writer of the book of Hebrews tells us that Jesus Himself upholds the world by the word of His power.

Paul says in Colossians that all things hold together because of Him. This entire world holds together because of the word of Christ.

Do you understand that? That all the little subatomic particles that make up the atoms, that make up the molecules, that make up the chemicals, that make up your body, they all hold together and continue to exist because Jesus tells them to keep existing.

And if Jesus stops telling them to exist, we're not here anymore. We're gone. This is the power that God has over His creation.

[29 : 52] And anyone who's steeped in the Old Testament would come to the Gospel of Mark and know that when Jesus tells the wind to be muzzled and the wind obeys, Jesus is exercising a power that belongs only to God Himself.

This is divine sovereignty at work. This is not the work of an ordinary miracle worker.

You can fake a lot of things. I mean, there are charlatans on TV all the time who fake all sorts of miracles. You can fake a lot of stuff. You can fake healing people because there are psychological components to sicknesses that you can fake healing somebody and have somebody who's sick.

You can convince them that they're well and for at least a few minutes they may appear to be well until the sickness overwhelms them. You can actually fake healing a genuinely sick person.

Or you can be a real charlatan and you can plant well people and say that they're sick. But you can fake all kinds of miracles. You can fake casting out a demon.

[31 : 02] It's possible to arrange things if you're a good enough con artist. You can counterfeit a lot of things.

Satan himself can counterfeit a lot of things. But God alone possesses sovereignty over the world. God alone controls the wind and the waves.

And when Jesus speaks to them there's no faking that. There's no pretending. He simply speaks a word and the creation responds in obedience to its creator with just a word.

Mark I think does not want us to live our lives stuck at the stage that Jesus' disciples are stuck in right here. Oh they're going to grow in their faith.

We know that they grow because we read the book of Acts and we see these very same men transforming the world as they proclaim the gospel. We know that these are men who are going to be further changed by Christ.

[32 : 11] Further transformed by Christ. And they're going to become powerful men in their own right. But at this stage in the gospel of Mark oh they have faith.

But do you still not have enough faith to understand who I am Jesus says? Do you still not get it? Are you still trembling in fear when trouble comes your way?

And I am right here. I think Mark means for us to not become stuck in the same place where the disciples were. There are so many people who never moved beyond this point in their walk with Christ.

There are so many people who have some understanding of who He is. who have some sliver of trust in what they know about Him but they never move beyond this point.

They never really understand the fullness of His divine authority. And that changes the way that you live. This is not an academic exercise.

[33 : 19] This is not about getting all your theological I's dotted and your theological T's crossed. This is not about all of that. The reality is what you believe about Christ and whether you understand what the Bible tells us about Him that changes the way that you live.

It changes the way that you respond to the inevitable suffering that's headed your way. And you may not even know that you are stuck in a spiritual rut and have not gone further in your faith until it's too late.

And you find yourself confronted with a crisis and you don't have enough faith to trust Him through it. And you begin to despair. You begin to fall apart.

And you'll think for a moment in that time you will think that He has failed you. You will think that somehow He was not enough. But is Jesus not enough for His disciples here?

Is He not powerful enough to get them through this storm? Of course He is. He speaks a word and the world obeys. Is Jesus not powerful enough to walk with us through our suffering and to carry us through it with joy?

[34 : 32] Is He not powerful enough to do it? Of course He is. But some of us are stuck in spiritual ruts and some of us have not yet fully embraced who He is and the power that He has and so when trouble comes we will think He's failed us.

when He never fails and He never falls short. He is sovereign as we will see in the next two weeks.

He is sovereign not only over the natural world. He's sovereign over demonic powers. I mean what could be worse than facing a legion of demons?

and Jesus speaks a word and they cry out in anguish and beg Him for mercy. We will see that Jesus has divine sovereignty over sickness as He heals a woman whose case is hopeless.

I mean she has been sick for years and no doctor can cure her and yet one touch of Jesus' garment and she's healed.

[35 : 44] That's power. power. So that there's no satanic attack that can come against you that Jesus is not sovereign over.

That's what the book of Job is aimed to teach us. The book of Job is there to teach us that though Satan may attack us and though his demonic hosts may come against us, they cannot do anything that God does not permit them to do.

And in all of their fighting against us, they only accomplish His divine purposes in our lives. And we simply need to believe that and trust in that because Satan is active.

When your co-worker attacks you, do you think that that's simply a matter of someone who's upset with you? Or do you think that Satan is trying to sidetrack you and derail you so you no longer have a gospel witness in the place where you work?

When your children rebel against you, do you think that, is that just the product of children who you messed up with or they have something wrong with them or something's going on? Or is Satan trying to use that to tear apart your family which is designed by God to reflect the glory of God to the world?

[36 : 57] These are not merely human events and yet we are not encouraged by the Bible to go around fearing a demon of this and a demon of that.

No. We're encouraged to believe that they can do nothing, that the sovereign God of the universe does not permit them to do. When you're stricken with cancer or when the doctor tells you that you have diabetes or heart disease or some other chronic illness, are you tempted to despair in that or do you believe that he has sovereignty over even that and he accomplishes his purpose in you through that.

Or when death hits you, death is going to strike a man here in the next chapter, his daughter, his young daughter dies. What's more painful than that?

All of us expect to lose our parents at some point in our life, but what is more painful than the loss of your child? And Jesus says, don't be afraid, just believe in me. Trust in me.

I don't know what awaits us tomorrow. And it may be something that in the grand scheme of things, when you really back up and you really look at it, is really trivial in the grand scheme of things, but it's not trivial in the moment.

[38 : 22] Or it may be some life-altering situation that hits you tomorrow or Wednesday or in two weeks or a month from now, whatever it may be. The gospel urges us to trust in the sovereign authority of Jesus and it will transform you.

It's not about ridding yourself of the problem. It's not about escaping suffering in the world. It's about trusting in God who is in control of all these things and because of that trust, the way that you walk through these things is transformed completely.

death. So you can face death itself if you know that Christ has fully satisfied the wrath of His Father for you on the cross and that what awaits you is the very riches of the inheritance that Christ Himself has earned.

If you know that that awaits you, you can face death. If you know that God has a good purpose for you in your cancer or in your sickness or in the attacks that the enemy sends you, if you know that God has a divine purpose in that to work it all together for your good, you trust in Him.

It changes everything. Everything changes when you understand the divine authority of Jesus. And my encouragement to you this morning is to look to Christ in the middle of it all and to not wait until you're in the middle of it to look to Him.

[40 : 07] Oh, if only the disciples had already known that His word was powerful enough, they'd have never feared. And if only we will know right now that His word is powerful enough, we won't have to fear.

Let's pray.