

## Who is Jesus – Jesus is Fearsome – Mark 4:35-41

### FBC Nacogdoches – Sunday, July 28, 2019 – A.M. Message

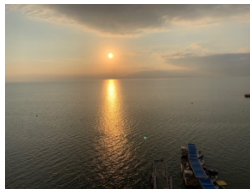
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#### Message Description

— Are you fearful of the Lord? Should you be? Well, the Bible says, “Happy is everyone who fears the Lord.” AND the Bible says, “Perfect love drives out fear,” and that believers should be careful not to fall back into fearing the Lord. So, what should my attitude toward the Lord look like? In this message on “Who is Jesus,” we will learn that Jesus is fearsome and how that should both trouble and comfort us. We will learn how to transition from an ungodly fear to a god-honoring, life-giving fear of the Lord.

#### Introduction

- Today we continue our series of messages focused on Jesus.
  - Jesus is wonderful in so many ways.
  - Today, we will learn one more of those ways.
- In **Mark 4** we find a fascinating account of an event in the Life of Jesus that teaches us much about how amazing Jesus is.
- Read **Mark 4:35-36**.
  - The “sea” spoken of here is not the Mediterranean Sea or the Red Sea (both of which are bordered by Israel) but actually a fresh water lake most commonly known as the Sea of Galilee.
  - **This is a good opportunity to talk a little about our recent trip to Israel.**
    - **How many have gone?**
    - **My attitude prior to going this summer for the first time...**
      - *I won’t learn much.*
      - *I study the Bible all the time...*
    - **My attitude today...**
      - *Wow. There is so much more to learn!*
    - **The plan right now is to go back in the summer of 2021.**
      - **We will work on details and get you more information soon.**
      - **Plan to go if you can.**
  - The Sea of Galilee is the key to really understanding many of the events of the gospels.
    - Mentioned in the Bible as early as **Numbers 34:11** (Sea of Chinnereth).
      - **Numbers 34:11** | *The border will go down from Shepham to Riblah east of Ain. It will continue down and reach the eastern slope of the Sea of Chinnereth. (CSB)*
    - **It is about the size and shape of the loop around Nacogdoches.**
      - 13 miles long // 8.5 miles at its widest point
      - 40,000 acres
    - More than half of the events described in the Gospels occurred on or around this lake.
    - **On our trip to Israel, we stayed in a hotel on the Sea of Galilee and toured many of the cities and sites around the Sea.**
      - **Photo I took while having my morning devotional in my hotel room overlooking the Sea of Galilee...**



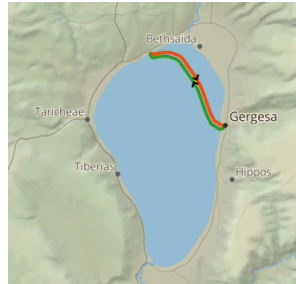
- This was Jesus’ backyard for most of his ministry.
- Events...
  - The calling of the disciples
  - Feeding of the 5,000
  - Sermon on the Mount
  - Jesus walks on water
  - Jesus reconciles with Peter (**John 21:15-23**)

— When Jesus instructed the disciples to cross over to the other side in **Mark 4:35**, he was telling them to leave Capernaum (on the north west corner of the lake) and travel to Gergesa (on the east side).

— This would have been a trip of about six miles.

— **From the CC's Smokehouse (Capernaum) to the intersection of Starr & Stallings (Gergesa).**

— MAP



— Capernaum was a populated area.

— Gergesa was not.

— So, they left the crowds of Capernaum and headed to the remote area of Gergesa.

— We know where they were headed by the reference in **Mark 5:1**.

— Read **Mark 4:37**.

— Windstorm...

— The interesting thing about the Sea of Galilee is that it is in a giant hole.

— The surface of the lake is 650 feet below sea level.

— **New Orleans is 6 feet below sea level.**

— On the northwest, the of Upper Galilee Mountains rise to a height of 4,000 feet above sea (ocean) level.

— On the east, mountains rise to 2,000 feet above sea (ocean) level.

— This odd geography causes unusual weather.

— Windstorms due to temperature variances.

— **Not thunderstorms like here in Texas but powerful storms of high-speed plunging winds.**

— More like a derecho.

— **In 2015, there was a storm on the Sea of Galilee with ten-foot waves.**

— Read **Mark 4:38-41**.

— The humanity of Jesus on display...

— Jesus was fully man.

— **Not some comic book superhero.**

— Jesus was tired and sleepy.

— The deity of Jesus on display...

— Jesus had power over the wind and waves.

— Notice in **Mark 4:39** it says, "*great calm*."

— The word for *great* in Greek is literally "mega" (μέγας).

— The waves and wind didn't just die down over a period of a few minutes or even a few seconds.

— This was instantaneous!

— Immediately the surface of the water was like glass, the air was eerily still, and the sound was that of silence.

— Then...

— ***They were terrified (4:41)!***

— Notice an unusual (odd) transition on the part of the disciples...

— They went from scared of the storm to scared of Jesus.

— Jesus seemed to be critical of their first fear, but he seemed to commend their second fear.

— The second fear was more profound than the first...

— The CSB and most other English Bibles really don't do the description justice here...

— **Mark 4:41** | *and they feared a great fear, and said one to another, 'Who, then, is this, that even the wind and the sea do obey him?'* (YLT)

— They "*feared a great fear*" (ἐφοβήθησαν φόβον μέγαν).

— Same “mega” as in **Mark 4:39**...

— So, should we fear the Lord? What does that mean?

— The answer is not as *simple* as you might think, but the answer is very *significant*.

— The Bible and especially the New Testament seem at first glance to give two answers, two instructions with respect to fearing the Lord.

— The Old Testament says to fear the Lord.

— **Psalms 19:9** | *The fear of the LORD is pure, enduring forever; the ordinances of the LORD are reliable and altogether righteous.* (CSB)

— **Psalms 111:10** | *The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom; all who follow his instructions have good insight. His praise endures forever.* (CSB)

— **Psalms 128:1** | *How happy is everyone who fears the LORD, who walks in his ways!* (CSB)

— **Ecclesiastes 12:13–14** | *When all has been heard, the conclusion of the matter is this: fear God and keep his commands, because this is for all humanity. For God will bring every act to judgment, including every hidden thing, whether good or evil.* (CSB)

— **Joshua 24:14** | *“Therefore, fear the LORD and worship him in sincerity and truth. Get rid of the gods your fathers worshiped beyond the Euphrates River and in Egypt, and worship the LORD.”* (CSB)

— The New Testament says to fear the Lord.

— **Matthew 10:28** | *Don’t fear those who kill the body but are not able to kill the soul; rather, fear him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.* (CSB)

— **Philippians 2:12** | *Therefore, my dear friends, just as you have always obeyed, so now, not only in my presence but even more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling.* (CSB)

— **Revelation 14:7** | *He spoke with a loud voice: “Fear God and give him glory, because the hour of his judgment has come. Worship the one who made heaven and earth, the sea and the springs of water.”* (CSB)

— **Luke 1:50** | *His mercy is from generation to generation on those who fear him.* (CSB)

— **Ephesians 5:20–21** | *giving thanks always for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, submitting to one another in the fear of Christ.* (CSB)

— But the New Testament also says fear has no place in our relationship with the Lord.

— **Romans 8:15–17** | *For you did not receive a spirit of slavery to fall back into fear. Instead, you received the Spirit of adoption, by whom we cry out, “Abba, Father!” The Spirit himself testifies together with our spirit that we are God’s children, and if children, also heirs—heirs of God and coheirs with Christ—if indeed we suffer with him so that we may also be glorified with him.* (CSB)

— **1 John 4:18** | *There is no fear in love; instead, perfect love drives out fear, because fear involves punishment. So the one who fears is not complete in love.* (CSB)

— And the New Testament often suggests there should be no fear barriers between believers and the Lord...

— One of the primary themes of the **Luke 15** prodigal son story is that we should not fear the Lord...

— Parable of the persistent widow...

— **Luke 18:7** | *Will not God grant justice to his elect who cry out to him day and night? Will he delay helping them?* (CSB)

— **Hebrews 4:16** | *Therefore, let us approach the throne of grace with boldness, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in time of need.* (CSB)

— **Matthew 7:9–11** | *Who among you, if his son asks him for bread, will give him a stone? Or if he asks for a fish, will give him a snake? If you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give good things to those who ask him.* (CSB)

— **James 4:8** | *Draw near to God, and he will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, sinners, and purify your hearts, you double-minded.* (CSB)

— **Romans 8:1** | *Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those in Christ Jesus,* (CSB)

— Theologians have wrestled with this through the years, especially Martin Luther and John Calvin...

— *Servile* fear and a *filial* fear...

— It gets very complicated.

— But let me see if I can unpack the fear of the Lord in a way that will instruct and encourage...

— Under closer inspection, there are three ways we should fear the Lord...

## A Godly Fear of the Lord

### I. Don't fear his punishment; fear his grief.

- We shouldn't be scared of the Lord in the sense that we are frightened by his presence.
  - **Romans 8:15-17** | *For you did not receive a spirit of slavery to fall back into fear. Instead, you received the Spirit of adoption, by whom we cry out, "Abba, Father!" The Spirit himself testifies together with our spirit that we are God's children, and if children, also heirs—heirs of God and coheirs with Christ—if indeed we suffer with him so that we may also be glorified with him. (CSB)*
  - **1 John 4:18** | *There is no fear in love; instead, perfect love drives out fear, because fear involves punishment. So the one who fears is not complete in love. (CSB)*
    - Why is there no fear in love?
      - Because fear involves punishment.
        - The Lord does not punish his children.
          - We will talk about the Lord's discipline in a moment.
        - If you fear the Lord's punishment (his wrath) then your love is not complete.
- However, we should fear grieving or disappointing him.
  - **Ephesians 4:30a** | *Don't grieve God's Holy Spirit... (CSB)*
- Perhaps Luther's conclusions about the two kinds of fear could be summed up as follows...
  - Ungodly fear fears what God will do to the believer.
    - Wrath of God...
  - Godly fear fears what the believer will do to God.
    - Disappointing God (grieving the Spirit) ...
- Another way of saying this...
  - Ungodly fear says, "Oh no, God is going to hurt me."
  - Godly fear says, "Oh no, I am going to hurt God."
- Another way of looking at this...
  - A slave fears his master's whip.
  - A son fears his father's displeasure.
- Perhaps the best biblical picture of someone experiencing the culmination of this fear is Peter's three-fold denial of Jesus...
  - **Luke 22:60-62** | *But Peter said, "Man, I don't know what you're talking about!" Immediately, while he was still speaking, a rooster crowed. Then the Lord turned and looked at Peter. So Peter remembered the word of the Lord, how he had said to him, "Before the rooster crows today, you will deny me three times." And he went outside and wept bitterly. (CSB)*
- When it comes to sin, the primary concern of someone who has a godly fear of the Lord is not...
  - Will I get caught?
  - What will God do to me?
  - What will it cost me?
  - Can I get away with it?
- The primary concern should be...
  - Will it break my Lord's heart?
- We want to be careful that we don't just turn our faith into an emotional, sentimental, melodrama...
  - But the Lord's view of us is important; should be important.
- There is much good theology in the classic child's song about being careful with our hands...
  - **Lyrics for child's song: Oh, Be Careful, Little Hands...**
    - **Be careful little hands what you do...**
    - **Be careful little hands what you do...**
    - **For your Father's up above...**
    - **Looking down on you in love...**
    - **So, be careful little hands what you do.**
  - **We don't teach the kids to say, "For your Father is up above looking down to smack you."**
    - That would foster the ungodly fear spoken of in **Romans 8:15-17** and **1 John 4:18**.
  - **We teach the kids that the Father is looking down in love.**
    - That is the godly fear of **Psalm 111:10**.
      - **Psalm 111:10a** | *The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom; all who follow his instructions have good insight... (CSB)*

## II. Don't fear his presence; fear his absence.

— In the second way of looking at the fear of the Lord we must acknowledge that the discipline of the Lord does play a role in our lives.

— Description of discipline...

— **Hebrews 12:5-6** | *And you have forgotten the exhortation that addresses you as sons: My son, do not take the Lord's discipline lightly or lose heart when you are reprovved by him, for the Lord disciplines the one he loves and punishes every son he receives.* (CSB)

— **Hebrews 12:7** | *Endure suffering as discipline: God is dealing with you as sons. For what son is there that a father does not discipline?* (CSB)

— **Hebrews 12:8** | *But if you are without discipline—which all receive—then you are illegitimate children and not sons.* (CSB)

— **Hebrews 12:9** | *Furthermore, we had human fathers discipline us, and we respected them. Shouldn't we submit even more to the Father of spirits and live?* (CSB)

— **Hebrews 12:10** | *For they disciplined us for a short time based on what seemed good to them, but he does it for our benefit, so that we can share his holiness.* (CSB)

— **Hebrews 12:11** | *No discipline seems enjoyable at the time, but painful. Later on, however, it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it.* (CSB)

— Warning...

— **Hebrews 12:12-13** | *Therefore, strengthen your tired hands and weakened knees, and make straight paths for your feet, so that what is lame may not be dislocated but healed instead.* (CSB)

— We shouldn't fear being in his presence; we should fear fleeing his presence.

— We shouldn't fear being close to him; we should fear rebelling against him.

— **I read a story this week told by John Piper...**

— **I went to visit a man named Dick Teegan, with Karsten when he was six. He had a dog at the door when we opened the door, and he looked Karsten eyeball to eyeball. This is a giant dog. And I sent Karsten back to the car to grab something that we had forgotten, and the dog went loping up behind the six-year-old at his very height with a little low growl, and Karsten was terrified. And Dick leaned out the door and shouted to Karsten, my six-year-old, "Karsten, maybe you better not run. He doesn't like it when people run away from him."**

— **And I thought, "That is going in the sermon this Sunday." Just walk beside him. You can even put your hand around his neck, you know? God is horrifically dangerous to run away from, and we should be terrified to run away from God, but if we will stay with him, his growl is a growl of our protection, not our destruction. And we can put our arm around his big neck, I guess, to change the imagery.**

— If you are running to the Lord, you will find love, mercy, grace...

— If you are running away from the Lord, you will find reason to fear him.

## III. Don't fear your circumstances; fear his sovereign power.

— This brings us back to the passage at hand...

— Let's look at the two specific kinds of fear the disciples faced in **Mark 4**.

— First, they feared their circumstances.

— Second, they feared the power of the Lord.

— Look at these two actions more closely...

— How did they err when they feared their circumstances?

— They should have trusted in Christ's protection.

— They should have looked at Jesus and said, "There is nothing to fear. Jesus is with us."

— And we should do exactly the same thing and say exactly the same thing.

— How did they honor the Lord with their fear of his power?

— That is the definition of worship.

— We worship/glory/honor the Lord when we step back amazed at his power (and love, grace, wisdom, etc.).

— Typically, we get fear wrong.

— We are fearful of circumstances. And we are not filled with faith in Christ.

— So, we get this kind of counsel from Jesus...

— **Matthew 10:28** | *Don't fear those who kill the body but are not able to kill the soul; rather, fear him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.* (CSB)

— But just like we see in the **Mark 4** account, when our fear (awe) of his power goes up, our fear of circumstances goes down.

— Once they saw Jesus silence the storm and still the waves...

— So, how can we increase our fear of the Lord and see our fear of circumstances shrink?

**A. Meditate on his attributes.**

- The more you are aware of his attributes, the more you will trust him.
- **Mark 4:41** | *And they were terrified and asked one another, “Who then is this? Even the wind and the sea obey him!”* (CSB)

### B. **Worship his greatness.**

- The more you worship him, the less you will fear circumstances.
  - Worship is the antidote to fear of circumstances.
  - Some people really need to learn that lesson.
- How to worship his greatness?
  - Faithfulness
  - Fervor
    - Posture
      - **1 Timothy 2:8** | *Therefore, I want the men in every place to pray, lifting up holy hands without anger or argument.* (CSB)
      - **Psalm 28:2** | *Listen to the sound of my pleading when I cry to you for help, when I lift up my hands toward your holy sanctuary.* (CSB)
      - **Psalm 95:6** | *Come, let us worship and bow down; let us kneel before the LORD our Maker.* (CSB)
      - **1 Kings 8:22** | *Then Solomon stood before the altar of the LORD in front of the entire congregation of Israel and spread out his hands toward heaven.* (CSB)

### C. **Ride the waves of obedience.**

- It is only those who go with Jesus that see his power.

### Conclusion

- Adrian Rogers once said, *“The fear of the Lord is but love on its knees.”*
- **Now an airplane pilot, he doesn’t fear the airplane, and he doesn’t fear the sky. But as a senior pilot told me, “Pastor, there are old pilots and bold pilots, but there are no old, bold pilots.” Now, what did he mean by that? He meant that there is that respect for the laws of aerodynamics.**<sup>i</sup>

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### Outlines

- #1: Kinds of Godly Fear
  - The kind that motivates the believer to honor rather than disappoint the Father.
    - Don’t grieve the Lord.
  - The kind that causes the believer to stay with rather than run from the Lord.
    - Illustration about running from the dog...
  - The kind that causes the believer to respect God’s power and not be afraid of God’s power.
    - Illustration about the handgun...
  - The kind that causes the believer to draw closer rather than run away.
    - Luther’s two-fear view...
- #2: How to Foster Godly Fear
  - Prayer posture
  - Focus on the greatness and power of God.
  - Exercise/stretch your faith.
- #3: How to Fear the Lord
  - Fear grieving the Lord.
  - Fear running from the Lord.
  - Fear the awesomeness of the Lord.
- #4: How to Fear the Lord
  - Honor the Lord’s holiness. // Fear his grief.
  - Walk with the Lord. // Fear his absence.
  - Stand in awe of the Lord’s power. // Fear his potential.
- #5: A Godly Fear of the Lord
  - Don’t fear his punishment; fear his grief.
  - Don’t fear his presence; fear his absence.
    - Dog
  - Don’t fear your circumstances; fear his sovereign power.
    - Matthew 10:28
    - Gun



- How to fear the Lord?
  - Posture
  - Meditation
  - Worship
  - Stretch faith

## Thoughts

- The disciples went from one kind of fear to another.
  - In **4:37-28** they were afraid of the storm.
    - Afraid of death.
    - In **4:41** this fear seems to be the opposite of faith.
      - Fear is the lack of faith.
  - In **4:41** they were terrified of being in the presence of God.
    - **Matthew 10:28** | *Don't fear those who kill the body but are not able to kill the soul; rather, fear him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell. (CSB)*
    - **Hebrews 10:31** | *It is a terrifying thing to fall into the hands of the living God. (CSB)*
- **How to handle a loaded gun?**
  - **Don't be scared of it...**
  - **Fear (respect) the power, lethality of the weapon...**
- On the surface there seems to be confusion about the New Testament instruction about fear...
  - **2 Corinthians 7:1** | *So then, dear friends, since we have these promises, let us cleanse ourselves from every impurity of the flesh and spirit, bringing holiness to completion in the fear of God. (CSB)*
    - Proper fear should inspire holy living.
  - **Romans 8:15-17** | *For you did not receive a spirit of slavery to fall back into fear. Instead, you received the Spirit of adoption, by whom we cry out, "Abba, Father!" The Spirit himself testifies together with our spirit that we are God's children, and if children, also heirs—heirs of God and coheirs with Christ—if indeed we suffer with him so that we may also be glorified with him. (CSB)*
    - There is unhealthy fear that we are in danger of falling back into.
  - **1 John 4:18** | *There is no fear in love; instead, perfect love drives out fear, because fear involves punishment. So the one who fears is not complete in love. (CSB)*
    - Healthy fear does not involve fear of punishment.
  - **Philippians 2:12** | *Therefore, my dear friends, just as you have always obeyed, so now, not only in my presence but even more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. (CSB)*
    - Salvation should be worked out with fear and trembling.
  - **Revelation 14:7** | *He spoke with a loud voice: "Fear God and give him glory, because the hour of his judgment has come. Worship the one who made heaven and earth, the sea and the springs of water." (CSB)*
    - Commanded to fear... connected to worship especially the acknowledgement of his creative power.
- Fear of God and being casual toward God are opposites.
- Worldly fear pushes away from God.
  - Godly fear pulls closer to God.
- Perhaps Luther's conclusions about the two kinds of fear could be summed up as follows...
  - Ungodly fear fears what God will do to the believer.
  - Godly fear fears what the believer will do to God.
    - Disappointing God...
- How to foster a healthy fear of the Lord?
  - Prayer postures
  - Faithfulness to worship

## Notes on text

- They crossed the sea at Jesus' insistence.
- There were "other" boats with the boat that Jesus traveled in.
- What did the disciples really expect?
  - Apparently not what Jesus did (call a great calm into existence) ...
  - What do we really expect of Jesus?
  - What would the surprise have been like when Jesus calmed the storm?

## References

- **Psalm 56:3** | *When I am afraid, I will trust in you.* (CSB)
- **2 Kings 17:33** | *They feared the LORD, but they also worshiped their own gods according to the practice of the nations from which they had been deported.* (CSB)
- **Psalm 19:9** | *The fear of the LORD is pure, enduring forever; the ordinances of the LORD are reliable and altogether righteous.* (CSB)
- **Psalm 111:10** | *The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom; all who follow his instructions have good insight. His praise endures forever.* (CSB)
- **Psalm 128:1** | *How happy is everyone who fears the LORD, who walks in his ways!* (CSB)
- **Ecclesiastes 12:13-14** | *When all has been heard, the conclusion of the matter is this: fear God and keep his commands, because this is for all humanity. For God will bring every act to judgment, including every hidden thing, whether good or evil.* (CSB)
- **Joshua 24:14** | *“Therefore, fear the LORD and worship him in sincerity and truth. Get rid of the gods your fathers worshiped beyond the Euphrates River and in Egypt, and worship the LORD.* (CSB)
- **Psalm 25:14** | *The secret counsel of the LORD is for those who fear him, and he reveals his covenant to them.* (CSB)
- **2 Corinthians 5:11** | *Therefore, since we know the fear of the Lord, we try to persuade people. What we are is plain to God, and I hope it is also plain to your consciences.* (CSB)
- **Jude 23** | *save others by snatching them from the fire; have mercy on others but with fear, hating even the garment defiled by the flesh.* (CSB)
- **2 Corinthians 7:1** | *So then, dear friends, since we have these promises, let us cleanse ourselves from every impurity of the flesh and spirit, bringing holiness to completion in the fear of God.* (CSB)

### Contrast the fear the disciples felt in 4:37 and the terror they felt in 4:41...

- The disciples’ fear of **perishing** is greater than their confidence in the presence of Jesus (see v. 40).<sup>ii</sup>
- Now, friend, there are two fears right there back to back: one, a bad fear; the other, a good fear. Friend, when you fear the Master of the winds and the waves, you don’t have to fear anything else.<sup>iii</sup>

### Fear

- Thus it is said, *the fear of the Lord is the beginning*, or the chief part, *of wisdom*. Psal. 111:10. *The fear of the Lord is the fountain of life*. Prov. 14:27. *The fear of the Lord is his treasure*. Is. 33:6. In these and a multitude of other declarations of a similar import, it is plainly indicated, that *the fear of the Lord* is the sum and substance of that morally excellent character which is the object of the divine complacency.<sup>iv</sup>
- Fear has a constructive role to play in enabling men to realize both the degeneracy of their souls and their need of divine forgiveness.<sup>v</sup>
- Fear is quite naturally the logical consequence of sin (Gn 3:10; 4:13, 14; Prv 28:1).<sup>vi</sup>
- Genuine faith is expressed in, and animated by, a reverential awe, and this is the basic meaning of the biblical idea of the fear of God.<sup>vii</sup>
- Never become a casual Christian. “*Fear the LORD.*” (Joshua 24:14) You say, “Now, wait a minute, Adrian. I thought that we had a faith that was built on love and not fear.” Friend, there’s no contradiction between love and fear. **He who fears God the most loves Him the best.** And I’ve told you before that **the fear of the Lord is but love on its knees.**<sup>viii</sup>
- **Now an airplane pilot, he doesn’t fear the airplane, and he doesn’t fear the sky. But as a senior pilot told me, “Pastor, there are old pilots and bold pilots, but there are no old, bold pilots.” Now, what did he mean by that? He meant that there is that respect for the laws of aerodynamics.**<sup>ix</sup>
- It’s not the fear of the Lord that says, “If I don’t do right, He’s going to get me.” That’s not the fear I’m talking about. You know the difference between a slave and a son? **A slave fears his master’s whip; a son fears his father’s displeasure.** Isn’t that true? And a true Christian, it’s not because he’s afraid God’s going to get him if he doesn’t behave; he just loves God; he stays in the presence of God.<sup>x</sup>
- We need to make some important distinctions about the biblical meaning of “fearing” God. These distinctions can be helpful, but they can also be a little dangerous. **When Luther struggled with that, he made this distinction, which has since become somewhat famous: He distinguished between what he called a servile fear and a filial fear.**
  - The servile fear is a kind of fear that a prisoner in a torture chamber has for his tormentor, the jailer, or the executioner. It’s that kind of dreadful anxiety in which someone is frightened by the clear and present danger that is represented by another person. Or it’s the kind of fear that a slave would have at the hands of a malicious master who would come with the whip and torment the slave. Servile refers to a posture of servitude toward a malevolent owner.
  - Luther distinguished between that and what he called filial fear, drawing from the Latin concept from which we get the idea of family. It refers to the fear that a child has for his father. In this regard, Luther is thinking of a child who has tremendous respect and love for his father or mother and who dearly wants to please them.



He has a fear or an anxiety of offending the one he loves, not because he's afraid of torture or even of punishment, but rather because he's afraid of displeasing the one who is, in that child's world, the source of security and love.<sup>xi</sup>

- Now here are two pictures, and I will close. I went to visit a man named Dick Teegan, with Karsten when he was six. He had a dog at the door when we opened the door, and he looked Karsten eyeball to eyeball. This is a giant dog. And I sent Karsten back to the car to grab something that we had forgotten, and the dog went loping up behind the six-year-old at his very height with a little low growl, and Karsten was terrified. And Dick leaned out the door and shouted to Karsten, my six-year-old, "Karsten, maybe you better not run. He doesn't like it when people run away from him."
  - And I thought, "That is going in the sermon this Sunday." **Just walk beside him. You can even put your hand around his neck, you know? God is horrifically dangerous to run away from, and we should be terrified to run away from God, but if we will stay with him, his growl is a growl of our protection, not our destruction. And we can put our arm around his big neck, I guess, to change the imagery.**
  - Or here is one last image, and I love this one, because I love the picture of a big, holy, sovereign, majestic God. So I picture myself climbing in the mountains, say the Himalayas. And I'm on these massive rock faces, and I see a storm coming. It is going to be a massive storm, and I feel unbelievably vulnerable on these mountain precipices. And so, I am desperately looking for a little covert in the rock where I won't be blown off the side of the cliff to destruction.
  - And I find a hole in the side of the mountain, and I spin quickly, and suddenly the holiness, and justice, and power, and wrath, and judgment of God breaks over me like a hurricane, but I know I am totally safe, which means all that horrible danger is transposed into the music of majesty, and I can enjoy it rather than fearing it. And I think that is what the cross is. Jesus died for us to provide a place where we could enjoy the majesty of God with a kind of fear and trembling and reverence and awe, but not a cowering fear.<sup>xii</sup>
- As this is thus differently spoken of under the names of *the love of God*, and *the fear of God*, both in the Old and New Testament; it is sufficiently evident to a mind even slightly attentive, that ***the fear of God, and the love of God, are but one character, appearing under different modifications.***<sup>xiii</sup>
- That there is a twofold fear: a servile fear, and a filial fear; a fear opposite unto faith, and a fear attending upon faith; a doubting and distrusting fear, and a careful and loving fear; a fear of discouraging diffidence, and a fear of awful reverence; **a fear from the law to be punished, and a fear from grace to offend and deserve punishment; a fear begotten by the spirit of bondage, and a fear begotten by the Spirit of adoption;**<sup>xiv</sup>

### General Notes

- This specific event is paralleled in Matt. 8:18, 23–27 and Luke 8:22–25.<sup>xv</sup>
  - **Luke 8:25** | *He said to them, "Where is your faith?" They were fearful and amazed, asking one another, "Who then is this? He commands even the winds and the waves, and they obey him!"* (CSB)
  - **Matthew 8:27** | *The men were amazed and asked, "What kind of man is this? Even the winds and the sea obey him!"* (CSB)

### Notes on 4:35

- **the other side.** Jesus and His disciples were **on the western shore** of the Sea of Galilee. To escape the crowds for a brief respite, Jesus wanted to go to the eastern shore, which had no large cities and therefore fewer people.<sup>xvi</sup>
- **On that day, when evening came,** Jesus **said to** His disciples, **"Let us go over to the other side."** **From the vicinity of Capernaum, on the northwest tip of the Sea of Galilee, Jesus and His followers headed for the eastern shore.** The multitude that had gathered to hear Jesus preach earlier that day was so massive that, in order to effectively address them all, "He got into a boat in the sea and sat down; and the whole crowd was by the sea on the land" (Mark 4:1). As night began to fall, the Lord again used a boat to distance Himself from the throngs of people still assembled on the shore. Traveling to the eastern shores of the Sea of Galilee, where there were no major cities and thus fewer people, would allow Jesus and His disciples to get some reprieve from the massive multitudes.<sup>xvii</sup>
- The Sea of Galilee is known today as Yam Kinneret. In Scripture, it is variously referred to as the Lake of Gennesaret (Luke 5:1), the Sea of Chinnereth (Num. 34:11; Josh. 13:27) or Sea of Chinneroth (Josh. 12:3), and the Sea of Tiberias (John 6:1; 21:1), after the main city on its western shore, which was named after Tiberius Caesar Augustus. The sea is in reality a large freshwater lake, measuring approximately thirteen miles long by seven miles wide. Sitting at about 690 feet below sea level, it is both the lowest body of freshwater on earth and the most significant geographical feature of Galilee. Though partially fed through underground springs, the lake gets most of its water from the Jordan River, which runs from north to south—from its source near Mt. Hermon (at an elevation of 9,232 feet above sea

level) and its terminus at the Dead Sea (at 1,400 feet below sea level). Even today, the pristine water of the lake not only provides drinking water for local residents, it also supports a thriving fishing industry.<sup>xviii</sup>

- Shaped like a harp, the Sea of Galilee sits roughly thirty miles east of the Mediterranean Sea. The Jordan Valley in which it is situated is part of the Great Rift Valley that runs some 4,500 miles from Syria through the Red Sea and down the east coast of the African continent to Mozambique. The steep hills and cliffs that encompass the Sea of Galilee make it vulnerable to high winds, which can cause sudden, violent storms to develop on the lake. As cooler air travels down from the northern Golan Heights, it collides with the warm air in the basin of the lake, creating turbulent conditions that are intensified as winds force their way through the ravines and canyons of the upper Jordan Valley. **In 1992, one such storm generated ten-foot high waves on the lake, causing flooding and damage in the city of Tiberias.**<sup>xix</sup>
- We should not be alarmed by surprises in our lives. They are divinely ordained moments whereby God is working in the everyday circumstances of our lives to reveal who He is, who we are, and who we need! Trials and tribulations, difficulties and desperate moments are when God does His greatest work in our lives. When He brings us to the end of ourselves, we are driven to Him and Him alone as Savior and Rescuer.<sup>xx</sup>

#### Notes on 4:36

- The boat was not large enough to transport all twelve apostles and others of Jesus' followers, so **other boats** were brought to accommodate those who **were with Him.**<sup>xxi</sup>

#### Notes on 4:37

- The Sea of Galilee is **696 feet (212 m) below sea level**, resulting in violent downdrafts and sudden storms (**windstorm**; cf. 6:48).<sup>xxii</sup>
- *Lailaps* (**fierce gale**) describes the violent gusts of a powerful storm. Mark added the adjective *meGas* ("great") to the noun *lailaps* in order to intensify His description of the hurricane-like tempest. Luke, in his account of this event, reported that the **winds "descended"** on the lake (8:23), to convey that they were racing down the slopes and whipping across the surface of the water. **Matthew describes the violent shaking of the storm by using the word *seismos***, from which the English word "seismology" is derived (8:24). The ferocious winds quickly turned the surface of the lake into a raging, convulsive sea.<sup>xxiii</sup>
- The Sea of Galilee rests at **628 feet below sea level** and is surrounded by mountains gouged with deep ravines. These ravines serve as gigantic funnels to focus whirling winds down onto the lake without notice. The way is often "greased" by a thermal build-up in the extremely low valley which, while it rises, invites the cold air to come falling violently from above.<sup>xxiv</sup>
- Our natural inclination to think of storms as being accompanied by rain and dark skies, thunder and lightning. So it is not surprising if this is the way we visualize the Lord Jesus calming the storms on the Sea of Galilee. This common assumption is only reinforced by famous paintings like Rembrandt's masterpiece "Christ in the Storm on the Sea of Galilee" (see Excursus below). There is, however, good reason to believe that the two storms the Lord Jesus calmed were nothing like what we have grown so familiar with. There was neither rain nor dark skies, and no thunder or lightening. But how can this be? To those accustomed to sailing on the Sea of Galilee the answer would be obvious: they were **windstorms, not thunderstorms.**<sup>xxv</sup>
- The two storm events recorded in the Gospels on the Sea of Galilee were both winter windstorms. Such storms come from the east off the Golan Heights, unlike rainstorms which come from the west or the north. Due to the nature of how rainstorms develop, it is highly unlikely the disciples would have been caught in such a storm. Indeed, "caught" implies the storms develop with a sense of suddenness, but this is not the case. If the storms were rainstorms, the disciples—many of whom were seasoned fishermen—would have recognized the developing rain clouds and impending threat, and sought shelter in one of the harbors around the lake.<sup>xxvi</sup>

#### Notes on 4:38

- Jesus' sleeping indicates lack of fear and also great fatigue, a reminder of his true humanity.<sup>xxvii</sup>
- With both His sleeping in the boat and His stopping of the storm coming in the same text, we have one of those examples in Scripture where the Deity and the humanity of Christ are side by side in a text. Sleeping is humanity; stopping the storm is Deity.<sup>xxviii</sup>
- the disciples had no legitimate reason to question Jesus' care for them or their situation. They had witnessed the divine power of Jesus and had followed Him long enough to know of His genuine love for them (cf. John 13:1). But, in their terror, their faith and steadfastness were replaced by fear and doubt.<sup>xxix</sup>
- The disciples' rebuke of Jesus—"Teacher, are we to drown for all you care?" (Mof)—indicates that they did not know who he really was.<sup>xxx</sup>

- It pains me greatly to see myself in the disciples. Jesus has proven Himself faithful to me over and over, yet when caught by surprise and squeezed in a vice of trouble, I fume rather than show faith.<sup>xxxii</sup>

#### Notes on 4:39

- Storms normally subside gradually, but when the Creator gave the order, the natural elements of this storm ceased immediately.<sup>xxxii</sup>
- The result was instantaneous. In a moment, the wind died down and it became perfectly calm. The towering waves vanished, the howling gusts were silenced, and the surface of the lake became like glass. As Charles Spurgeon expressed, "There was no trace of storm another moment after He had been awakened."<sup>xxxiii</sup>
- When Christ rebuked the wind and the waves, they did not subside gradually until calm was restored. Both disappeared immediately. The storm may have arisen suddenly, but it vanished even faster than it came. Mark's use of the word *me gas* (meaning "great," translated perfectly) indicates the absolute stillness that now characterized the Sea of Galilee.<sup>xxxiv</sup>

#### Notes on 4:40

- Jesus chides the disciples for being afraid (cf. 7:18; 8:17–18, 21). The antidote to fear is faith, i.e., trust in Jesus (see also note on Matt. 8:26). They are right in turning to Jesus, but they are exhorted regarding their fear and feeling of being forsaken by God.<sup>xxxv</sup>
- Having silenced the literal tempest, Jesus turned His attention to the winds of fear and the waves of faithlessness that had been raging in their hearts (cf. James. 1:6).<sup>xxxvi</sup>
- The answer to Jesus' first question is implied by the second: the reason they were afraid (from the Greek word *deilos*, meaning cowardly or timid) was because they still had no faith.<sup>xxxvii</sup>
- **δειλός, ἡ, ὄν:** pertaining to being cowardly—'cowardly, coward.'<sup>xxxviii</sup>
- He's teaching them faith ... don't miss this. Faith is not confidence that bad things won't happen. Faith is not confidence that the storm will end tomorrow. Faith is confident that, no matter how heavy the storm is, God is right there in the middle of that storm with you. Here's where the love casts out fear. Jesus has power over nature. We see His presence. He is there with them, and the promise that He gives to these guys and to all who follow and trust in Him, He says, "You are not alone."<sup>xxxix</sup>

#### Notes on 4:41

- The Identity of Jesus Is an Issue We All Must Settle<sup>xi</sup>
- they feared exceedingly. This was not fear of being harmed by the storm, but a reverence for the supernatural power Jesus had just displayed. The only thing more terrifying than having a storm outside the boat was having God in the boat!<sup>xli</sup>
- Mark's explanation that they became very much afraid could be literally translated, "they feared with a great fear," emphasizing the intensity of their astonishment. The realization that the Creator was in their boat was far more frightening than any terror they might face outside their boat.<sup>xlii</sup>
- Fear is here juxtaposed to faith. Because the disciples do not yet recognize Jesus' role as Savior, they still fear the elements that threaten them. The implications for Mark's community are clear: the fearful have no faith, and the faithful have no fear. Now the disciples are filled with a great fear, but it is a different kind of fear (*deilos* in v. 40; *phobos* in v. 41). It is "the fear of the Lord," a reverential awe (see the references to "great fear" in Jonah 1:10, 16; cf. Jonah 4:1 "great grief," and 4:6, "great joy").<sup>xliii</sup>
- He rebuked them for fearing, and in the very next verse, they feared Him in a very wonderful way. One kind of fear was condemned, because it was faithless. The other was exonerated and commended, because it was reverential awe. Listen. Never, never get careless about your Christian life. Never lose the reverence. Have a careful reverence for God.<sup>xliv</sup>
- The affright with the marveling is reported by both Mark and Luke. Mark says the disciples "feared exceedingly" (Mark 4:41), and Luke says the disciples were "afraid" (Luke 8:25). This is the second time we read in our text of the disciples being fearful. The first time we read of their being fearful (Mark 4:40; Matthew 8:26) concerned their fear of the storm. Here their fear is part of their reaction to the miracle. The fear in each case was very different. This is especially seen in the two different Greek words involved in these words of fear in this miracle. The first Greek word refers to the fear which the disciples had of the storm. It is a bad fear. It is cowardly fear. The second Greek word refers to the fear the disciples had in their reaction to the miracle. It is a good fear. It speaks of reverence for God. We need a lot more of this fear.<sup>xlv</sup>
- **φοβέομαι:** (derivative of φόβος<sup>a</sup> 'fear,' 25.251) to be in a state of fearing—'to fear, to be afraid.'<sup>xlvi</sup>



## Images of the Boat



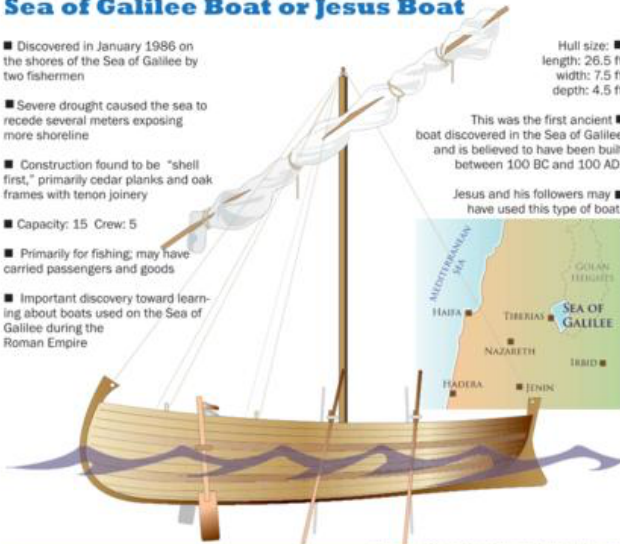
### Sea of Galilee Boat or Jesus Boat

- Discovered in January 1986 on the shores of the Sea of Galilee by two fishermen
- Severe drought caused the sea to recede several meters exposing more shoreline
- Construction found to be "shell first," primarily cedar planks and oak frames with tenon joinery
- Capacity: 15 Crew: 5
- Primarily for fishing; may have carried passengers and goods
- Important discovery toward learning about boats used on the Sea of Galilee during the Roman Empire

Hull size: ■  
length: 26.5 ft  
width: 7.5 ft  
depth: 4.5 ft

This was the first ancient ■ boat discovered in the Sea of Galilee and is believed to have been built between 100 BC and 100 AD.

Jesus and his followers may ■ have used this type of boat.



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<sup>1</sup> Adrian Rogers, "How to Keep Your Spiritual Health," in *Adrian Rogers Sermon Archive* (Signal Hill, CA: Rogers Family Trust, 2017), Jos 24:14–22.

<sup>2</sup> Crossway Bibles, *The ESV Study Bible* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles, 2008), 1901.

<sup>3</sup> Adrian Rogers, "How to Keep Your Spiritual Health," in *Adrian Rogers Sermon Archive* (Signal Hill, CA: Rogers Family Trust, 2017), Jos 24:14–22.

<sup>4</sup> Timothy Dwight, *Theology: Explained and Defended in a Series of Sermons*, vol. 3 (Middletown, CT: Clark & Lyman, 1818), 340–341.

<sup>5</sup> Stuart D. Sacks, "Fear," *Baker Encyclopedia of the Bible* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1988), 782.

<sup>6</sup> Stuart D. Sacks, "Fear," *Baker Encyclopedia of the Bible* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1988), 782.

<sup>7</sup> Stuart D. Sacks, "Fear," *Baker Encyclopedia of the Bible* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1988), 782.

<sup>8</sup> Adrian Rogers, "How to Keep Your Spiritual Health," in *Adrian Rogers Sermon Archive* (Signal Hill, CA: Rogers Family Trust, 2017), Jos 24:14–22.

<sup>9</sup> Adrian Rogers, "How to Keep Your Spiritual Health," in *Adrian Rogers Sermon Archive* (Signal Hill, CA: Rogers Family Trust, 2017), Jos 24:14–22.

<sup>10</sup> Adrian Rogers, "How to Keep Your Spiritual Health," in *Adrian Rogers Sermon Archive* (Signal Hill, CA: Rogers Family Trust, 2017), Jos 24:14–22.

<sup>11</sup> <https://www.ligonier.org/blog/what-does-it-mean-fear-god/>

<sup>12</sup> <https://www.desiringgod.org/interviews/what-does-it-mean-for-the-christian-to-fear-god>

<sup>13</sup> Timothy Dwight, *Theology: Explained and Defended in a Series of Sermons*, vol. 3 (Middletown, CT: Clark & Lyman, 1818), 341.

<sup>14</sup> Henry Airay, *Lectures upon the Whole Epistle of St. Paul to the Philippians* (Edinburgh:London:Dublin: James Nichol;J. Nisbet & Co.;G. Herbert, 1864), 146.

<sup>15</sup> Robert James Dr. Utley, *The Gospel according to Peter: Mark and I & II Peter*, vol. Volume 2, Study Guide Commentary Series (Marshall, Texas: Bible Lessons International, 2000), 58.

<sup>16</sup> John MacArthur Jr., ed., *The MacArthur Study Bible*, electronic ed. (Nashville, TN: Word Pub., 1997), 1467.

<sup>17</sup> John MacArthur, *Mark 1–8*, MacArthur New Testament Commentary (Chicago, IL: Moody Publishers, 2015), 227.

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- <sup>898</sup> John MacArthur, *Mark 1–8*, MacArthur New Testament Commentary (Chicago, IL: Moody Publishers, 2015), 228.
- <sup>899</sup> John MacArthur, *Mark 1–8*, MacArthur New Testament Commentary (Chicago, IL: Moody Publishers, 2015), 229.
- <sup>900</sup> Daniel L. Akin, David Platt, and Tony Merida, *Exalting Jesus in Mark* (Nashville, TN: Holman Reference, 2014).
- <sup>901</sup> John MacArthur, *Mark 1–8*, MacArthur New Testament Commentary (Chicago, IL: Moody Publishers, 2015), 228.
- <sup>902</sup> Crossway Bibles, *The ESV Study Bible* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles, 2008), 1901.
- <sup>903</sup> John MacArthur, *Mark 1–8*, MacArthur New Testament Commentary (Chicago, IL: Moody Publishers, 2015), 229–230.
- <sup>904</sup> R. Kent Hughes, *Mark: Jesus, Servant and Savior*, vol. 1, Preaching the Word (Westchester, IL: Crossway Books, 1989), 113.
- <sup>905</sup> Gordon Franz, “What Type of Storms Did Jesus Calm: Wind or Rain?” in *Lexham Geographic Commentary on the Gospels*, ed. Barry J. Beitzel and Kristopher A. Lyle, Lexham Geographic Commentary (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2016), Mt 8:23–Jn 6:21.
- <sup>906</sup> Gordon Franz, “What Type of Storms Did Jesus Calm: Wind or Rain?” in *Lexham Geographic Commentary on the Gospels*, ed. Barry J. Beitzel and Kristopher A. Lyle, Lexham Geographic Commentary (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2016), Mt 8:23–Jn 6:21.
- <sup>907</sup> Crossway Bibles, *The ESV Study Bible* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles, 2008), 1901.
- <sup>908</sup> John G. Butler, *Jesus Christ: His Disciples*, vol. 5, Studies of the Savior (Clinton, IA: LBC Publications, 2003), 206.
- <sup>909</sup> John MacArthur, *Mark 1–8*, MacArthur New Testament Commentary (Chicago, IL: Moody Publishers, 2015), 231.
- <sup>910</sup> Walter W. Wessel, “Mark,” in *The Expositor’s Bible Commentary: Matthew, Mark, Luke*, ed. Frank E. Gaebel, vol. 8 (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1984), 655.
- <sup>911</sup> Daniel L. Akin, David Platt, and Tony Merida, *Exalting Jesus in Mark* (Nashville, TN: Holman Reference, 2014).
- <sup>912</sup> John MacArthur Jr., ed., *The MacArthur Study Bible*, electronic ed. (Nashville, TN: Word Pub., 1997), 1467.
- <sup>913</sup> John MacArthur, *Mark 1–8*, MacArthur New Testament Commentary (Chicago, IL: Moody Publishers, 2015), 233.
- <sup>914</sup> John MacArthur, *Mark 1–8*, MacArthur New Testament Commentary (Chicago, IL: Moody Publishers, 2015), 233.
- <sup>915</sup> Crossway Bibles, *The ESV Study Bible* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles, 2008), 1901.
- <sup>916</sup> John MacArthur, *Mark 1–8*, MacArthur New Testament Commentary (Chicago, IL: Moody Publishers, 2015), 233.
- <sup>917</sup> John MacArthur, *Mark 1–8*, MacArthur New Testament Commentary (Chicago, IL: Moody Publishers, 2015), 233.
- <sup>918</sup> Johannes P. Louw and Eugene Albert Nida, *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament: Based on Semantic Domains* (New York: United Bible Societies, 1996), 317.
- <sup>919</sup> David Platt, “God’s Story in a Fear-Based Culture,” in *David Platt Sermon Archive* (Birmingham, AL: David Platt, 2007), 768.
- <sup>920</sup> Daniel L. Akin, David Platt, and Tony Merida, *Exalting Jesus in Mark* (Nashville, TN: Holman Reference, 2014).
- <sup>921</sup> John MacArthur Jr., ed., *The MacArthur Study Bible*, electronic ed. (Nashville, TN: Word Pub., 1997), 1467.
- <sup>922</sup> John MacArthur, *Mark 1–8*, MacArthur New Testament Commentary (Chicago, IL: Moody Publishers, 2015), 234.
- <sup>923</sup> R. Alan Culpepper, *Mark*, ed. Leslie Andres and R. Alan Culpepper, Smyth & Helwys Bible Commentary (Macon, GA: Smyth & Helwys Publishing, Incorporated, 2007), 156.
- <sup>924</sup> Adrian Rogers, “How to Maintain the Life of Victory,” in *Adrian Rogers Sermon Archive* (Signal Hill, CA: Rogers Family Trust, 2017), Jos 24:11–23.
- <sup>925</sup> John G. Butler, *Jesus Christ: His Disciples*, vol. 5, Studies of the Savior (Clinton, IA: LBC Publications, 2003), 215–216.
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