

# **“WORDS OF POWER”**

**Pastor Mike Corwin**

**4<sup>TH</sup> SUNDAY OF LENT**

**TEXT: MARK 4:35-41**

**GOD’S WORD: GENESIS 1:1-27**

## **I – DAD’S WORDS:**

I grew up in a house where dad’s word was the law. If he spoke you obeyed, no questions asked. His words were powerful and carried consequences if you didn’t follow them. This didn’t mean he was mean or abusive, just meant when he spoke we listened. Let me give you an example of what I’m talking about.

One Christmas Eve my father had some homemade mincemeat he wanted to deliver to some friends north of Crestline and asked me to run him out to their house. I was only 16 and jumped at any chance to drive, so I said yes. We were on our way out of town on SR. 61 when these friends passed us coming into town. They pulled off the side of the road and waited while I went down and turned around and came back. They had stopped on the curve just as you leave town and I started to pull in behind them to make the delivery but dad had other ideas, he told me to just pull up beside them so he could hand the jar out the window to them. I did as I was told and the exchange was made just as an Ohio State Highway Patrol car came around the curve. I started to leave and he motioned me to pull over, which I did. He turned around, came up behind me, and gave me a ticket for parking on the roadway as my father sarcastically wished him a Merry Christmas!

A few weeks later I appeared with dad in juvenile court before the honorable judge Bierkecher. The charges were read and the judge asked if I had anything to say and before I could speak my dad stood up and explained that it was his fault I had gotten the ticket, that I had started to do what the law required and he had ordered me to pull up beside them instead. The judge launched into a lecture how he had taught his children that when he said something they didn’t agree with they should tell him their feelings and argue their point. Without even thinking my dad stood up and informed the judge that he had raised his children to do what he told them without question or pay the consequences. The judge never said another word but slammed his gavel, found me guilty, suspended my license for 30 days and

fined me \$200.00. As we left the courtroom my dad was crying because of what he had done and I was laughing!

## **II – GOD’S WORDS:**

Maybe this is one of the reasons I have such high respect for the Words of God. If my earthly father’s words had such power, how much more must my Heavenly Father’s Words. If my dad can put a judge in his place with words, think of what God can put in place.

That’s what I see in the creation story from the book of Genesis that you heard read this morning. We all know that God created the world and everything in it. It said that when he began there was nothing but chaos and he went to work and made it all. What we sometimes miss is how it says he did it. It says he spoke and it happened. He “Said” let there be light and the world lit up. He “said” there should be space between the water and the sky and there was. He said dry land should appear and it did. He “said” there should be grass and plants and trees and there were. God “said” there should be stars, sun, and moon, and there was. God “said” there should be fish in the sea and animals on the land and there were. Then God said there should be people made in his image and there were.

God didn’t go off into the laboratory and mix together some kind of a primordial chemical mixture to create the universe. He did not outsource it to another galaxy, nor did he hire a bunch of astral consultants. God merely spoke and it happened. By his Word things happened. Remember the way John put it in the beginning of his Gospel? In the beginning was the Word. God spoke and it happened! By the power of God’s Word we are here!

## **III – TEXT – MARK 4:35-41:**

This power in the Word of God was not a fluke, not a one-time deal, as shown by this morning’s text.

### **Mark 4:35-41 (NLT)**

<sup>35</sup>As evening came, Jesus said to his disciples, “Let’s cross to the other side of the lake.” <sup>36</sup>So they took Jesus in the boat and started out, leaving the crowds behind (although other boats followed). <sup>37</sup>But soon a fierce storm came up. High waves were breaking into the boat, and it began to fill with water. <sup>38</sup>Jesus was sleeping at the back of the boat with his head on a cushion. The disciples woke him up, shouting, “Teacher, don’t you care that we’re going to drown?” <sup>39</sup>When Jesus woke up, he rebuked the wind and said to the water, “Silence! Be still!” Suddenly the wind stopped, and there was a great calm. <sup>40</sup>Then he asked them, “Why are you

afraid? Do you still have no faith?" <sup>41</sup>The disciples were absolutely terrified. "Who is this man?" they asked each other. "Even the wind and waves obey him!"

It had been a long and grueling day. Jesus had been swarmed by the people and got into the boat where he preached and taught from. By the time he was done he was exhausted and didn't bother going back to shore but told the disciples to set off across the Sea of Galilee where he hoped to find some peace and quiet on the far shore. While they were rowing he found a cushion in the back of the boat, laid down, and went to sleep.

The Sea of Galilee can be a fickle body of water. It is in a basin surrounded by mountains and when the winds blow from the right direction it can blow up a fierce and violent storm and that's what happens this night. Jesus is sound asleep but the disciples are caught in the storm. They're rowing and rowing without much success and the waves have crested high enough they're filling the boat with water. The disciples can't bail fast enough to save the boat and in fear of drowning they wake Jesus up, accusing him of not caring about the fact they're all going to die.

Now if I'm Jesus I may well have taken offense to the fact I'm the Messiah and they think it in their power to rebuke me! I might think that maybe a little more terror in their lives may drive the point home so just let them go back to getting soaked. But Jesus does something that amazes them. He doesn't pray for their soon to be departed souls, he doesn't give them last rights, he doesn't ask them if they want to make peace with God before they visit the bottom of the sea, he doesn't even grab an oar and help them try to save the boat. He calmly stands up and speaks. All he does is talk! He talks to the water and he talks to the wind and tells them to be quiet...to be still. The original translations quote him as saying, "Peace, Be Still." And they listened! The wind stopped and the waves returned to a calm surface and then he took the disciples to task for rebuking him. It says that they were in awe that the wind and the waves listened and obeyed.

#### **IV – STILL HAS POWER:**

But I don't quite understand why they were amazed. They were his disciples; they knew he was Immanuel, God with us. They knew he had the power of God as he had demonstrated in miracle after miracle, yet they were in awe. They shouldn't have been, the Words of power used by Jesus to command nature on this night were used before to create and command nature at the beginning. Jesus was the Word who was with God in the beginning, Jesus was the Word through which God created everything, and the Words of Jesus wielded the same power on this night in the chaos of a storm that they had to bring peace to the initial chaos of the earth. God still had the power to calm the storm by the mere use of his Word!

Not only did God's Word have power then, but it still does today. What storm do you face that God couldn't possibly calm by the power of his Word?

- Do you have an inferiority complex? Do people pick on you; is a storm raging in your life because you think you're insignificant? Jesus calms such storms by the Words that not even a sparrow falls to earth without God knowing and you are ever so more important than a bird, so much so that the very hairs on your head are numbered. (Mt. 10:29)
- Are you facing a problem with addiction? Can't stop drinking or using the needle or taking that pill. It's just not humanly possible to win this battle. Then settle your waves of despair as you remember Jesus' Word telling us that "humanly speaking it is impossible, but with God all things are possible." (Mt. 19:26)
- Are you up to your necks in debt, going through a divorce, can't get along with the boss, have the IRS breathing down your back, family issues are eating you alive? Then remember his words to "come to me all of you who are weary and carry heavy burdens and I will give you rest." (Mt. 11:28)
- Or maybe you've reached the end of human existence. Maybe you're faced with cancer or kidney failure. Maybe you suffer from diabetes or stroke, congestive heart failure or age related disease and there's nothing else you can do but face it, then you can find power in his Words of "My peace I leave you, my peace I give you. Not like the world's peace, but mine, so don't be troubled and don't be afraid." (John 14:27)

## **V – WORDS OF POWER:**

I can find comfort in all of these words to calm my storms because of the Words of Power Jesus uttered from the cross. It's in those words I find all the power I need to live now and forever.

As he hung on the cross, as his life ebbed away from him. As his blood flowed out of his spike pierced wrists and feet, he took all our sins upon himself. He was so covered with our sins that his own Heavenly father couldn't look upon him and he yelled out, "Father, Father, why have you forsaken me?" And then uttered the words, "it is finished" and died.

It's in these words that I find all the power of God's love. He wasn't merely speaking about his life, he was speaking about ours. When he said it is finished he was stating that a way had been made for us to heaven. He was proclaiming that God's plan of Salvation was complete. He was proclaiming to the enemy that God had won, sins would be forgiven, and in three days he would hold power over life and death! And with that power nothing could ever come against the children of God ever again that would result in death. When you find those words...when you see the meaning of those words...when you realize the power of those words...and when you claim that power in your own life through the Lordship of Jesus Christ...then absolutely nothing can ever rock your boat again!

AMEN