



NO MATCH FOR JESUS: Sleeping Through the Storm

Pastor Derek Sanford

February 18, 2024

Life Group Discussion

Encouragement: How have storms in your life helped to grow your faith? Or who have you seen depend on God well during the storms of life?

Scripture: Read [Mark 4:35-41](#).

Observations:

- What time of day were they traveling across the lake? Why might Jesus have been sleeping?
- What kind of storm would this have been to cause *fishermen* to be afraid for their lives?
- How does Jesus respond to the storm and how do the disciples respond to what Jesus does?

Interpretations:

- Read [Psalm 107:23-32](#). How does this Psalm parallel what happens in Mark? What does this say about Jesus?
- What does the disciples' fear say about their faith? (see pp. 192-193 in the *NIV Application Commentary*)
- Why is the object of your faith (what you have faith in) more important than the size of your faith?

Application:

- What is your response when you are afraid: Fight, flight, or freeze?
- In our lives we will experience many kinds of storms, what does it look like to allow them to grow your faith? (Read Paul's experience in [2 Corinthians 1:8-10](#), see pp. 198-200 in the *NIV Application Commentary*)
- What is a current "storm" in your life and how can you depend on Jesus in it?

Prayer: Read [Psalm 46:1-3](#) and take turns praying for each other to experience Jesus entering into your storms of life.

Next Steps:

- How does this picture of Jesus compel me to live differently?
- Remember, all the Mark series resources can be found at <http://www.whoisgrace.com/MARK>.



MARK- NO MATCH FOR JESUS: Reaching Those on the Other Side

Pastor Derek Sanford

February 25, 2024

Life Group Discussion

Encouragement: Who first told you about Jesus or mentored you in the faith?

Scripture: Read [Mark 5:1-20](#) [see *NIV Application Commentary* pp.201-217]

Observations:

- Try to engage your senses in the scene- what do you see, smell, hear, feel?
- Compare and contrast the reactions of the demon-possessed man and the townspeople.
- What do you observe after reading [Mark 5:19-20](#) and [Mark 7:31-33](#)? (see also [Matthew 4:25](#))

Interpretations:

- Put yourself in the disciples' shoes- What are you witnessing, and what is it teaching you about Jesus?
 - o Reminder- What happens on the journey to this side of the lake? ([Mark 4:35-41](#))
 - o Glance at [Mark 5:21-43](#)- what comes next in the story?
- Jesus' main ministry focus was always the Jewish people, but He also ministers to Gentiles on occasion. Why do you think that is? How is He fulfilling God's good plan and pointing ahead to the work of his church?
 - o Look up these verses: [Genesis 22:18](#); [Luke 2:32](#); [Matthew 28:19](#); [Revelation 5:9-10](#)

Application:

- One of the prevailing worldviews is Fear/Power- the fear of bondage or the spirit world makes one seek deliverance in a power that is greater. Less common in the Western world, this worldview is still quite prevalent in tribal communities. They are drawn to Jesus by stories like these, that reveal that He has the power to overcome. ([Ephesians 6:12](#); [1 John 4:18](#))
- How have you experienced fear and the power of Jesus to deliver you?
- How might you tell someone who holds the fear/power worldview the good news of Jesus?

Prayer: Praise Jesus for His power. Praise God for His plan to bring salvation to all the nations. Ask God to give you a sensitive heart to the fears of the people you love and care for. Ask the Spirit for wisdom to tell them the of Jesus and his power and love as you live out His story every day, everywhere.

Next Steps:

- What circumstances in your own life do you need to see through spiritual eyes?
- Remember, all the Mark series resources can be found at <http://www.whoisgrace.com/MARK>.



MARK- NO MATCH FOR JESUS: From Fear to Faith

Pastor Sarah Burt

March 3, 2024

Life Group Discussion

Encouragement:

Scripture: Read [Mark 5: 21-43](#) [see *NIV Application commentary pp. 218-227*]

Observations:

- After reading in the ESV or NIV, consider reading these stories in a paraphrase translation: New Living (NLT), The Message (MSG), First Nations Version (FNVNT), Amplified (AMP). How do observe the scene differently when the descriptive language changes?
- Pastor Sarah's sermon leaned into the perspectives of the different characters. Which one(s) do you find that you empathize with the most? (disciples, Jairus, bleeding woman, crowd)

Interpretations:

- Both the woman and the dead girl are "unclean" according to the purity laws ([Leviticus 15:25-33](#); [22:1-7](#)). This does not mean that they are sinners, but that they are cut off from the people of God while they are unclean.
 - o What effect has this had on the woman (remember- she has been unclean for 12 years)?
 - o What does this mean for Jesus? [see *NIV Application commentary pp.225-226*]

Application:

- What were the fears of the different characters? (disciples, Jairus, bleeding woman, crowd)
- How does Jesus lead them from fear to deeper faith?
- How is Jesus preparing His disciples for their role as disciple-makers?

Prayer: Does someone in your group need the power of Jesus to overcome their fear and deepen their faith? Whatever their circumstance, gather around them and pray out loud, praising God, thanking Him for His work in their life, and asking Him for wisdom, peace, healing, guidance, etc.

Next Steps:

- How does this picture of Jesus compel me to live differently?
- What circumstance do I need to see through spiritual eyes?
- Remember, all the Mark series resources can be found at <http://www.whoisgrace.com/MARK>.



NO MATCH FOR JESUS: Dealing with Disparaging Critics

Pastor Derek Sanford

March 10, 2024

Life Group Discussion

Encouragement: What has been something recently that caused you to be in awe of Jesus?

Scripture: Read [Mark 6:1-6](#).

Observations:

- How did people respond to Jesus in his hometown? What is the progression of emotions that are experienced by the people?
- What did Jesus do and what did he not do there?

Interpretations:

- Read [Mark 3: 20-21, 31-35](#); [Luke 4:28-30](#). These passages also talk about Jesus being in his hometown of Nazareth. How do they shed light on how people responded to Jesus?
- Why would Jesus' former profession as a carpenter cause others to question his authority? (see pp. 233, 235 in the *NIV Application Commentary*)
- The Apostle Paul talks about people who struggle with unbelief in [2 Corinthians 4:4-6](#). How are the eyes of the people of Nazareth blinded to who Jesus really is?

Application:

- Revisit [2 Corinthians 4:4-6](#). How might some people respond to us as we share our faith with them?
- What do we learn from Jesus about how to deal with opposition/criticism?
- How could our familiarity with stories about Jesus prevent us from continuing to be in awe of who he is? What does it look like to keep our perspective fresh?

Prayer: We know that eventually Jesus' brothers came to faith (James and Jude wrote books of the New Testament!), so we can have hope that those who reject Jesus now, may still know him in the future.

Write down the names of people who you are connected to that are struggling with unbelief. Take time as a group to pray over the names for their eyes to be opened and for wisdom to be their friend until that time.

Next Steps:

- What is holding me back from looking more like Jesus?
- Remember, all the Mark series resources can be found at <http://www.whoisgrace.com/MARK>.



NO MATCH FOR JESUS: Equipping Disciples for Ministry

Pastor Derek Sanford

March 17, 2024

Life Group Discussion

Encouragement: Who has either gone on mission with you or helped equip you for ministry? How did they help you?

Scripture: Read [Mark 6:7-13](#).

Observations:

- What does Jesus instruct his disciples to do and say on their missionary journey?
- How are the disciples supposed to travel and invest in each town?

Interpretations:

- See pp. 240-242 in the *NIV Application Commentary* for reference for Interpretations.
- Read [Deuteronomy 19:15](#) and [2 Corinthians 13:1](#). Why would Jesus have sent out the disciples in groups of two? What might be some other reasons that he would send them in groups of two?
- How does the way the disciples traveled encourage them to develop dependence on the Lord?

Application:

- See pp. 248-250 in the *NIV Application Commentary* for reference for Applications.
- Who are the people that Jesus has uniquely sent you to influence? Name 3-5 people.
- Who is the Lord providing for you to partner with to help reach these people? List out their name(s). (ie. Christian coworkers, friends in the same circle, etc)
- Read [1 Corinthians 2: 1-5](#). How are we to approach the mission field that Jesus has called us to reach? What is challenging about this? What is comforting?

Prayer: Write the names of the people each person listed in the application in two different columns. Break into two groups. Take turns praying for those you are on mission to and those who you are partnering with to reach them. Use the verses from today to guide your prayers.

Next Steps:

- What is my next small step of obedience in my sphere of influence?
- Remember, all the Mark series resources can be found at <http://www.whoisgrace.com/MARK>.