

Read Mark 4:35-5:43. We often hear the saying, "Wisdom comes with experience." Yet experience alone does not necessarily produce wisdom. Many people simply become older while continuing to rely on themselves, learning little from the struggles they have endured. Mark presents four unforgettable scenes that expose the limits of self-help and invite us to place our confidence in Jesus instead. The terrified disciples could not calm the storm no matter how experienced they were as fishermen. The townspeople could not free the demon-possessed man despite repeated attempts to restrain him with chains and force. The woman with the flow of blood exhausted every available treatment until nothing remained. Jairus stood helpless as the news arrived that his daughter had died. Each story brings us to the same conclusion: there are burdens too great for human strength, wisdom, and resources. Only Jesus is enough.

The disciples discovered that Jesus possessed authority over the wind and the sea. The man enslaved by demons found that Jesus had absolute authority over every spirit. The woman learned that Jesus had absolute authority over sickness and pain, and that healing came from reaching out to Jesus in faith. Jairus discovered that death itself was under Jesus' authority. Mark carefully places these accounts together so that we see Jesus' lordship over every realm of human helplessness. Again and again, the answer is not greater self-reliance but deeper dependence upon the Son of God.

This truth also shapes the way we serve others. We are called to help, encourage, counsel, and pray for those who are hurting, but we must never confuse ourselves with the Savior. The people of the Gerasenes had sincerely tried to help the tormented man, yet they could not set him free. Lasting transformation came only when Jesus entered the situation. The same remains true today. Our words, compassion, and spiritual disciplines are valuable, but they are not the source of healing. Prayer, scripture, worship, and fellowship are gracious gifts that bring us into the presence of Christ, where He alone forgives, restores, strengthens, and transforms. Our calling is not merely to become better at helping ourselves or others, it is to continually lead ourselves and others to Him.

Perhaps that is the greatest question these chapters ask: Why do we wait so long to seek Jesus' help? We often exhaust our own wisdom, resources, and strength before finally falling at His feet. Yet throughout these stories, Jesus never turns away the one who comes to Him in faith. He calms storms, breaks chains, heals broken bodies, and raises the dead. He still delights to meet people at the end of themselves because it is there they finally discover the sufficiency of the Savior. True wisdom is not found in becoming more self-sufficient; it is found in becoming more Christ-dependent every day.

Prayerfully consider the following this week: Where in my life am I relying more on my own strength than on the power and presence of Jesus? Is there a burden, fear, or struggle that I have delayed bringing fully to Christ because I have been trying to manage it myself? Are prayer, scripture, worship, and fellowship merely becoming religious habits, or am I using them to truly draw near to the Savior who alone makes the difference?

Weekly Memory Verse:

"Who, then, is this, that even the wind
and the sea obey Him?"

Mark 4:41

Weekly Affirmation:

**KNOWING YOU, JESUS,
THERE IS NO GREATER THING**

AUGUST 2026 GROWTH GOALS

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| ☐ Read the Gospel of Mark | ☐ Memorize one of the weekly memory verses. |
| ☐ Watch the Bible Project video on Mark
(available on the website). | ☐ Spend ten minutes in silence and stillness each day. |