

Feb 24th, 2019
The Overarching Authority of Christ
Mark 4:35-5:43

BIBLE IN A YEAR READING PLAN

Feb 17 Numbers 14-15	Feb 21 Numbers 23-25
Feb 18 Numbers 16-17	Feb 22 Numbers 26-27
Feb 19 Numbers 18-20	Feb 23 Numbers 28-30
Feb 20 Numbers 21-22	Feb 24 Numbers 31-32

Lesson Introduction: Our passage this week points us once again to the authority of Christ. We examined in chapter 2 how Christ has authority over sin. Our lesson this week shows us some of the effects of the curse on the earth, and in this passage, we will see Christ's overarching authority over the curse of sin, as He shows His authority over nature, the spiritual realm, and the physical realm (even over death itself!). As we study this week, may we be encouraged as we are reminded that there is nothing that our Lord does not have authority over, and that all our circumstances are in His control.

FOUNDATIONAL TRUTHS OF THE PASSAGE:

- **Christ has authority over all nature (Ch. 4:35-41)**
- **Christ has authority over the spiritual realm (Ch. 5:1-20)**
- **Christ has authority over our physical circumstances (Ch. 5:21-43)**

Discussion Section 1: Christ's Authority Over Nature (Ch. 4:35-41)

-Why does Mark include the note that Jesus was, "**asleep on the cushion**"?

-What does Jesus' demeanor during the storm, in contrast to that of the disciples, tell us about who He is?

-What gives Jesus authority over nature?

Note: Mark moves from a brief section where he details the teaching of Christ, and from there jumps right back into His actions. What we see in our passage this week is that Jesus and His disciples were on a boat, which many of His disciples would have been familiar with. Those who were fisherman would have most likely grown up fishing. The Sea of Galilee, due to its location near mountains, regular experiences sudden and substantial storms. This would not have been shocking to those disciples who

were fisherman, as it almost certainly was not their first experience out on the water during a storm.

That being said, they were terrified, and feared for their lives. Their reaction to this storm says a lot about its severity. Yet, as the disciples were running around trying to figure out how to save themselves, Mark includes an interesting note about Jesus: "**He was in the stern, asleep on the cushion.**" What a shocking statement, that during a life-threatening storm, Jesus was sleeping! It is interesting that Mark not only let's us know that Jesus was asleep, but includes the note about the cushion. It's almost as if he wants us to know just how comfortable Jesus was during this ordeal. What this tells us about Jesus, is that He knew there was nothing to fear, and that there was not an ounce of doubt in His mind about what the outcome of this storm would be. Amazingly, Jesus gets up, and with a simple three words, He rebukes the storm, and in an instant, all the chaos turns calm.

What we learn in this brief account is that Jesus has authority over all nature. The reason He has such authority is because He is the Creator of all nature (**Colossians 1:15-17**). He is not only the One who has the power to stop storms, but also the one who causes storms (**Psalms 135:7, 147:8, Jeremiah 10:13**). Because Jesus is the creator of all things, He has the authority to command the winds and the sea. This incredible miracle performed by Jesus was not simply meant to be an astonishing act to impress people. Rather, it was meant to show that, although the earth groans because of the curse of sin, Jesus has authority over the curse, and one day, there will be no more storms, because Christ's death is sufficient not only to redeem us, but even nature itself (**Romans 8:18-24, Revelation 21:5**)

Discussion Section 2: Christ's Authority Over the Spiritual Realm (Ch. 5:1-21)

-Why is it significant that the possessed man stated that his name was, "**Legion**"?

-What do we learn about the transformative power of Christ in this passage?

-In what ways has Christ fought Spiritual battles on our behalf?

Note: Mark moves from displaying Christ's authority over nature to displaying His authority over the spiritual realm. What we see in the beginning of chapter 5 is what looks like a scene from a horror film. Jesus steps off the

boat after calming the storm, and Mark says that, **“immediately there met Him out of the tombs a man with an unclean spirit. He lived among the tombs.”** He goes on to give details about how this man could break chains, and tell how no one was able to subdue him. Simply put, this man was an outcast of society, homeless, and thought to be crazy by those who knew of him, yet, Jesus sees past the surface. Rather than try to subdue him, or medicate him, or try to reason with him, Jesus looks deeper, and ultimately, He meets this man’s greatest need.

Jesus, knowing that this man’s greatest need is of a spiritual nature, and recognizing that the man is demon possessed, asks the name of the demon in order to bring to light the severity of the situation at hand. The response is, **“My name is Legion, for we are many.”** John MacArthur writes: **“Legion is a Latin term, by then common to Greeks and Jews, that defined a Roman military unit of 6000 infantrymen. Such a name denotes that the man was controlled by an extremely large number of militant evil spirits.”** Yet, what we see from this militant group of demons is not a flexing of their muscles in the presence of Jesus, but rather, they are terrified of Him. Knowing that Christ has power over them, they ask His permission to stay in that area. Verse 13 tells us that, **“Jesus gave them permission,”** and cast them into a herd of pigs nearby. The man is transformed in an instant from a raving madman, to being **“clothed, and in his right mind,”** and more importantly, a follower of Jesus.

It is important for us to realize that, although life throws us many difficult and trying circumstances, be it physical illness, or dealing with damage done by natural disasters, our most pressing needs and our greatest battles are of a spiritual nature (**Ephesians 6:12**). Although we may not live near the tombs homeless and naked, or cut ourselves with stones in the mountains, apart from the authoritative work of Christ on the cross, our spiritual state is just as hopeless as the man in Mark 5. Indeed, without the power of Christ in us, we are dead men walking (**Ephesians 2:1**). As we consider Jesus casting out these 6000 demons, may we be reminded that it is by His power and authority that we have been set free and transformed!

Discussion Section 3: Christ’s Authority Over the Physical (Ch. 5:21-43)

-What do **verses 25-26** teach us about where our hope ultimately lies?

-Why did Jesus stop on His way to an emergency situation, to question the woman who touched His cloak?

-What does the term **“Talitha cumi”** tell us about Christ’s authority over death?

Note: As this passage comes to a close, we see an incredible account of Jesus’ power over our physical issues, and through it, we learn that there is no problem we can face that is too great for Him to handle. As Jesus is urgently on His way to heal a young girl who is about to die, a new character suddenly enters the story. Mark tells us that she **“was a woman who had had a discharge of blood for twelve years.”** We also learn in verse 26 that, although she had seen many doctors, her situation had only grown worse, and on top of that, she was out of money. This woman was in a hopeless situation, an outcast of society, and in her desperation, she reached out to touch Jesus. As soon as she does, she is instantly healed! Jesus ends up talking to this woman, which distracts from the emergency at hand, and because of the delay, Jairus’ young daughter dies.

This delay must have seemed crazy to the disciples, and certainly it was frustrating to Jairus, who knew his daughter’s situation was dire. Yet Jesus never batted an eye, even upon hearing the news that the girl had died! We see from there that Jesus, despite the ridicule of all those at Jairus’ house, walks into the room where her body was, and very simply takes her by the hand and says, **“Talitha cumi.”** Concerning the word **“Talitha,”** Timothy Keller, in his book **Jesus The King**, explains that it is not simply a word that means “little girl,” but rather, it had more of a sense of a pet name, or a term of endearment, and he compares its usage to how we might call a little girl, “honey.” Keller writes, **“Jesus is doing what this child’s parents might do on a sunny morning. He sits down, takes her hand, and says, ‘Honey, it’s time to get up,’ and she does. Jesus is facing death, the greatest enemy of the human race, and such is His power that He holds this child by the hand and gently lifts her right up though it.”** What we learn from this passage, is that Jesus holds our greatest fears in the palm of His hand. Death and disease have no grip on the life of Christians, because ultimately, even if the timing seems off from our human perspective, Christ will bring the healing in His perfect timing, for He has completely defeated death, thus we have unshakable hope (**1 Corinthians 15:55-57, Romans 8:18-39**)!