



The Vanquishing of Powers Hostile to God | 4:35-5:43

- *We had 4 examples of Christ's teaching in parables in chapter 4 and now we have 4 demonstrations of Christ's power in 4 miracles at the end of chapter 4 and all of chapter 5.*
 - *The Subduing of the Sea | 4:35-41*
 - *The Subduing of the Demoniac | 5:1-20*
 - *The Subduing of Sickness | 5:25-34*
 - *The Subduing of Death | 5:21-24, 35-43*
- *This is not accidental. Mark has brought these miracles together as a unit to illustrate the vanquishing of powers hostile to God.*
- *In each case the word of God invites the response of faith. These follow the key parable of the sower and its interpretation.*



- *How will you understand any parable? What is the key to this gatekeeper parable? It is this: God is sowing Christ generously as the Seed and as the Lamp. But only those who combine the Seed with faith receive Christ and bear fruit.*
 - *Faith = Reasoning from the unseen to the seen*
 - *Allowing me to act out the promises of God*
- *Like a skeleton key, faith is . . .*
 - *Little, but the key to everything*
 - *Unlocks all of life for the Christian*
 - *Like a "skeleton", the unseen supporting the seen*

GOD SPEAKS THROUGH HIS WORD

THE WORD IN
CREATION
(spoken)

And **God said**, Let there be light: and there was light. Gen 1:3

THE WORD IN
SCRIPTURE
(written)

In the past **God spoke** to our forefathers through the prophets Heb. 1:1

THE WORD
INCARNATE
(Jesus Christ)

. . . but in these last days **he has spoken** to us by his Son Heb. 1:2

“ The universe was fashioned as a theatre where man might by observation learn of the Creator and by that knowledge might render praise to his Maker. - *Warren Austin Gage* ”

The stage was created as was the audience precisely to display and highlight God's self-revelation.

- *The only acceptable response to the Word of God is faith.*
- *In the subduing of the sea, Jesus rebukes the disciples for their lack of faith expressed in their terror and fear. This is the first in a series of rebukes (for the disciples do not yet understand their Lord) –*
 - 7:18
 - 8:17, 21, 32
 - 9:19
- *9:28-29 (Mat 17:19-21) “Lord, increase our faith!” But how?*
 - *Faith comes by hearing and hearing by the Word of God = there is no faith without the Word. (Rom 10:17)*
 - *Unseen faith is generated by the visible activities of sending, preaching and hearing.*
- *Look again at the parable of the sower –*
 - *Mark 4:9, 15, 16, 18, 20*
 - *“Others, like seed sown on good soil, hear the word, accept it, and produce a crop--some thirty, some sixty, some a hundred times what was sown.”*





- *Faith in what? The promises of God, especially the promise that God saves, so especially Jesus Christ. (2 Corinthians 1:20)*
- *Faith is not only the key to life, it is the key to the rest of Mark. In each of these 4 miracles and in the remaining chapters, the Word of God in the person of Jesus Christ invites the response of faith.*
 - *The key to the rest of Mark is the interpretation of the parable of the sower.*
 - *God sows Christ, the good news, which is only effective when combined with faith.*
 - *The one who receives Christ must understand his mission. He must reason from the unseen to the seen.*
- *Galatians 3*
- *Romans 14:8-9, cf. Isaiah 45:21-25, 46:3-5, 8-13*

The Subduing of the Sea | 4:35-41

- *At evening, Jesus decides to cross over the lake Among the disciples were a number of fishermen by trade and expert sailors.*
- *The Sea of Galilee is surrounded by high mountains and functions as a basin subject to sudden, violent storms, especially in the afternoon.*
- *Such a storm struck the disciples driving waves over the side of the boat and threatening to swamp it.*
- *While the storm raged, Jesus lay sleeping on a cushion. This is the only place Scripture records Jesus sleeping.*
- *The disciples rudely awake Jesus with a sharp tone of rebuke, "Teacher, are we to drown for all you care?"*
- *Jesus rebukes the wind and the sea with "Peace be still" and there was a great calm.*

The language is the language of demonic combat.

- *Psalm 74:12-17 –salvation from waters is described as defeating Leviathan.*
- *This is true–*
 - *In creation by defeating the monster of chaos*
 - *In Noah’s flood of judgment by again defeating the monster of chaos*
 - *In the Exodus by defeating the monster of the Egyptians*
 - *In Israel’s salvation from the floods of Assyrian and Babylonian judgments,*
 - *In defeating the monsters of Revelation (Babylon who sits on many waters Rev 17:1, 15 and the dragon who stands on the shore of the sea Rev 13:1 and his antichrist who comes out of the sea Rev 13:2),*
 - *In judging the ungodly in the lake of fire Rev. 20:14, and*
 - *In finally eradicating the sea altogether Rev.21:1.*
- *Ps 24:1-2, cf. 2 Peter 3:4-9*

The Subduing of the Sea | 4:35-41

- *The question of Jesus muzzling the storm cannot be avoided.*
 - *The God of Israel is the Lord of history and nature. His sovereignty is demonstrated in the stilling of the roaring sea.*
 - *He is the living, personal God who intervenes in the experience of men with a revelation of his power and will. He is the God who acts, not some pale abstraction. (2 Samuel 22:1-20)*
- *Mark carefully chooses terminology which recalls Jesus’ encounter with demons.*
 - *Jesus rebuked the wind.*
 - *And commands “Silence, be muzzled!”, a detail found only in Mark.*
 - *The wind subsides with the result of great calmness.*

“Do you not yet have faith?”

- *This is the first in a series of rebukes (7:18 8:17, 21, 32, 9:19).*
- *It indicates that despite the special dispensation in 4:11, 34, the difference between the disciples and the unbelieving crowd is one of degree, not of kind.*
- *The crowd may only see a riddle in the person of Christ, but the disciples only have limited insight as well in the nature of the Kingdom of God. They are still quite blind and filled with misunderstanding.*
- *When Jesus asks “Do you not yet have faith?” he means specifically faith in God’s saving power present and revealed in his own person.*

“Who then is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him?”

- *The response should have been rhetorical “He is the Christ, the Son of God.”*
- *This account tells us that what is true of the God of Israel is true of Jesus Christ.*
- *At all times and in every sphere, he exercise sovereign control over every situation.*
- *The story is more than a demonstration of power, it is an epiphany where Jesus is unveiled to his disciples as the Savior in the midst of intense peril.*
- *Very early in the life of the Church this story was understood as a sign of Jesus’ saving presence in the persecution which threatened to overwhelm them.*
- *In early Christian art the Church was depicted as a boat driven upon a perilous sea with Jesus in the midst, so there was nothing to fear.*