

**OUR
INSTANT-
ANEOUS
GOD**

OUR INSTANTANEOUS GOD

April 24, 2016

Sermon in a sentence: God has the power to radically alter the course of our lives and circumstances instantaneously!

Congregational reading: Mark 4:35-41

Scriptures: Mark 4:35-41; Mark 10:27 all things are possible; Luke 1:37 nothing shall be impossible; Luke, Ch. 4-8; John, Ch. 4-6

Mark 4:35-41 NKJV On the same day, when evening had come, He said to them, **“Let us cross over to the other side.”** ³⁶ Now when they had left the multitude, they took Him along in the boat as He was. And other little boats were also with Him. ³⁷ And a great windstorm arose, and the waves beat into the boat, so that it was already filling. ³⁸ But He was in the stern, asleep on a pillow. And they awoke Him and said to Him, “Teacher, do You not care that we are perishing?” ³⁹ Then He arose and rebuked the wind, and said to the sea, **“Peace, be still!”** And the wind ceased and there was a great calm. ⁴⁰ But He said to them, **“Why are you so fearful? How is it that you have no faith?”** ⁴¹ And they feared exceedingly, and said to one another, “Who can this be, that even the wind and the sea obey Him!”

Most of us have experienced things in life that have brought us to a place of utter fear and dread. For many, it has involved the discovery of an incurable disease in your own body or that of a loved one.

Or it could be the loss of a job at the time when you have just invested everything you have into a new home. Where will the mortgage payments come from when you have no job and no savings?

Some have ended up at the wrong place, at the wrong time, with the wrong crowd and are now in prison for crimes they did not commit.

For others, there are immigration issues. For others there are relational issues with a spouse. Others are trapped in psychological and/or financial bondage to an abuser.

Some have been caught in the dangerous middle ground between rival gangs or even lived in war zones, in danger from all sides.

The questions loom large. Where do I turn? Who do I turn to? What do I do now?

The disciples of Jesus were experiencing one of those moments as they sailed the Sea of Galilee. They were in the middle of the sea, in the middle of a storm, in a boat that wouldn't float, totally hopeless. In the middle of their panic, they yelled out to Jesus: "Don't you care that we are perishing?"

This was not a cry for help or even a rebuke to an uncaring individual refusing to help someone in need. It was a question of incredulity, seeing a person sleeping in the face of impending death. It was certainly not a cry of faith, as Jesus noted in His response to them.

Really, all the disciples wanted to know was: 'How can you be so cool and calm when we are all about to die? You are not even concerned enough to help us bail water!'

One would think that a storm as violent as Mark describes it would wake any sleeper. Unless, of course, the sleeper was so relaxed, comfortable, confident and full of faith in

God that they wouldn't even feel the need to stay awake in the middle of a storm!

Give illustration of the refugee unable to sleep on his first night in Canada, petrified to be alone in a house with no bars on the windows and doors.

The point we quickly need to understand is that “When Christ is in the vessel, we can smile at the storm.” He has the power to calm any storm in an instant. He is our instantaneous God!

The Bible is filled with events, circumstances and situations that highlight this truth. As the disciples traveled with Jesus, they witnessed His instantaneous power time and time again.

Here is a sequence of interventions by Jesus in the lives of those around Him, as reported by Luke:

- He instantaneously cast a demon out of a man (4:33-36)
- He put fish in the disciples' nets (5:4-10).
 - o *He can also instantaneously supply all of your needs according to His riches in glory (Phil. 4:19)*
- He healed a leper (5:12-13)
- He healed a quadriplegic man (5:18-26)
- He healed a man's withered hand (6:6-10)
- He remotely healed a centurion's slave (7:2-10).
 - o *You may be like the centurion – part of a privileged, yet hated group in society, or you may be like the slave – part of the lowest class in society. No matter who you are, Jesus can instantaneously change your life!*

- He raised a widow's only son back to life (7:11-16)
- Right after calming the storm we read about in our main text, He came to Gaderra and delivered a man from a Legion of devils (8:26-33)
- He healed a hemorrhaging woman as she touched His garment in faith (8:43-48)
- He raised Jairus' dead daughter back to life (8:41-42, 49-56)

Here is another sequence of events, this time from John's gospel:

- He transformed the life of a notoriously sinful Samaritan woman (4:7-30), and through her many in her city became believers (4:39-42).
 - o *He can also instantaneously transform you to become a child of God, no matter who you are and what you have done!*
- He healed a nobleman's son remotely (4:46-53)
- He healed a man at the pool of Bethesda who had been there 38 years (5:2-9)!
- He fed a massive crowd of people – the men alone numbered 5000 – with five barley loaves and two fishes (6:1-14)
- He walked on water to meet His disciples and instantaneously transported their boat to the other shore (6:16-21)

Illustration: A number of years ago, my brother found himself out of work due to corporate cutbacks. Many months passed and absolutely nothing good was happening on the job front. Then one day, 'out of the blue' (as some would say), a reporter from the Toronto Star called to ask about his situation and the editors ran his story as the front-page feature in the Saturday Star. The next week, he had a fantastic job!

How then should we respond to this truth? How should we live in the light of the knowledge that we serve an instantaneous God?

First of all, there should be a surge of faith in our souls. A might surge of hope and trust in God. He knows where we are and what we are going through. He has a purpose and a plan regarding how we should view our lives, our circumstances, our sicknesses, our failures and our future, in light of His omnipotence. He can turn your situation completely around, whatever it may be, in an instant.

No matter what God decides to do in our lives, no matter what attacks He allows the enemy to mount against us, we know that we are safe in His arms. Therefore, let us live in faith.

**“God is fighting for us pushing back the darkness
Lighting up the kingdom that cannot be shaken
In the name of Jesus, enemy’s defeated
And we will shout it out, shout it out!” (Darlene Zschech)**

We worship and praise our God because we understand He is sovereign. We worship and praise our God because there is absolutely no restriction to His power. We live with hope and joy in our hearts because our lives are in His hands. We do not need to worry about a thing!

We pray without ceasing (1 Thes. 5:17). We continue to approach the throne of grace in faith (Heb. 4:16). We understand that our lives are hidden with Christ in God (Col. 3:3). God can turn our lives around in an instant! Therefore we will keep praying, praising and living with joy!

Songs:

**My Faith Looks Up To Thee
My God Can Do Anything
Bigger Than All My Problems
In Jesus' Name**