

November 24, 2002 by Steve Brandon



The Authority of Jesus Christ - Over Nature

Matthew 8:23-27

Question #1: Do you follow Jesus? (verses 23-24)

Question #2: Do you cry out to Jesus? (verse 25)

Question #3: Do you trust Jesus? (verse 26)

Question #4: Do you marvel at Jesus? (verse 27)

The song we just sang together this morning was no accident. I specifically chose for us to sing these words in preparation for my message this morning. We sang the words Graham Kendrick wrote, ...

Meekness and Majesty, manhood and Deity,
in perfect harmony, the Man who is God.
Lord of eternity, dwells in humanity;
Kneels in humility and washes our feet.

O what a mystery, meekness and majesty;
Bow down and worship, for this is your God.

These words express the teaching of Matthew in our text this morning. We will see Jesus meek and yet majestic. We will see Jesus, the Man, displaying that He is God. We will see Jesus, in His humanity, demonstrating that He is the Lord of eternity. We will see Jesus, in His humility, helping His disciples, who were fearful of the storm that was about to over take them and kill them. We will see Jesus, who was sleeping in the storm, arise and still the sea. We will feel the mystery of these things. We will ask ourselves questions like the following: How can these things be? How can Jesus be meek and majestic? How can Jesus be Man and God? How can Jesus be humanity and Lord of eternity?

The disciples responded in wonder and awe at Jesus when they began to see these things in His life. Just as the disciples responded in wonder and awe at Jesus, my aim this morning is that you will bow down and worship at the feet of Jesus, for He is your God. I have been praying to this end.

To remind you once again, Matthew is showing us the authority of Jesus Christ. In this case, we will behold "The Authority of Jesus Christ over Nature" (which is the title of my message this morning).

Matthew 8:23-27

(23) And when He got into the boat, His disciples followed Him. (24) And behold, there arose a great storm in the sea, so that the boat was covered with the waves; but He Himself was asleep. (25) And they came to [Him,] and awoke Him, saying, "Save us, Lord; we are perishing!" (26) And He said to them, "Why are you timid, you men of little faith?" Then He arose, and rebuked the winds and the sea; and it became perfectly calm. (27) And the men marveled, saying, "What kind of a man is this, that even the winds and the sea obey Him?"

For my outline this morning, I want to ask you four questions. Each of these questions get to the heart of why Matthew has bunched these stories of Jesus' authority all together here. These aren't simply stories that have been placed here to give us information about the authority of Jesus. Matthew doesn't write these things so that we can simply say to each other, "Oh, isn't that nice? Jesus was such a mighty man!" Rather, Matthew places these stories together for us to deal with Jesus in our lives. I ask you, "How will these stories make a change in you? How will you respond to Jesus' authority?"

In verse 29, we see how the demons interact with Jesus' authority. Verse 29, "What do we have to do with You, Son of God? Have You come here to torment us before the time?" See, these demons clearly understood Jesus' authority. They thought that Jesus had come to torment them. They viewed themselves as prisoners, awaiting the torture. Now, Jesus was coming to torture them. They knew that Jesus was powerful over them. Rather than submitting to Him, they request that they be treated on their own terms. In verse 31, they request, "If You are going to cast us out, send us into the herd of swine." These demons understood the authority of Jesus, and yet were unchanged by it. So, this morning, my questions will all deal with how the authority of Jesus has changed (or will change) your life.

Question #1: Do you follow Jesus? (verses 23-24)

If Jesus has this type of authority, He is worthy of being followed. Indeed, the very first thing we see in these verses is that Jesus' disciples followed Him. "And when He got into the boat, His disciples followed Him" (verse 23). This verse picks up the story from verse 18, when "Jesus saw a crowd around Him," and "gave orders to depart to the other side." Between the order to depart and the actual departing, Matthew inserts the story of these two disciples, who make some efforts to come after Jesus. This week, we see Jesus' disciples actually

following Him. They followed Jesus into the boat. Where the Lord went, His disciples were sure to follow.

Now, when you think boat, don't think "yacht" or "speed-boat." Rather, think of "row-boat." Don't think "canoe," for their boats were a bit bigger than this. When Yvonne and I were in Israel, we saw a fishing boat that dated back to near the time of Jesus. It had been embedded in the they seabed clay for 2,000 years, but two years of drought had caused the water levels to lower and the boat to be exposed. This boat, was about 25 feet long and 7 feet wide. Tboat to be exposed. This boat, was about 25 feet long and 7 feet wide. Sometimes these boats might have had a sail on them to help them travel, but not always. This was probably the size of the boat that Jesus got into, which was a fishing vessel, big enough for two to four fishermen and a bunch of fish. If the fish were absent, this boat could probably hold about 12-15 people in it, which is probably about how many were in the boat heading south.

We find out from Mark's account of this event, that it was evening when they departed for the other side (Mark 4:35). So, they set out for the country of the Gadarenes in the dark. Today, we take red-eye flights when we leave late like this. Jesus was taking the "red-eye" boat trip to the other side of the sea. Jesus was going to sit back and relax and enjoy the trip across the sea. Rather than flying the friendly skies, he was planning on riding the friendly waves.

Notice that His disciples "followed Him." Now, I'm not sure that His disciples understood everything that they were getting into, but surely Jesus did. Surely these disciples had heard things like the challenge that Jesus had placed before these two disciples that had wanted to follow Jesus. "You want to follow me? The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay His head" (8:20). "You want to bury your dead father first? Follow Me; and allow the dead to bury their own dead" (8:22).

These disciples who came with Jesus were willing. They had indeed left everything to follow Christ. This is Peter's testimony, "Behold, we have left everything and followed you" (Matt. 19:27). There was another time in the ministry of Jesus, when many of His disciples who had followed Him for a time withdrew from Jesus, He turned and asked Peter if he also wanted to leave. Peter said, "Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life. And we have believed and have come to know that You are the Holy One of God" (John 6:66-69).

These disciples were followers of Jesus and were willing to go where He wanted to go. When Jesus told them to depart, they departed. They were about to encounter one of the greatest storms that they had ever encountered, all because of their willingness to follow Jesus. This is the case, church family. Far from a life of ease and comfort, to be a follower of Jesus Christ will bring you hardship and difficulty. Jesus will demand difficult things of you. We have talked much about it in the past, so don't be surprised when difficult things come upon you. Later, he wrote, "Do not be surprised at the fiery ordeal among you, which comes upon you for your testing, as though some strange thing were happening to you; but to the degree that you share the sufferings of Christ, keep on rejoicing; so that also at the revelation of His glory, you may rejoice with exultation" (1 Pet. 4:12-13). Earlier in the same epistle, He told his readers, "You have been distressed by various trials, that the proof of your faith, ... may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ" (1 Pet. 1:7). Followers of Jesus will be put on the hot seat, that they might be bold in proclaiming righteousness, as Paul did before Felix (Acts 24:25) Followers of Jesus will be made weak, that they might trust the grace of God, as Paul was inflicted with his thorn in the flesh (2 Cor. 12:9) Followers of Jesus will face trials, to strengthen their faith (James 1:2-4).

These disciples were about to tested in their faith. Verse 24 reads, "And behold, there arose a great storm in the sea, so that the boat was covered with the waves; but He Himself was asleep." It wasn't strange for them to encounter such a terrible storm upon the sea. Though the Sea of Galilee is no bigger than what we would call a lake (10 miles long and 5 miles wide), it is known for its violent storms, due to the geographical make-up of the sea. On both the east and the west, there are hills, which ascend over 2,500 feet above the level of the sea. In the north, Mount Herman is even higher than this, though it is far off. In the south, the geography of the land continues to slope downward several hundred more feet to the dead sea. This means that the temperature of the air in these hills is significantly cooler than the air in the lake's basin. Storms happen when cold-fronts encounter warm fronts, which is a regular occurrence upon the Sea of Galilee. The weather patterns are fairly regular. In the morning, the sea is very calm. By the afternoon, the warm air of the lake and the cold air of the surrounding hills begin to mix and the sea becomes turbulent. However, with any shift in the wind patterns storms can come up suddenly and be life-threatening, especially for those in such small boats. About 10 years ago (March 1992), there were waves 10 feet high that crashed into downtown Tiberias, which caused significant damage to the downtown area of that city, which is right on the western shore of the sea.

This particular storm that caught these disciples was a great storm. We are given two clues as to how great this storm was.

1. "The boat was covered with waves" (verse 24). These waves were coming into the boat. Mark tells us that the boat was "filling up" (Mark 4:37). Luke wrote that "they began to be swamped and to be in danger" (Luke 8:23).
2. These disciples thought that they were going to die. In verse 25, they cry out to Jesus, "We are perishing!" There was panic in their eyes and they were afraid. We know that this storm was exceedingly great, because at least four of those along with Jesus were experienced fisherman, namely Peter, Andrew, James and John (Matt. 4:18-21).

This is part of the cost of following Jesus. For these disciples, it meant a trip in the cold waters of a storm. Later it would mean being delivered up to the courts (Matt. 10:17). Later it would mean being accused of wrong-doing (Matt. 12:2; 15:2). Later it would mean affliction and persecution (Matt. 13:21). Later it would mean losing their leader to crucifixion. For all of the twelve disciples (except John) were martyred for their faith in Jesus Christ.

For you? I don't know what it means. Perhaps it means persecution from your family. Perhaps it means difficulties at work. Perhaps it means personal tragedy of some type (theft, disaster, sickness in you or in your family). Perhaps it means a trip to Communist Vietnam to deliver Bibles. Perhaps it means a bold stand for the unborn. Perhaps it means caring for the homeless at the Rockford Rescue Mission on the west side of town, where it isn't so safe. I don't know what it means for you, but it will mean something.

For me? I don't know what it means either, but I have an idea why. I expect difficulties to come upon me for a specific purpose. I received a book two weeks ago in the mail from a dear friend who said, "I don't know if you have this book, but you might want to have it for your shelves and read it when you have time." In the past, he has sent me several other books. I love this friend. You can be a friend like this as well. Anyway, this book is called, "Brothers, We are NOT Professionals." It is written by John Piper. The book is written to pastors, calling them to radical ministry. I literally couldn't put the book down last week and this week, perhaps because it addressed my situation so perfectly, as it addressed the job description of pastors. Anyway, John Piper entitled chapter 19, "Brothers, our affliction is for their comfort."

Piper writes, "God has made plain to us one of the purposes for which pastors must suffer. Paul tells us in 2 Corinthians 1:6: 'If we are afflicted, it is for your comfort and salvation.' A sermon on this text would have as its main point: 'The afflictions of a Christian minister are designed by God to achieve the comfort and salvation of his flock'" (p. 139). He continues, "How does a pastor's suffering achieve the consolation and salvation of his flock? ... No pastoral suffering is senseless. No pastoral pain is pointless. No adversity is absurd or meaningless. Every heartache has its divine target in the consolation of the saints, even when we feel least useful. ... All pastoral afflictions are graciously designed to make us rely on God and not ourselves. And therefore our afflictions prepare us to do the one thing most needful for our people -- to point them away from ourselves to the All-sufficient God. In this alone is consolation and salvation" (pp. 140-141).

Are you following Jesus? It means difficulty.

Following Jesus means that we are to be like Jesus. Peter tells us that Jesus left "an example for you to follow in His steps" (1 Pet. 2:21). Look at what Jesus was like. He was sleeping in the boat. We read earlier that "the Son of Man has nowhere to lay His head" (Matt. 8:20). Here we see Jesus "laying His head" ... in a damp, cold boat that was tossed here and there by the waves. I don't think that this was particularly the most comfortable location to take a power-nap. But, the point is that He was at perfect peace with his surrounding situation. And His disciples were not. To walk in the example of the steps of Jesus might not mean that the disciples needed to be sleeping, for they were the ones responsible to row to the other side of the sea. However, it did mean that they should have had the same peace that He did.

Are you following Jesus? It means peace in times of distress. (We will expand more upon this in our third question this morning).

Question #2: Do you cry out to Jesus? (verse 25)

We see the disciples responding in the only natural way when fear comes upon you. Verse 25, "they came to Him and awoke Him, saying, 'Save us, Lord; we are perishing!'" They cried out to Him. These disciples were desperate. Think about how desperate they were. You had at least four experienced fishermen, who had certainly battled rough waters before. These men turn to Jesus, the former carpenter from Nazareth for help, which was an inland town. Jesus didn't have much experience on the lake.

Last week, I spoke to you all of how Jesus saw the crowds and had decided to leave. I compared it crowds coming to Rock Valley Bible Church and seeing me leave town. Suppose that I said to Elroy (who is a pilot), "Elroy get your airplane, please take me to Milwaukee." During the flight, we encounter a such a tremendous storm that it causes Elroy to panic. He is so terrified that he says, "Help! Steve! We are perishing! Here, Steve, you take the controls!" Now, **that** would be a total act of desperation on Elroy's part. This was the desperation of the disciples.

I don't think that they knew what Jesus could do. So far as they knew, Jesus was a wonder-working miracle-man that could heal people of diseases. Perhaps He could do something here. Their response in awe (in verse 27) demonstrated that they didn't expect Him to calm the storm! But, they were desperate enough to awaken Jesus and cry to Him for help. Storms have a way of doing this. I have read that there is nothing more fearful than being on a sinking ship during a storm. There is none who can come and save you. You are away from all help. You are totally at the mercy of the storm.

John Newton, the slave trader was awakened to God's peculiar mercy toward him in a storm he experienced in January 1748. In Newton's autobiography, *Out of the Depths*, he describes how one night he was "awakened from a sound sleep by the force of a violent sea, which broke on us. Much of it came down below and filled the cabin where I lay with water" (p. 69). Newton tells of the battle that lasted for days against the storm. He said, "taking in all circumstances, it was astonishing, and almost miraculous, that any of us survived" (p. 70). It was in the midst of this storm that John Newton prayed, "Lord have mercy on us" (p. 71), which quite surprised him. Later, he wrote, "I thought I saw the hand of God displayed in our favor and I began to pray. I could not utter the prayer of faith; I could not draw near to a reconciled God and call Him Father. My prayer was like the cry of ravens, which yet the Lord does not disdain to hear. I now began to think of that Jesus whom I had so often derided. I recollected the particulars of His life and of His death -- a death for sins not His own, but for those who in their distress should but their trust in Him" (p. 74). God used the storm in the midst of the sea to awaken John Newton to his desperate need of a Savior.

Newton goes on to tell how his awakening was so feeble at first. He tried to grasp the implications of the gospel for his own soul. He said, "In the gospel I saw at least a peradventure of hope, but on every side I was surrounded with black, unfathomable despair" (pp. 76-77). John Newton's faith was weak, but this storm he encountered lead him to grasp for any hope in God that he could grasp. In this way, I believe that John Newton was much like the disciples, who were much affected by this storm, yet had little faith (as we see in verse 26).

They knew that they were at the end of themselves and that all they could do was cry out to Jesus for help! They said, "Save us Lord; we are perishing" (verse 25). The disciples cried out to Jesus, because they were absolutely desperate. At this point, you might find fault with the disciples, because they didn't have faith and they weren't at peace with the entire situation. Your observation is entirely correct. However, what is the right thing to do when you lack faith? It is to cry out to God. This is exactly what the disciples did. They cried out to Jesus because they were absolutely desperate!

This perspective of utter desperation is a fundamental attitude of the Christian. I come back to our question, "Do you cry out to Jesus?" Or are you waiting until danger comes to cry out to Him? The experience of the Christian is that he constantly cries out to God. We live in daily dependence upon His grace and mercy. The picture of Christianity is not that we pray a prayer once in history past and God has saved us, so we never have the need to cry out to Him again. Rather, we are in constant need of His help. Do you realize that Jesus is our great High

Priest, who always lives to make intercession for us (Heb. 7:25)? We need to be constantly crying for help at His throne to receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

The Bible talks about our salvation in Christ in many different ways.

1. We are saved. "I make known to you ... the gospel .. by which ... you are saved" (1 Cor. 15:1-2).
2. We have been saved. "For by grace you have been saved through faith" (Eph. 2:8).
3. We will be saved. "Having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from the wrath of God through Him" (Rom. 5:9).
4. We are being saved. "The word of the cross is to those who are perishing foolishness, but to us who are being saved, it is the power of God" (1 Cor. 1:18).

The Christian will constantly be pouring out His dependence upon the Lord in every circumstance. When a temptation comes your way, you should cry out to the Lord, "Help me now." When you are celebrating Thanksgiving with an unthankful and sinful family, you should cry out to the Lord, "Give me patience to endure their sinful behavior. Give me compassion to love them anyway." When your children are being rebellious, you should cry out to the Lord, "Help me have wisdom in dealing with my children." When something comes about that makes you angry, you should cry out to the Lord, "Give me patience, O God." When a witnessing opportunity comes, you should cry out to the Lord, "Grant me boldness."

The hymn writer well wrote, ...

Day by day and with each passing moment,
strength I find to meet my trials here;
Trusting in my Father's wise bestowment,
I've no cause for worry or for fear.
Every day the Lord Himself is near me
With a special mercy for each hour.

John Newton would write over thirty years after his danger at sea, ...

Through many dangers, toils and snares, I have already come;
'Tis grace hath brought me safe thus far, and grace will lead me home.

The grace of our Lord comes when we cry out to Him in utter desperation. Yet, in our crying to Him, we need to be believing....

Question #3: Do you trust Jesus? (verse 26)

Verse 26 records that Jesus said to them, "Why are you timid, you men of little faith." In their crying out to Jesus, there was little faith in the heart of these disciples. At least, that is how Jesus saw it, for He called them, "men of little faith." Jesus had set the example of calm in the midst of storm, and they failed to follow His example.

I am reminded of another ship story. This time it has to do with John Wesley and the Moravians. John Wesley was bound for Savannah Georgia to minister among the Americans. He happened to be on board ship with a group of devout Christians from Germany, called "the Moravians." Their calm during the storm made a great impression upon Him. Wesley wrote in his journal on Jan. 25, 1736 of a storm that the ship encountered, "Every ten minutes came a shock (from the high seas) against the stern or side of the ship, which one would think should dash the planks to pieces." During this storm, these Germans were having a church service. Wesley described it with these words: "In the midst of the psalm wherewith their service began, the sea broke over, split the main-sail in pieces, covered the ship, and poured in between the decks, as if the great deep had already swallowed us up. A terrible screaming began among the English [of whom John Wesley was a part]. The Germans calmly sung on. I asked one of them afterwards, 'Was you not afraid? [sic]' He answered, 'I thank God, no.' I asked, 'But were not your women and children afraid?' He replied, mildly, 'No; our women and children are not afraid to die.' Wesley noticed "the difference in the hour of trial, between him that feareth God, and him that feareth him not." Years later, God used the example of these Moravians in his conversion.

For these disciples, I am sure that years later, as they reflected upon the calmness and composure of Jesus in the midst of the storm. It certainly was an encouragement to their faith. Matthew wrote these words, some 30 years after these things happened. Looking back, He knew that they really had nothing to fear.

1. First of all, Jesus was with them. They were never in danger when Jesus was with them. "Do not fear, for I am with you" (Is. 41:10).
2. Second, they had nothing to fear, because Jesus was at peace with the situation. The time to fear was when Jesus said to them, "My soul is deeply grieved, to the point of death" (Matt. 26:38). But when Jesus was at peace, the disciples should have known that all was well.

This is Matthew's point. Jesus has the authority to protect you and to keep you and to help you. Jesus can heal the sick. Jesus can calm the storm. Jesus can control the demons. Jesus can forgive your sin!

Which leads me to ask our question again, "Do you trust Jesus?"

We ought to look at the calmness of Jesus in the storm and realize that He was absolutely in control, and there is no need to fear when in His presence. Are troubles and distresses and difficulties and illnesses coming upon you today? I would call you to trust that Jesus has the situation entirely under control. Think about Satan, the most powerful antagonist against Jesus. Satan had to ask permission before he could touch Job (Job 1, 2). Satan had to ask permission to torment Peter (Luke 22:31). Satan has to ask permission to bring difficulties in your life as well. Jesus conquered Satan (as we saw in chapter 4). Furthermore, **Jesus has the authority and the ability to whatever He wants to do**. In this case, He calms the storm and stops the waves. Verse 26 says, that "He arose, and rebuked the winds and the sea; and it became perfectly calm."

Notice that there is a double-miracle here. (1) Jesus rebuked the winds. And the winds stopped blowing. (2) Jesus rebuked the sea. And the waves stopped rolling. "It became perfectly calm." This is obviously a miracle. There is no doubting here. Perhaps if the winds stopped when Jesus rebuked them, you might find the skeptics who would say that Jesus had good timing. I know that I have experienced good timing before. I have golfed on occasion, when the wind has been whipping. I have waited another 15 seconds and the wind has calmed down to allow me a better shot. But Jesus didn't have good timing. Good timing can't calm the water. This is perhaps the greater miracle.

I remember travelling to Yosemite National Park in California. We came upon Mirror Lake. (Perhaps it is better named, "Mirror Pond," for that's how big it is). It is so named, because the water is so still that it acts like a giant mirror. It is sort of down in a little valley with beautiful mountains in the back ground. You can look at the mountains or you can look at their reflection. Well, ambitious me, whenever I see a body of water that flat and smooth, I'm looking for flat rocks. So I found one and slung it side-arm with a lot of spin on it and it skipped across the lake some 10-15 times. And then I realized what I had done! I broke the mirror! There were people around me who weren't too excited, because they had come to see a lake that was a mirror, not a lake that had ripples in it. As I remember, it took some time for the little disturbance that I had created with that little rock to dissipate, so that the mirror became a mirror again. Yet, Jesus said, "Hush, be still" (Mark 4:39) and the sea became perfectly calm in an instant!

Do you believe that Jesus has this type of power and authority? Do you trust Jesus? What about when life gets difficult? Will you be at peace with the situation like Jesus was? Will you have the opportunity to be like the Moravians and model your faith before others?

I told you a few weeks ago of a woman who died at the age of 39 of breast cancer. She left a husband four children (between the ages of 14 and 8). I didn't know this, but I found out that in September, when she knew for certain that she was going to die, she emailed a reporter at the Rockford Register Star and asked her to come and be with her to see "what it is like, trying to live while your body is dying." Beginning today, there will be a four-part series in the Rockford Register Star of how she spent her last days. From everything that I have heard about this woman, I trust that she was a Moravian to the reporters and photographers who came into her home during the two months before she died. When people see peace and contentment in the midst of a storm, their own faith will be challenged greatly.

How about another sea story? Perhaps you are familiar with Horatio Spafford. In 1873, he sent his wife and four daughters on a ship to England in order to assist Dwight L. Moody in one of his evangelistic campaigns. Due to business, he had to remain in Chicago. Their boat struck another boat and sank in 12 minutes. His four daughters died, though the life of his wife was saved. Two years before this, He had invested heavily in real estate on the shore of Lake Michigan. In the great Chicago First of 1871, he experienced great financial loss as a result. Shortly before this happened, his son had died. While traveling on a ship to meet his wife, over the same spot where his four daughters had died, Spafford wrote, ...

When peace, like a river attendeth my way,
When sorrows like sea billows roll
Whatever my lot, Thou hast taught me to say,
"It is well, it is well with my soul."

Horatio Spafford could only write this because of his faith in Jesus in every circumstance.

Let's look at our last question, ...

Question #4: Do you marvel at Jesus? (verse 27)

In verse 27 Matthew records, "And the men marveled saying, 'What kind of a man is this, that even the winds and the sea obey Him?'" The disciples were stunned! What Jesus did wasn't hocus-pocus. It wasn't magic. It wasn't slight of hand. It wasn't trickery. It was a miracle.

The disciples knew (and we know) that God is the only one who is able to do something like this. David declares that God is the One who stills the sea. n Ps. 65). "By awesome deeds You have answered us in righteousness, O God of our salvation, ... Who stills the roaring of the seas, the roaring of their waves" (Ps. 65:5, 7). In Psalm 107, the Psalmist declares that God ... "spoke and raised up a stormy wind, which lifted up the waves of the sea. ... He caused the storm to be still, so that the waves of the sea were hushed" (Ps. 107:25, 29).

So, when the disciples asked, "What kind of a man is this, that even the winds and the sea obey Him?" they were on the right track. A mere man can't do this. It has to be the Sovereign hand of almighty God who has done this thing! Jesus is beginning to show Himself as the God-man. In this miracle, Jesus was beginning to pull back His skin to allow the disciples to begin to see exactly who Jesus was.

When Clark Kent would begin to take off his shirt, you could see that underneath his office clothes were Superman's costume. This is what Jesus is doing. He is beginning to reveal Himself to His disciples as to His true identity. He is God almighty, Who came in the flesh! With the next several events that Matthew records for us, we will see this further. It's not just the natural that obeys Jesus, it is the supernatural that obey Him as well (i.e. the demons). It's not just sickness upon the earth that He can heal, but it is also the sin that He can heal as well.

Do you marvel at Jesus? Matthew is writing these words that we might realize that Jesus is God in the flesh! And as God, He has all authority in heaven and upon earth. He can heal diseases. He can control the natural elements. He can command the supernatural demons. He can

forgive sins. With a word, God (i.e. Jesus - Col. 1:15-20) created the world. Jesus breathed life into Adam. Jesus commanded and the floods come upon the whole earth. With Egypt before the Exodus, Jesus commanded the plagues to come. Jesus turned the water in the Nile to blood. Jesus brought frogs, gnats, and swarms of insects. Jesus sent pestilence upon the livestock. Jesus caused boils to grow. Jesus caused the hail to come down. Jesus brought the locusts and the darkness and decreed that all of the first born in Egypt would die! Jesus made donkeys speak. Jesus raised up pagan kings to accomplish His will.

Meekness and Majesty, manhood and Deity,
in perfect harmony, the Man who is God.
Lord of eternity, dwells in humanity;
Kneels in humility and washes our feet.

O what a mystery, meekness and majesty;
Bow down and worship, for this is your God.

At Rock Valley Bible Church, we worship Jesus Christ, for He is our God! He has all authority. May we bow before Him and worship Jesus Christ!

This sermon was delivered to Rock Valley Bible Church on November 24, 2002 by Steve Brandon.
For more information see www.rvbc.cc.