
Lesson Overview

Biblical Passage	Mark 4:35-41
Supporting Passages	Matthew 8:23-27; Luke 8:22-25
Memory Verse	Philippians 4:6-7
Biblical Truth	Because of Jesus' authority, He has power to see you through any difficult situation.
Context	In a boat, Jesus and His disciples crossed to the eastern side of the Sea of Galilee. Jesus fell asleep in the boat. A terrible storm began which terrorized the disciples. In fear, they awoke Jesus who revealed His power over nature for the first time by calming the storm.
Learning Goals	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Students will examine Jesus' power over nature.• Students will verbalize how Christ wants them to respond to fearful situations.
Prayer Suggestions	<p>As you prepare to teach this lesson, pray for your students.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Pray that your students will consider what Jesus' power over nature reveals about Him.• Pray that your students will become aware of Christ's power over all things.• Pray that your students will desire to trust Christ in every situation they face, whether stormy or calm.

Biblical Commentary

Investigation

Jesus left with His disciples to go across the Sea of Galilee, where horrific storms were known to frequently come up without warning. While Jesus slept, one such storm erupted, terrifying the disciples. They then awoke Jesus in a panic for their safety.

Jesus calmed the storm and then chastised the disciples for their lack of faith. They questioned who Jesus was, given that He had authority over even the wind and the sea. Through these events on the Sea of Galilee, the disciples recognized Jesus' extraordinary power.

Importance

This passage clearly illustrates that **Jesus is God and Savior**, the One who has power over nature. He "got up, rebuked the wind and said to the waves, 'Quiet! Be still!' Then the wind died down and it was completely calm" (Mk. 4:39). Believers who place their full trust in Jesus have the assurance that His power can overcome any difficult situation they may encounter.

Interpretation

Mark 4:35 At the end of a very busy day, Jesus wanted to travel to the "other side" of the **Sea of Galilee**. He may have wanted to get away from the crowds so He and the disciples could rest and be renewed spiritually. Throughout his gospel account, Mark recorded that Jesus often withdrew from the crowds for this purpose. It is possible, however, that Jesus simply wanted to minister to people in a different area. Regardless of the reason, Jesus and His disciples left the crowd behind and headed toward the eastern side of the lake.

Mark 4:36 Mark 4:1 notes that Jesus taught the crowds while sitting in a boat on the shore of the lake. The disciples were with Him in the large fishing boat. When they left, they apparently did not return to shore for food or other supplies. This was probably what Mark meant when he wrote that they took Jesus "just as he was."

As experienced fishermen, several of the disciples took the lead in navigating the ship across the water. While Jesus may have wanted to get away from the crowds to rest, people in "other boats" still followed Him.

Mark 4:37 A number of high mountains surround the Sea of Galilee. Strong winds rush down the mountains and create violent storms on the water. These storms are usually sudden and can put sailors in great danger. Generally, the evening winds are the strongest winds of the day.

As Jesus and His disciples crossed the lake, a "furious **squall**" developed. This sudden, violent storm sent waves

breaking over the boat to the point that it was "nearly swamped," quickly filling with water. While many of the disciples were experienced fishermen, they may never have encountered such a storm before. It was probably difficult to stand up, see, or navigate in such a storm. It had to be frightening. The men realized that if the boat continued to take in water, it would sink, and they would die. Since nothing more was mentioned of the smaller boats that started out with Jesus and His group, it can be supposed that the storm may have caused them to turn back.

Mark 4:38 Despite the violent storm raging around them, Jesus was asleep in the stern (or rear) of the boat. This is the only time Scripture mentioned Jesus "sleeping." It is a reminder that even though He was fully God, Jesus was also fully human. As such, He took on the limitations of humanity, needing food, water, sleep, and so on. Certainly, one reason Jesus slept so soundly was because He was physically exhausted. Yet the greater reason He could sleep in the midst of the storm was because He knew the Father would be with Him and take care of Him (Ps. 3:5, 4:8).

Though Jesus was asleep, the disciples were not. They were afraid they were going to drown and probably frustrated that Jesus seemed to have little concern for them. So they went to Jesus, "woke him," and confronted Him with an interesting question: "Teacher, don't you **care** if we drown?" Their words were a rebuke to Jesus as well as a cry for help. The disciples recognized Jesus had abilities they did not have. Otherwise, these fishermen would not have looked to a carpenter to save their lives.

Mark 4:39 Jesus rose from His sleep and demonstrated His authority. He "rebuked" the wind and commanded the sea to be quiet and **still**. He responded to the raging storm as a parent might respond to an unruly child.

At His command, the weather immediately became calm. It was no mere coincidence that the elements subsided at His words. As Creator (Col. 1:16), Jesus has full control over His creation. Psalm 107:25-30 depicts a stormy wind rising and falling at the command of the Lord. Jesus' action on the Sea of Galilee is a reminder that He is fully God.

Mark 4:40-41 After He calmed the wind and the sea, Jesus confronted His disciples. He rebuked them for demonstrating so little faith. They had seen Jesus heal people and drive out demons. They believed Him to be Messiah. Yet they apparently did not understand that their Messiah was, in fact, God Himself. Thus, they wondered among themselves, "Who is this?"

The disciples were "**terrified**," or amazed, at Jesus' control of the wind and the waves. Though they did not fully understand Jesus, they somehow realized His divine power and authority.

Implications

Students face many fearful situations. They have probably faced the news of the catastrophic illness of a friend or loved one, the divorce of someone close to them, death of a family member, or moving into a new neighborhood and a new school. Some of these may have even occurred within recent days. The story of Jesus calming the storm reminds believers that there is no situation that God does not ultimately control. The disciples were terrified of the storm, but because they were in the same boat with the Maker of heaven and earth, they really did not need to fear. Because **Jesus is God and Savior**, students can find security in His authority over the storms of life. People who understand this truth can live through their daily storms with a peace that passes understanding. Those who do not understand this truth struggle with the terror of circumstances, longing for the

firm footing in life that God wants to provide.

Walking with Christ often requires believers to sail with Him through stormy seas. Students may question whether they really sense God's presence in the storm and may wonder if God cares for them. Understanding that the disciples, too, had trouble with faith sometimes, despite all that they had seen firsthand, can help students trust God more. Identifying the kinds of storms all Christians face and sharing with other Christians who have sailed safely through with Christ will help them develop confidence in God's ability to care for them. They will grow in their ability to support and encourage others as they recall storms God has brought them through.

Teaching Plan

Connect

Review Questions

(5-8 minutes, easy set-up)

Students will answer five review questions from the previous lesson.

Print one copy of the “Review Questions” activity sheet for your use.

After greeting students, use the review questions to test what they can recall from the previous lesson as well as to provide the context for today’s lesson.

Master Teacher Option: Power Over Nature

(10 minutes, easy set-up)

Students will discuss positive and negative effects of the power of nature.

Provide a dry erase board and marker. Also, provide paper and pens.

Write “Power of Nature” on the board. Underneath the last word in that phrase, create two columns titled “Positive” and “Negative.” Divide students into small groups of three or four and provide each group with a sheet of paper and a pen. Instruct students to work together to name as many positive effects that nature can have and to list their responses on the left side of the paper. After a minute or so, instruct students to name as many negative effects that nature can have and to list their responses on the right side of the paper. Allow another minute for student to come up with as many answers as possible.

After time has elapsed, lead groups to share a positive effect and a negative effect and list these on the board. After you’ve received a good sampling of answers, ask: **As you look at everything on the board, how would you describe the power of nature?** Encourage several volunteers to share their thoughts. Conclude by explaining that God has control over every aspect of nature. Say: **Today we will look at Jesus’ authority over nature and how that power demonstrates His divine identity.**

Explore

Master Teacher Key Study: His Power Over Nature

(15-20 minutes, easy set-up)

Students will study Mark 4:35-41 to examine Jesus' power over nature.

Print one copy of the Master Teacher Key Study for your use. Also provide a copy of the Student Worksheet and a pen for each student.

Learning Goal: Students will examine Jesus' power over nature.

Pass out pens and copies of the Student Worksheet. Then, use the Master Teacher Key Study to teach Mark 4:35-41.

Transform

Deeper Discussion

(10 minutes, easy set-up)

Students will verbalize how Christ wants them to respond to fearful situations.

Learning Goal: Students will verbalize how Christ wants them to respond to fearful situations.

Use the following questions to lead students to verbalize how Christ wants them to respond to fearful situations:

- **Why is it easy for us to wonder if Jesus cares for us?**
- **How does knowing that Jesus has control of the world help us to trust Him with our lives?**
- **How would you have responded to Jesus making the wind and waves die down?**
- **How should we live our lives in light of the fact that the One who controls the world cares about us and works in our lives?**

After discussion, emphasize that it is easy to become fearful during difficult times, but that we can draw comfort knowing that Jesus is with us at all times, even in the midst of frightening or trying situations. Lead students in prayer, asking God to continue to teach you all how to be able to depend upon Jesus' presence in your lives, especially when frightened, discouraged, or alone.

Master Teacher Option: Getting Through the Storms

(10 minutes, easy set-up)

Students will consider why they can trust Jesus to help them through any storms they may face.

Tape four large sheets of paper to the walls and provide markers.

Learning Goal: Students will seek to verbalize how Christ wants them to respond to fearful situations.

Ask: **Based on the description of the storm in this passage, what types of natural elements do you think the disciples faced?** (Answers might include strong winds, heavy rain, lightning, high waves.) Choose four of the elements that students named and write them as column headings on the four

large sheets of paper you have taped to the walls. Divide students into four groups and lead each group to stand in front of one of the sheets of paper.

Instruct groups to write a short description of what damage might be caused by the element listed on the sheet of paper in front of them. (*Example: strong winds might blow the boat off course, high waves might capsize the boat.*) Ask: **How do you think this physical storm the disciples faced could be compared with the storms of life that people today might face?** Allow time for response, and then lead students to rotate clockwise to the next large sheet of paper.

This time, instruct groups to make a list of the types of storms people might face and how those storms might make them feel. Share these examples with students: **If I were diagnosed with an illness like cancer, I might feel like waves have capsized my boat. If I didn't make the team, I might feel like my plans for the future have been blown off course.** Allow three minutes for students to write on the sheets of paper in front of them similar statements that describe how the storms of life could make them feel. Invite groups to share with the class a couple of statements written on their papers. Ask: **How does having a plan for surviving a storm help you react correctly in the midst of a storm?** (If necessary, prompt students to think about tornado drills at school or similar practice drills.) Ask: **Based on today's lesson, how should we respond to the storms we might face?** Allow students to discuss, emphasizing that students should always turn to Jesus as He alone has the power to either control their storms or to guide them safely through those storms.

Conclude by praying that your students will spend time with Jesus every day so that they develop a strong relationship with Him that will draw them to Jesus when they need help facing the storms of life.

Take Home Activity

Family Devotion

(10-15 minutes at home, easy set-up)

Distribute copies of the Family Devotion to students and encourage them to share the devotion with their family.

A copy of the Family Devotion will be included in your lesson PDF download.

REVIEW QUESTIONS

(5-8 minutes, easy set-up)

Use these questions to review the content from Lesson 12: "He is the Living Water"
The correct answer for each question is printed in bold, italic font.

1. Through which area was Jesus traveling when He encountered the woman at Jacob's well?
 - a. Bethany
 - b. Judah
 - c. *Samaria***
 - d. Syria
2. What time of day was Jesus' encounter with the woman at the well?
 - a. Early in the morning
 - b. At dusk
 - c. Late at night
 - d. *In the middle of the day***
3. What kind of "water" did Jesus offer to the woman at the well?
 - a. Pure water
 - b. *Living water***
 - c. Good water
 - d. Refreshing water
4. How many times had the woman at the well been married?
 - a. ten
 - b. *five***
 - c. two
 - d. none
5. How did Jesus tell the woman at the well that people will worship Him?
 - a. *In spirit and in truth***
 - b. At the tabernacle
 - c. In the Temple
 - d. In the synagogue

Students: Christ
Lesson 13, Master Teacher Key Study

HIS POWER OVER NATURE

(15–20 minutes, easy set-up)

Use this outline and any of the corresponding activities to share the Biblical Truth with students.

Introduction: We tend to separate the God who created the universe and has complete power over it from the God who loves us. In truth, when we pray, we are talking with the God who has ultimate control over the world. The God who has power over all things is the God who works in our lives!

1. When we trust Jesus, we willingly follow Him wherever He leads us (Mark 4:35-38a).

Description: After a long day of teaching, Jesus led the disciples to leave the crowds by crossing the Sea of Galilee in a small boat (vv. 35-36). Even when a fierce storm threatened to sink the boat, Jesus slept peacefully in the stern (vv. 37-38a).

Illustration: Like the disciples, we may find it easy to trust Jesus when things are going well. But when we are faced with the storms of life—such as a flat tire, a rainy prom, an abruptly ended sports season, our parents' divorce, a disloyal friend, or a broken relationship—we may question whether God cares about us. When we doubt His goodness and His power, we are led to doubt His care.

Application: Much of our lives involves dealing with circumstances that are out of our control—like the weather. We can have faith that Jesus has complete control of the situation and that He can protect us. Even if He allows us to experience the difficulties that can come from any situation, He cares enough to be present with us always. We can trust that Christ cares about us.

2. We can become angry with Jesus when we think He doesn't see our needs and fears (Mark 4:38-39).

Description: Because the disciples were afraid for their lives, they woke Jesus and questioned His concern for their safety. They apparently doubted that Jesus would protect them or even be with them through the storm (v. 38b). In response, Jesus commanded the wind and sea to be quiet and still, and they obeyed, in turn providing His disciples safety (v. 39). Only the Creator of the world is able to control nature in such a way. Because **Jesus is God and Savior**, He has power and control over nature.

Illustration: Every summer, meteorologists attempt to predict when hurricanes will develop, how strong they will become, where they will make landfall, and how much damage they will do. While their predictions can help people in the path of the storms take necessary precautions to protect their property or even evacuate before the storm makes landfall and the flooding begins. Yet everything they do—whether predicting the storm or evading the storm—only demonstrates that people have no power to control the storm. Much like the disciples in the boat with Jesus when this storm struck, when the storms of life strike today, we feel helpless and afraid for our lives.

Application: When we experience the storms of life, it may be easy to get angry with God for allowing them instead of turning to Him to help us through them. But when we recognize Jesus as the One who controls every aspect of life, we can confidently turn our lives over to Him and allow Him to work in our lives in a way that shows His power and care.

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3. We can worship Jesus when He reveals His power over the storms in our lives (Mark 4:40–41).

Description: Jesus questioned why His disciples continued to lack faith (v 40). Jesus' disciples were in shock at the power that Jesus displayed over the storm. Their automatic response was to wonder about what kind of a person could command nature to obey (v. 41). Of course, only God has such power over nature, meaning that Jesus was fully God in addition to being fully man.

Illustration: Mankind has tried to control nature. Scientists have successfully learned how to harness the wind, but they cannot actually cause the winds to blow or to stop blowing. Engineers might build levees to redirect the path of a river, but the levees aren't strong enough to hold back floodwaters. Building codes might require hurricane glass in beachfront homes, but the glass doesn't withstand a direct hit by a Category 5 hurricane. Meteorologists are increasingly accurate in their predictions about where conditions are favorable for tornadoes, but since they cannot prevent the storms from forming, their only advice is to take cover or run away.

Application: While man cannot control nature, and has no power over nature, Jesus does. When we have faith in Jesus' power in the world, we come to know who He is. He is God, and He is our Savior. We can undoubtedly have faith in the truth of who Jesus is, and of His authority over all.

Conclusion: Our Savior has power over the world. Jesus, who cares deeply for us and desires to have a relationship with us, is the Creator of the universe. He has ultimate power in the world and has the same power to work in our lives. We can rejoice that our Savior has ultimate control over the universe and that He cares for us.

LESSON 13

HIS POWER OVER NATURE

Biblical Passage: Mark 4:35-41

Memory Verse: Philippians 4:6-7

“Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.”

1. When we _____ Jesus, we willingly follow Him wherever He leads (Mark 4:35-38a).
2. We can become _____ with Jesus when we think He doesn't see our needs and fears (Mark 4:38-39).
3. We can _____ Jesus when He reveals His power over the storms in our lives (Mark 4:40-41).

SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- Why is it easy for us to wonder if Jesus cares for us?
- How does knowing that Jesus has control of the world help us to trust Him with our lives?
- How would you have responded to Jesus making the wind and waves die down?
- How should we live our lives in light of the fact that the One who controls the world cares about us and works in our lives?

CORRECT QUESTION

Read Mark 4:38-40 and answer the following questions.

What did the disciples question?	What did Jesus do?	What did His actions toward nature show?	What did His rebuke of the disciples show?

SOMETHING TO THINK ABOUT . . .

“Every difficulty is a test—a test to see whether you will believe in God, a trial to drive you into His arms and His promises, where you find Him all-sufficient.”—*Kay Arthur*

LESSON 13

HIS POWER OVER NATURE

CHRISTOS
STUDENT EDITION

Biblical Passage: Mark 4:35-41

With news coverage on television and the Internet, your teenagers are probably aware of the dangers and threats of natural disasters . . . such as tornadoes, earthquakes, or hurricanes. Without question, these devastating storms wreak havoc on both people and property. Even if your family hasn't faced storms of this kind, you've likely experienced personal disasters, or watched friends and family members ride out the storms of life. The question is: How can believers have peace in the midst of turbulent times in the world, in the lives of friends and family, or in their own lives?

Read Mark 4:35–41. After an exhausting day of teaching, Jesus directed His disciples to set sail on the Sea of Galilee. Once in the boat, Jesus fell asleep. This area is very susceptible to violent storms as the cool air from the Mediterranean clashes with hot, humid air passing through the narrow mountains. Evidently, soon after the boat set sail, a violent storm blew across the sea and quickly threatened to overtake the boat. This storm was so dangerous that the disciples, many of whom were seasoned fishermen and sailors, were terribly frightened. Fearing the storm would capsize the boat and take their lives, the disciples woke Jesus. In a display of His power over nature, Jesus rebuked only the wind. And, then, He rebuked His followers for their lack of faith. Jesus' power over nature can assure your teenager that there is power in the words of Christ. He can give peace in the midst of life's storms.

What kind of storms is your family facing? Have these storms increased the amount of tension in your home? Are family members facing ridicule at school or work because of their stand for Christ? The way each person responds to life's storms sets an example for other family members. How can your family develop a trust in God that prepares each of you to trust Him even in the midst of overwhelming storms?

CONNECTION QUESTIONS:

- Can you remember a time when you were frightened in a storm? Was it more frightening as a child? How does having an emergency plan give you confidence and peace when you are faced with a natural disaster?
- How do you think the disciples felt when the storm came?
- Why do you think Jesus rebuked the disciples?
- Do you think the disciples had a good understanding of who Jesus really was? Why?
- You are either in a storm, coming out of a storm, or getting ready for a storm. Which of the three scares you the most?