

**SUNDAY 11 February 2024 - St Paul's Cooma 10am, Numeralla 1130**

### **Introduction**

#### **Hymn 234 - How Good Lord to be Here**

**How good Lord to be here  
Your glory fills the night  
Your face and garments like the sun  
Shine with unborrowed light**

**How good Lord to be here  
Your beauty to behold  
Where Moses and Elijah stand  
Your messengers of old**

**Fulfiller of the past  
Promise of things to be  
We hail Your body glorified  
And our redemption see**

**Before we taste of death  
We see Your kingdom come  
We still would hold the vision bright  
And make this hill our home**

**How good Lord to be here  
Yet we may not remain  
But since You bid us leave the mount  
Come with us to the plain**

### **Greeting**

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with you all. **And also with you.**

### **Sentence of the day**

They were terrified and asked each other, "Who is this? Even the wind and the waves obey him!" Mark 4:41

### **Prayer of Preparation**

**Almighty God, to whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hidden: cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you, and worthily magnify your holy name, through Christ our Lord. Amen.**

Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is one; you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength.'

Jesus said: 'This is the great and first commandment. And a second is like it: you shall love your neighbour as yourself.'

### **Prayer of the Day**

Almighty God,

In signs and wonders you Son revealed the greatness of your saving love: renew your people with your grace, and sustain us by your power, for we can do nothing good without you;; through Jesus Christ our Lord; who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

## The Ministry of the Word

### Leviticus 15:25-27

<sup>25</sup> “When a woman has a discharge of blood for many days at a time other than her monthly period or has a discharge that continues beyond her period, she will be unclean as long as she has the discharge, just as in the days of her period. <sup>26</sup> Any bed she lies on while her discharge continues will be unclean, as is her bed during her monthly period, and anything she sits on will be unclean, as during her period. <sup>27</sup> Anyone who touches them will be unclean; they must wash their clothes and bathe with water, and they will be unclean till evening.

This is the word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God**

### Psalm 30

1 I will exalt you, LORD, for you lifted me out of the depths and did not let my enemies gloat over me.

**2 LORD my God, I called to you for help, and you healed me.**

3 You, LORD, brought me up from the realm of the dead; you spared me from going down to the pit.

**4 Sing the praises of the LORD, you his faithful people; praise his holy name.**

5 For his anger lasts only a moment, but his favor lasts a lifetime; weeping may stay for the night, but rejoicing comes in the morning.

**6 When I felt secure, I said, “I will never be shaken.”**

7 LORD, when you favored me, you made my royal mountain stand firm; but when you hid your face, I was dismayed.

**8 To you, LORD, I called; to the Lord I cried for mercy:**

9 “What is gained if I am silenced, if I go down to the pit? Will the dust praise you? Will it proclaim your faithfulness?

**10 Hear, LORD, and be merciful to me; LORD, be my help.”**

11 You turned my wailing into dancing; you removed my sackcloth and clothed me with joy,

**12 that my heart may sing your praises and not be silent. LORD my God, I will praise you forever.**

### Acts 1:20-26

20 But Christ has indeed been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep. 21 For since death came through a man, the resurrection of the dead comes also through a man. 22 For as in Adam all die, so in Christ all will be made alive. 23 But each in turn: Christ, the firstfruits; then, when he comes, those who belong to him. 24 Then the end will come, when he hands over the kingdom to God the Father after he has destroyed all dominion, authority and power. 25 For he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet. 26 The last enemy to be destroyed is death. 27 For he “has put everything under his feet.” Now when it says that “everything” has been put under him, it is clear that this does not include God himself, who put everything under Christ. 28 When he has done this, then the Son himself will be made subject to him who put everything under him, so that God may be all in all.

This is the word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God**

### Mark 4:37-5:13,25-43

**Glory to you, Lord Jesus Christ**

<sup>37</sup> A furious squall came up, and the waves broke over the boat, so that it was nearly swamped. <sup>38</sup> 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?” <sup>39</sup> He got up, rebuked the wind and said to the waves, “Quiet! Be still!” Then the wind died down and it was completely calm. <sup>40</sup> He said to his disciples, “Why are you so afraid? Do you still have no faith?” <sup>41</sup> They were terrified and asked each other, “Who is this? Even the wind and the waves obey him!”

<sup>5.1</sup> They went across the lake to the region of the Gerasenes. <sup>2</sup> When Jesus got out of the boat, a man with an impure spirit came from the tombs to meet him. <sup>3</sup> This man lived in the tombs, and no one could bind him anymore, not even with a chain. <sup>4</sup> For he had often been chained hand and foot, but he tore the chains apart and broke the irons on his feet. No one was strong enough to subdue him. <sup>5</sup> Night and day among the tombs and in the hills he would cry out and cut himself with stones. <sup>6</sup> When he saw Jesus from a distance, he ran and fell on his knees in front of him. <sup>7</sup> He shouted at the top of his voice, "What do you want with me, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? In God's name don't torture me!" <sup>8</sup> For Jesus had said to him, "Come out of this man, you impure spirit!" <sup>9</sup> Then Jesus asked him, "What is your name?" "My name is Legion," he replied, "for we are many." <sup>10</sup> And he begged Jesus again and again not to send them out of the area. <sup>11</sup> A large herd of pigs was feeding on the nearby hillside. <sup>12</sup> The demons begged Jesus, "Send us among the pigs; allow us to go into them." <sup>13</sup> He gave them permission, and the impure spirits came out and went into the pigs. The herd, about two thousand in number, rushed down the steep bank into the lake and were drowned.

<sup>25</sup> And a woman was there who had been subject to bleeding for twelve years. <sup>26</sup> 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. <sup>27</sup> When she heard about Jesus, she came up behind him in the crowd and touched his cloak, <sup>28</sup> because she thought, "If I just touch his clothes, I will be healed." <sup>29</sup> Immediately her bleeding stopped and she felt in her body that she was freed from her suffering. <sup>30</sup> At once Jesus realized that power had gone out from him. He turned around in the crowd and asked, "Who touched my clothes?" <sup>31</sup> "You see the people crowding against you," his disciples answered, "and yet you can ask, 'Who touched me?'" <sup>32</sup> But Jesus kept looking around to see who had done it. <sup>33</sup> Then the woman, knowing what had happened to her, came and fell at his feet and, trembling with fear, told him the whole truth. <sup>34</sup> He said to her, "Daughter, your faith has healed you. Go in peace and be freed from your suffering."

<sup>35</sup> 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?" <sup>36</sup> Overhearing what they said, Jesus told him, "Don't be afraid; just believe." <sup>37</sup> He did not let anyone follow him except Peter, James and John the brother of James. <sup>38</sup> When they came to the home of the synagogue leader, Jesus saw a commotion, with people crying and wailing loudly. <sup>39</sup> He went in and said to them, "Why all this commotion and wailing? The child is not dead but asleep." <sup>40</sup> 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. <sup>41</sup> He took her by the hand and said to her, "Talitha koum!" (which means "Little girl, I say to you, get up!"). <sup>42</sup> Immediately the girl stood up and began to walk around (she was twelve years old). At this they were completely astonished. <sup>43</sup> He gave strict orders not to let anyone know about this, and told them to give her something to eat.

This is the gospel of the Lord: **Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ**

### **Sermon - Jesus and Authority - Mark 4:36-4:43**

#### **The Nicene Creed**

**We believe in one God, the Father, the almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen.**

**We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one Being with the Father; through him all things were made.**

**For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven, was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the virgin Mary and became truly human.**

For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate; he suffered death and was buried. On the third day he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures; he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father.

He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified, who has spoken through the prophets.

We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church. We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins. We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come.

Amen.

### Prayers

Let us pray for the world and the church.

Response: Gracious God, in your mercy. **Hear our prayer.**

### The Lord's Prayer

Accept our prayers through Jesus Christ our Lord, who taught us to pray,

**Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours now and for ever. Amen.**

### Prayer of Approach

We do not presume to come to your table, merciful Lord, trusting in our own righteousness, but in your manifold and great mercies, we are not worthy so much as to gather up the crumbs under your table. But you are the same Lord whose nature is always to have mercy. Grant us, therefore, gracious Lord, so to eat the flesh of your dear Son Jesus Christ, and to drink his blood, that we may evermore dwell in him, and he in us. Amen.

### The Confession

God is steadfast in love and infinite in mercy, welcoming sinners and inviting them to the Lord's table. Let us confess our sins in penitence and faith, confident in God's forgiveness.

**Merciful God, our maker and our judge, we have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, and in what we have failed to do: we have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbours as ourselves; we repent, and are sorry for all our sins. Father, forgive us. Strengthen us to love and obey you in newness of life; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

Almighty God, who has promised forgiveness to all who turn to him in faith: pardon you and set you free from all your sins, strengthen you in all goodness and keep you in eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

### Greeting of Peace

We are the body of Christ. **His Spirit is with us.**

The peace of the Lord be always with you. **And also with you.**

### Hymn 495 - Father we give you thanks

Father, we give you thanks, who planted

Your holy Name within our hearts.

Knowledge and faith and life immortal

Jesus your Son to us imparts.

Lord, you have made all for your pleasure,

and given us food for all our days,

giving in Christ the Bread eternal;

Yours is the pow'r, be yours the praise.

Over your church, Lord, watch in mercy,  
save it from evil, guard it still.  
Perfect it in your love, unite it,  
cleansed and conformed to your will.

As grain, once scattered on the hillsides,  
was in this broken bread made one,  
so may your world-wide church be gathered  
into your kingdom by your Son.

### Offering

Blessed are you, Lord, God of all creation. Through your goodness we have these gifts to share. Accept and use our offerings for your glory and for the service of your kingdom.

**Blessed be God forever.**

### The Thanksgiving

The Lord be with you. **And also with you.**

Lift up your hearts. **We lift them to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God. **It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

Loving God, we thank you for this world of wonder and delight. You have given it to us to care for, so that all your creatures may enjoy its bounty. Lord our God, **we give you thanks and praise.**

We thank you that when we turned away from you, you sent Jesus to live and work as one of us, and bring us back to you. He showed us how to love you and set us free to love and serve one another. Lord our God, **we give you thanks and praise.**

We thank you that on the cross Jesus took away our sin, all that keeps us from each other and from you. He frees us from hate and fear, from all that destroys love and trust. Lord our God, **we give you thanks and praise.**

And so with everyone who believes in you, with all the saints and angels, we rejoice and praise you, saying:

**Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might,  
Heaven and earth are full of your glory.  
Hosanna in the highest.**

And now we thank you for these gifts of bread and wine; may we who receive them, as Jesus said, share his body and his blood.

On the night he was betrayed, he took bread and gave you thanks. He broke the bread and gave it to his friends, and said, 'Take and eat. This is my body given for you. Do this in remembrance of me.'

After supper he took the cup and gave you thanks. He shared the cup with them and said, 'This is my blood poured out so that sins may be forgiven. Do this in remembrance of me.'

**Christ has died.**

**Christ is risen.**

**Christ will come again.**

You have gathered us together to feed on Christ and to remember all he has done for us. Fill us with your Spirit that we may follow Jesus in all we do and say, working for justice and bringing your peace to this world that you have made. Accept our prayers through Jesus Christ our Lord.

**Blessing and honour and glory and power are yours for ever and ever. Amen**

We who are many are one body, **for we all share in the one bread.**

## **The gifts of God for the people of God.**

Come let us take this holy sacrament of the body and blood of Christ in remembrance that he died for us, and feed on him in our hearts with thanksgiving.

The Lord's Supper is open to all who love the Lord.

### **After Communion**

Father of all we give you thanks and praise that when we were still far off you met us in your Son and brought us home. Dying and living, he declared your love, gave us grace, and opened the gate of glory. May we who share Christ's body live his risen life; we who drink his cup bring life to others; we whom the Spirit lights give light to the world. **Keep us in this hope that we have grasped: so we and all your people will be free, and the whole earth live to praise your name.**

### **Hymn 690 - God of the Poor**

**Beauty for brokenness, Hope for despair  
Lord in Your suff'ring world, This is our prayer  
Bread for the children, Justice joy peace  
Sunrise to sunset, Your kingdom increase**

**Shelter for fragile lives, Cures for their ills  
Work for the craftsmen, Trade for their skills  
Land for the dispossessed, Rights for the weak  
Voices to plead the cause of those who can't speak**

**God of the poor, Friend of the weak  
Give us compassion we pray  
Melt our cold hearts, Let tears fall like rain  
Come change our love, From a spark to a flame**

**Refuge from cruel wars, Havens from fear  
Cities for sanctu'ry, Freedoms to share  
Peace to the killing fields, Scorched earth to green  
Christ for the bitterness, His cross for the pain**

**Rest for the ravaged earth, Oceans and streams  
Plundered and poisoned, Our future our dreams  
Lord end our madness, Carelessness greed  
Make us content with The things that we need**

**Lighten our darkness, Breathe on this flame  
Until Your justice Burns brightly again  
Until the nations Learn of Your ways  
Seek Your salvation And bring You their praise**

**God of the poor, Friend of the weak  
Give us compassion we pray  
Melt our cold hearts Let tears fall like rain  
Come change our love, From a spark to a flame**

### **Notices**

### **Dismissal**

The peace of God which passes all understanding, keep your hearts and minds in the knowledge and love of God, and of his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord and the blessing of God almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be among you and remain with you always. **Amen.**

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord: **In the name of Christ. Amen.**

## Sermon - Mark 3:7-35 - Who is on Jesus's side?

Authority is a big issue in the public service, for whom I worked for 40 years or so. This is because the Australian constitution and our laws give public servants authority to do things that ordinary people cannot legally do. For example, the tax office has the authority to collect taxes, and law enforcement agencies, such as the police and Border Protection have authority to enforce law, including using force. Pretty much every public servant has some authority to spend taxpayers' money. These authorities aren't given lightly, and there are mechanisms to prevent other people doing these things, to punish them if they do, and even to punish public servants who act outside the authority the law gives them.

The word authority has already come up a few times in Mark's gospel.

Back in Chapter 1, The people were amazed at Jesus's teaching, because he taught them not as the teachers of the law, but as one who had authority. When he cast out demons, the people asked "What is this? A new teaching—and with authority! He even gives orders to impure spirits and they obey him." And in Chapter 2, despite what the scribes thought, he claimed that he had authority to forgive sins.

In the same way that the government has mechanisms to prevent people using authority they don't have, so God's created world prevents people from doing many things that they don't have the authority to do. Sometimes, you might try as much as you like to tell creation to do something, like King Canute telling the waves to go back, but it will just ignore you. Other times, there are substantial penalties for exceeding the authority you have - for example, the consequences for disobeying the law of gravity can be quite severe - just try jumping off a building sometime!

Anyway, back to Jesus's authority. The Bible claims that the world was created by him and through him, and so he has an authority over this world that lesser beings do not have. It's the same way ordinary citizens do not own the money that has been collected as taxes, so do not have the authority to spend it for their own purposes. Jesus, however, made and owns this world, so he does have authority to act in it according to his will. He has this authority even if his actions don't align with what we see as the natural laws of this world.

### Jesus Calms The Waves

This authority of Jesus is shown in the first miracle in our reading this morning. Jesus calms the wind and waves while he and his disciples are being thrown about in a boat. Jesus was having a well deserved nap on a cushion in the boat when he was woken by the disciples who feared for their lives. He got up, calmly rebuked the wind, which miraculously calmed, and he then rebuked the disciples for their lack of faith. This changed their fear of the waves into terror of who they were dealing with, and they asked each other, **"Who is this? Even the wind and the waves obey him!"**

The disciples obviously weren't used to dealing with anyone who had that sort of authority over the natural world, and they were terrified at what could be done with that power. However, Jesus created this world, including the atmosphere and the oceans. He put them in their places, and so is not surprising he has that sort of authority over them.



### **Jesus casts out demons**

In Jesus' second miracle today he demonstrates his authority over the malevolent forces in this world. Demons, including those who possessed the man belonged to the realm of Satan and are opposed to all the good that Jesus did. These were also obviously powerful, they broke the man's chains and leg irons, and no human was strong enough to subdue the man when he was possessed.

These demons also knew their enemy well, and the authority he had over them. They begged Jesus not to torture them. They even invoked God the Father's name to try to avoid the punishment they knew they deserved. Nevertheless, they suffered the most ignominious punishment Jesus's Jewish audience could contemplate. They were evicted from the man into a herd of unclean pigs, and they promptly drowned themselves in the lake.

The point here is that Jesus had authority over the legion of demons possessing the man. He didn't just have authority over the good things he had created, or even the neutral things like the wind and the waves, but he also had authority over the less savoury, the spiritual, the demonic elements of this world that are in opposition to him.

### **Jesus Heals the haemorrhaging woman**

The third example of Jesus' authority shows his authority over the diseases and afflictions that humans suffer. In this case, a woman had been suffering from persistent bleeding for 12 years. She'd spent all her money on doctors, but they had only made her suffering worse, and her bleeding got increasingly worse. The bleeding was not only embarrassing and socially stigmatising, as we heard in our Old Testament reading from Leviticus, it made her ceremonially unclean and prevented her, and any one who touched her, or who she touched, from participating in all the religious observances and fellowship with God's people.

This actually shows another element of Jesus's authority. You recall that the woman was healed by touching Jesus. According to Leviticus, he should have become unclean as well, as soon as she touched him. In fact, Jesus would have become unclean, except he has authority over what makes people clean and unclean.

So, Jesus did not become ceremonially unclean, and the woman was immediately healed, and made clean. Jesus does have authority over all elements of creation, including diseases and afflictions, as well as over spiritual cleanness and uncleanness.

### **Jesus Raises a dead girl**

In the final miracle in today's reading, Jesus gets back to the synagogue leader, Jairus's daughter, to whom he was called before being distracted by the haemorrhaging woman. While he was distracted, the girl had died, but Jesus went to her anyway. He commanded her to get up, and to everyone's surprise, she got up, and walked around, and astonished everyone.

This really is an escalation of Jesus' authority. Our reading started with authority over created order, the wind and the waves, and then demons and evil spirits. He then moved on to authority over the temporal consequences of sin: sickness and disease, and spiritual

separation from God and his people. This final miracle is the jackpot - authority over death itself. There was no doubt to the people in Jairus's house, the girl had died. There was even less doubt to all concerned that Jesus raised her back to life. In doing this, Jesus showed his authority over death. Of course, after she was raised, Jairus's daughter no doubt lived the normal lifespan of people in those days, , but she was to die again, as we all do.

However, Jesus's authority over death was even greater than this. He was shortly to demonstrate absolute authority over death. Within a short space of time he himself would be brutally killed and raised back to life from that death. The difference would be that for Jesus it would be permanent. He would never die again. He has absolute authority over his death, and when he was raised to eternal life, he promised that eternal life to all who put their trust in him.

### **Conclusion**

So, as we come to the end of this sermon, the Bible makes some pretty extravagant claims about Jesus's authority. As we read today it claims Jesus had authority over created order, the spiritual order, disease and even death. Many people believe this, or at least pay lip service to it. In fact, even the evil spirits possessing the man believed this, but this isn't enough.

The fact is, the evil spirits remained evil. They would never access the benefits of Jesus's authority over death, the eternal life he offers. This is because, while they believed Jesus's authority over created order and even death, they didn't accept his authority over their lives. This is the difference between these spirits and Christians. Christians accept Jesus's authority over their own lives, demons never will.

Another way of saying that Jesus has authority in your life is to say Jesus is Lord. I prefer to say Jesus had authority because saying Jesus is Lord sounds like he is lording it over you. But he doesn't. You accept his authority and the forgiveness he brings, or you don't. Like every decision, there are consequences, and an extremely severe one in this case. You accept the eternal life that comes with forgiveness, or you miss out. And then you try to live under his authority as much as you can on this side of heaven. You try to live the way he wants you to live, but you do this in response to the forgiveness he has given you. You don't do it in order to be forgiven.

This is the most important decision you can ever make. If you haven't made it then I'm sure that anyone who had accepted Jesus's authority in their life will help you with the decision and share with you how it has changed their life.

If you have accepted Jesus's authority in your life, then make sure you help others make the same decision. Like we read last week, don't hide your light under a barrel. Please share the good news of God's forgiveness and the eternal life this brings with those who haven't made the decision yet. Make sure you also share how light the burden of his yoke, his authority, really is, and the joy that it brings.

Will you do that for God? Amen