Today is the last day in our series

ARE YOU AFRAID OF THE RIGHT THINGS

And I gotta say, I’ve had fun with this series. It’s been neat to see your feedback and have follow up questions But most of all, it’s been great to address some things that are a little out of the ordinary in a way that reflects God’s holiness.

Today we’re going to finish up this series but first I want to give you a little preview of where we’re going next.

(Sermon Graphic)

During the month of November we’re going to talk about grace.

Have you ever wondered why John Newton wrote the song Amazing Grace?

Why didn’t he write Amazing God? Amazing Gospel?

John Newton wrote Amazing Grace – how sweet the sound, that saved a wretch like me.

A good question for you to be considering as you prepare for next Sunday is – what is grace?

Together we’re going to examine what exactly is so amazing about grace.

* You may be brand new to church and have no idea what grace is.
* Maybe you’ve been coming to church for 20 years and have no idea what grace is.
* And maybe you’ve studied grace your whole life and you could teach on it.
* It doesn’t matter where you’re coming from. How much or how little you know

Our goal for November is to teach all of us about God’s amazing grace and help us to understand how that grace affects us personally and us corporately.

I’m excited about this, I know you just heard about it but I hope you’re excited too, and this is going to be a great series for people who don’t normally come to church, so why don’t you invite them. **In your bulletin you’re going to see a sheet with three invitations on it.**

Your job is to invite three people next week to our service. So take that with you, think about who they are, and then write their name on one of the sections and hand them an invitation.

I want to stop and pray for that endeavor and then we’ll get started today.

PRAY

Last week in our series ARE YOU AFRAID OF THE RIGHT THINGS

And I want to start this way. GOD IS BIGGER THAN THE BOOGIE MAN (2 min)

All month we’ve been looking at the things that scare us but more than that—we’ve seen that God is BIGGER THAN THE BOOGIE MAN. God is mightier than the things that scare us.

Luke started by saying fearing God destroys our fear of hell.

Then we came back the next week and looked at Jesus’ power over demons—how Jesus’ power over demons is complete.

And last week we talked about satan’s motivations and Jesus’ power to overcome temptation.

And all three sermons have been driving at one point

**When you fear God, you have nothing else to fear.**

Go ahead and say that with me. I’ll say the first half and you say the second half, ready?

When you fear God . . .

Good.

That’s what our sermons have been driving at all month and it’s exciting to see it come to fruition this morning.

This morning we’re going to briefly look at 4 stories that prove this point.

Go ahead and open up your Bibles to Mark 4 and we’ll read together starting in vs. 35. If you’re using a pew Bible that will be page \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ or we’ve got it up on the screen here for you.

**35**That day when evening came, he said to his disciples, “Let us go over to the other side.” **36**Leaving the crowd behind, they took him along, just as he was, in the boat. There were also other boats with him. **37**A furious squall came up, and the waves broke over the boat, so that it was nearly swamped. **38**Jesus was in the stern, sleeping on a cushion. The disciples woke him and said to him, “Teacher, don’t you care if we drown?”

**39**He got up, rebuked the wind and said to the waves, “Quiet! Be still!” Then the wind died down and it was completely calm.

**40**He said to his disciples, “Why are you so afraid? Do you still have no faith?”**41**They were terrified and asked each other, “Who is this? Even the wind and the waves obey him!”

What’s going on here? Jesus is asleep in the boat. As they travel across the lake, a great storm suddenly arises and begins to ravage the boat.

And how do the disciples feel? Yeah they’re scared? Now keep in mind, these are experienced Galilean fishermen. They were familiar with storms, but this one was violent enough to shake their confidence.

Sometimes you’re going to face storms that shake your confidence. You’re going to experience things that make you question your ability to go on.

Maybe you’re trying to care for aging family members and the waves of paperwork are crashing over you.

Maybe you’re overcommitted and the relentless winds of responsibility are beating you down.

Maybe your heart is hurting for a strained relationship and sadness and doubt seem more powerful than the boat you’re sailing in.

You’re going to face storms that shake your confidence.

And too often people use these times as opportunities to be mad at God. Don’t do that.

Instead of opportunities for anger—these storms are opportunities to lean into God.

Charles Spurgeon said it this way—

**I have learned to kiss the wave that throws me into the Rock of Ages.**

And you know, the apostles *sort of* did this. They went to Jesus and said

“Teacher, don’t you care if we drown?”

And what does Jesus do? He gets up and speaking to the wind and the waves He says, “Hush, be still.”

And not only was the storm over—there was an overwhelming calm on the water.

But then Jesus turns around and says

“Why are you so afraid? Do you still have no faith?”

Translation: You haven’t learned that when you fear God, you have nothing else to fear.

And then the disciples were **terrified and asked each other, “Who is this? Even the wind and the waves obey him!”**

The disciples were terrified. Not because Jesus was acting like a mad man. Not because Jesus was waving a gun around. Because this demonstration of power made the disciples realize how small they were.

There is an old poem called the Breton Prayer that reads like this

*Your sea, O God, so great,*

*My boat so small.*

*It cannot be that any happy fate*

*Will me, befall.*

*Except that your goodness opens paths for me*

*Through the consuming vastness of the sea.*

*Your winds, O God, so strong,*

*So slight my sail.*

*How could I curb and bit them on the long*

*And saltry trail,*

*Unless Your love were mightier than the wrath*

*Of all the tempests that beset my path?*

*Your world, O God, so fierce,*

*And I so frail.*

*Yet, though its arrows threaten oft to pierce*

*My fragile mail,*

*Cities of refuge rise where dangers cease,*

*Sweet silences abound, and all is peace.*

What is that poem saying?

Fearing God is accomplished by realizing that we’re small but God is bigger than whatever boogieman we have in our lives.

After the storm, the men continued traveling across the lake to the region of the Gerasenes. **2**When Jesus got out of the boat, a man with an impure spirit came from the tombs to meet him.

You’re familiar with this story. We studied it a few weeks ago.

A man possessed with several thousand demons came and approached Jesus. But this isn’t the setting for some spiritual royal rumble.

The demons aren’t coming to Jesus saying, “Let’s fight for the heavyweight championship of the spiritual world.”

Instead the demons come to Jesus and say

What do you want with me, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? In God’s name don’t torture me!”

Those aren’t the words of a worthy adversary; those are the words of a desperate defeated enemy.

From there the demons beg Jesus not to send them out of the area but instead into a herd of pigs that were nearby. Jesus does this and look at the response of the people from the nearby cities

**15**When they came to Jesus, they saw the man who had been possessed by the legion of demons, sitting there, dressed and in his right mind; and they were . . . afraid.

This is the same word used to describe the fear the disciples felt after Jesus stilled the storms – but in this case, it doesn’t invoke a favorable reaction.

And this is important because this happens all the time today.

We hear stories about God’s mighty power. We see evidence of His work in our lives. We see His creation and we share it with people and they back away.

And we wonder – how in the world could they back away from God?

**Because, they’re threatened by His power.**

What’s going to happen in my life if God starts working on me? How much of my junk is He going to have to blow up? How many of my skeletons are gonna see the light of day?

Let’s put it this way. Surgery is a helpful thing right? Whatever it is that’s wrong, surgery is going to improve it.

We know this. But how many of you are excited about the prospect of going under the knife?

In fact, sometimes people put off surgery that they really need, that they know they need because it’s going to be painful.

Why do people back away from God? Because they’re threatened by His power. They don’t want this to happen.

For the word of God is living and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart.

Because of this, the people began to plead with Jesus to leave their region.

Sometimes people are going to be hesitant about God because His power is a threat to their normal life.

Don’t give up on them. Don’t write them off. Keep after them.

That’s how this story ends. Not with Jesus writing these people off, but with the demon-possessed man, now in his right mind coming to Jesus saying, “Jesus, please let me come with you.”

Jesus did not let him, but said, “Go home to your own people and tell them how much the Lord has done for you, and how he has had mercy on you.”

Tell the people what I’ve done for you but also tell them how I had mercy on you.

One of the most powerful things we can do in our faith is tell people “This is what God has forgiven me of.”

**1**When Jesus and the disciples left, a large crowd gathered around him while he was by the lake. **22**Then one of the synagogue leaders, named Jairus, came, and when he saw Jesus, he fell at his feet. **23**He pleaded earnestly with him, “My little daughter is dying. Please come and put your hands on her so that she will be healed and live.” **24**So Jesus went with him.

A large crowd followed and pressed around him. **25**And a woman was there who had been subject to bleeding for twelve years. **26**She had suffered a great deal under the care of many doctors and had spent all she had, yet instead of getting better she grew worse. **27**When she heard about Jesus, she came up behind him in the crowd and touched his cloak, **28**because she thought, “If I just touch his clothes, I will be healed.” **29**Immediately her bleeding stopped and she felt in her body that she was freed from her suffering.

**30**At once Jesus realized that power had gone out from him. He turned around in the crowd and asked, “Who touched my clothes?”

**31**“You see the people crowding against you,” his disciples answered, “and yet you can ask, ‘Who touched me?’ ”

**32**But Jesus kept looking around to see who had done it. **33**Then the woman, knowing what had happened to her, came and fell at his feet and, trembling with fear, told him the whole truth. He said to her, “Daughter, your faith has healed you. Go in peace and be freed from your suffering.”

**35**While Jesus was still speaking, some people came from the house of Jairus, the synagogue leader. “Your daughter is dead,” they said. “Why bother the teacher anymore?”

**36**Overhearing what they said, Jesus told him, “Don’t be afraid; just believe.”

**37**He did not let anyone follow him except Peter, James and John the brother of James. **38**When they came to the home of the synagogue leader, Jesus saw a commotion, with people crying and wailing loudly. **39**He went in and said to them, “Why all this commotion and wailing? The child is not dead but asleep.” **40**But they laughed at him.

After he put them all out, he took the child’s father and mother and the disciples who were with him, and went in where the child was. **41**He took her by the hand and said to her, *“Talitha koum!”* (which means “Little girl, I say to you, get up!”). **42**Immediately the girl stood up and began to walk around (she was twelve years old). At this they were completely astonished. **43**He gave strict orders not to let anyone know about this, and told them to give her something to eat.

Two stories here.

The first is the story of the synagogue leader. His daughter is dying so he comes to Jesus for help.

While they’re on the way to help the girl, a woman who has been sick for twelve years comes and touches Jesus’ garment.

First of all – the story of the synagogue leader.

His name is Jairus and his daughter is dying so he comes to Jesus for help.

And I love this. He says, please come and put your hands on her so that she will be healed and live.

As they’re on the way, messengers from Jairus’ house come and say, don’t bother Jesus anymore, your daughter has died.

And Jesus’ response is fantastic.

He says, “Don’t be afraid, just believe.”

(highlight it or better yet MEMORIZE IT!)

Don’t be afraid of your circumstances – just believe.

Because when you fear God – you know you have nothing else to fear.

And what does Jesus do? He goes and raises the girl from the dead.

One of the most common questions ministers get is “does this happen today?”

You know how I answer that question?

You bet it does. Every time we have a baptism.

Every time we have a baptism Jesus raises someone from the dead and gives them new life. Listen to these words. They’re not going to be on the screen. Just listen. Even better, close your eyes and picture what’s being said.

don’t you know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? **4**We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was **raised** from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life.

Do people get raised from the dead today? All the time.

As we close I want to tell you one more story

A woman was there who had been subject to bleeding for twelve years. **26**She had suffered a great deal under the care of many doctors and had spent all she had, yet instead of getting better she grew worse. **27**When she heard about Jesus, she came up behind him in the crowd and touched his cloak, **28**because she thought, “If I just touch his clothes, I will be healed.” **29**Immediately her bleeding stopped and she felt in her body that she was freed from her suffering.

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**32**But Jesus kept looking around to see who had done it. **33**Then the woman, knowing what had happened to her, came and fell at his feet and, trembling with fear, told him the whole truth. He said to her, “Daughter, your faith has healed you. Go in peace and be freed from your suffering.”

This woman was at her wits end. She had tried everything she could think, spent all her money on doctors and still her suffering increased.

So she goes to Jesus thinking – if I could just touch His garment, I would be healed.

So she reaches out among the crowd and grabs at a corner of his cloak.

And she was healed.

I love this story.

This woman was fearful of coming to Jesus but that fear was outweighed by her faith.

See she knew something that we would all do well to remember

When you fear God – you have nothing else to fear.

So maybe you’re scared.

You’re scared because you’re facing storms. You’re scared because you’re not sure you can give up control. You’re scared because you feel like you need to give your life to Christ but coming up in front of people is the last thing you’d ever want to do

But please know

When you fear God – you have nothing left to fear.

We’re going to stand together and sing a song of invitation.

If your heart is beating like crazy and your mind is trying to talk you out of standing up and coming forward, I’m talking to you. Don’t ignore that. Come forward today and make Jesus your Lord and your God.

Let’s stand together.