

mark 4:35-5:43

THEME SENTENCE:

Jesus teaches his disciples that he is the omnipotent Lord so that they put their faith in him.

Jesus is the omnipotent Lord

The question in the first half of Mark (cf 8:29) is 'who is Jesus?' By way of answer, four times, Mark shows Jesus' supremacy over an impossible situation.

4:35-41	nature	If professional fishermen (cf 1:16-20) think their lives are in danger, then you know it's a bad storm! Even more, in the OT (eg Job 38; Ps 89:9; 104:7), the sea represents chaotic powers that only God can control. Jesus calms not only the 'wind', but also 'waves' (which would normally take days to go still). 'Who <u>is</u> this?' (41) is the obvious question.
5:1-20	Satan	Mark underlines the impossibility (cf 'no one' in 3-5; 'Legion' in 9). No-one watching pigs charging into the lake could doubt the destructive intent of demons, but also, see how unmistakable is Jesus' power: those demons really are gone!
5:24-34	illness	26 sets up a contrast between what the medics fail to do, and what 'immediately' happens by Jesus' 'power' (29).
5:21-24 & 5:35-43	death	The men's comment in 35, the mourners crying (38) and their laughter (40) show what everyone knows: when death comes, that's it. But for Jesus, death is no more permanent than sleep (39): he just tells the child to get up (41)!

Jesus is teaching this to his disciples

At first glance, it seems as if these four stories are a return to the public displays of authority in ch 1, in contrast to the theme of a 'secret' given to 'some' in 4:1-34. But actually, the theme of the section from 3:7 to 10:45 is Jesus training his disciples: here only three disciples see all four of these miracles. It is crucial that this new Israel understand **who he is** (and what he's come to do) otherwise they will not be able to spread the good news of his coming.

4:35-41	nature	It's only those on the boat who would know that the incredible calm on the lake that day followed this man's command.
5:1-20	Satan	We're in Gentile territory (1), so although the townsfolk know about Legion's exorcism (15-16), it's only the disciples travelling with Jesus who see it in the context of all Jesus' other miracles.
5:24-34	illness	The woman's healing happens in a crowd but until it's pointed out, not even the nearest disciples would know that (31).
5:21-24 & 5:35-43	death	Jesus wants this raising kept quiet (43), and only five people (of whom three are disciples) witness it (37, 40).

Jesus wants his disciples to (learn more about what it means to) put their faith in him

Exod 3:6; Isa 6:5; Ezek 1:28 are 3 OT occasions where a man comes face to face with God and is terrified. So we shouldn't be surprised that people are not only astonished at Jesus (5:42), but also afraid (4:41; 5:15, 33). But though fear is appropriate, Jesus wants to encourage an even better response to him:

4:35-41	nature	It's not easy to sleep in a fishing boat in a storm! So it seems as if Jesus deliberately slept (rather than being simply exhausted!) to encourage the right response: if his disciples understand who he is, they won't doubt his power or care.
5:1-20	Satan	It may seem strange that this awesome Lord is so meekly shooed away (17-18). But though opposed (- sinisterly 'begged' in 10, 12 is the same word as 'plead' in 17), Jesus appoints someone to remain there as his witness (19-20).
5:24-34	illness	By calling this already-healed woman out of the crowd, Jesus is able to encourage her to have faith in his word rather than mere superstition: now she knows she's healed not just because she 'felt' it, but because he'd promised it (34).
5:21-24 & 5:35-43	death	Does Jesus spend time with the woman not <i>instead of</i> attending to Jairus, but <i>for the sake of</i> Jairus? Jairus already has faith (23), but 36 asks him to keep believing and not lapse into fear: greater grounds for the faith he already has will now be given (cf 4:25), as he sees that Jesus is stronger even than death, 'the last enemy' (1 Cor 15:26).