

Remarkable: Jesus and the Storms of Life

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Mark 6:45-52

Background: Mark records that Jesus had performed many miracles. He healed many (leprosy, paralytic). Others had unclean spirits cast. Jesus simply spoke to a violent storm while the disciples were in a boat on the Sea of Galilee. The disciples were amazed – “even the winds and the waves obey him.” He showed mastery over water by turning some of it into wine at a wedding feast in Cana after the host was in a great embarrassment when he had run out of wine for his guests.

In Chapter 6, Jesus sent the disciples out to preach. They had great success. The crowds grew. The disciples were worried since the people were hungry and without food available. He challenged the disciples: **“YOU GIVE THEM SOMETHING TO EAT.”** They found 5 loaves and 2 fish. The loaves and fish were multiplied and 5,000 (men) were fed. After feeding 5,000 men, Mark 8 says He fed another 4,000 men with only 7 loaves and a few fish. Then the Pharisees asked “for a sign.” The Pharisees didn’t “get it” because they didn’t want to. *“Jesus sighed deeply.”* I can “get” the Pharisees not get it, as they were the enemies of Jesus, but the disappointing thing to Jesus was when the disciples didn’t get it, either. They didn’t connect the dots at all. Jesus showed them His ability to transform a humanly impossible situation into a display His great power.

6:45 *Immediately Jesus **MADE** his disciples get into the boat and go on ahead of him to Bethsaida, while he dismissed the crowd. We don’t know why Jesus ordered them to do this, but the disciples could certainly have blamed all that is about to happen on Jesus’ order 😊.*

⁴⁶ *After leaving them, he went up on a mountainside to **PRAY**.* To fully participate in the activity of the Kingdom of God, we must respond. To be a disciple of Jesus means we must learn from Him (that's what a "disciple" is = a "learner.") It says here, He prayed. Maybe Jesus wanted to give thanks for the miracle. Prayer is as necessarily after triumph as it is in difficulty. He was in constant prayer (not just isolated or crisis moments). To follow Jesus means we should be doing what Jesus did. In your bulletin this morning note the invitation to "WATCH AND PRAY."

He read, knew and quoted **SCRIPTURE**. He participated in **CORPORATE WORSHIP**. He and His disciples sang **HYMNS**. He had friends in the faith who shared His mission. (Show me your friends and I'll show you your future.) He **SERVED**. These weren't optional for Jesus – He did them all. If He did them, it is an example for us.

⁴⁷ *When evening came, the sun has set on the Sea of Galilee. It's probably 6:00 p.m. the boat was in the middle of the lake, and he was alone on land.* ⁴⁸ *He saw the disciples **STRAINING** at the oars, because the wind was against them.* Storms can arise on the Sea of Galilee. Even today, fishermen won't go out on the Sea of Galilee at certain times because these squalls can occur. The winds whip the lake into foamy white caps. The Disciples thought they would drown in the Sea of Galilee earlier (4:35-41). This time, they don't appear to be in danger of drowning, but they were stuck and struggling.

*About the 4th **WATCH** of the night* If they got into the boat around 6:00 p.m. and the 4th watch is between 3-6 a.m., they've been rowing against the wind for over 9 hours.

*he went out to them, **walking on the lake**.* Why did Jesus walk on the water? The Jews were NOT a sea-faring group. Jonah represented = bad things happen in the sea. A river separates neighbors. An ocean divides countries or continents. Jesus walking on the water shows that He owns it.

*He was about to **PASS BY them**,* In the OT, the term *pass by* is used when God revealed himself to Moses and Elijah (Exodus 33:19; 1 Kings

19:11). Jesus wasn't trying to conceal himself from the disciples, but to reveal himself to them, as in the transfiguration (Mark 9:2-8).

⁴⁹ *but when they saw him walking on the lake, they thought he was a ghost. They cried out,* ⁵⁰ *because they all saw him and were **TERRIFIED**.* These seasoned fishermen who worked the Sea of Galilee probably weren't frightened by many things, but this did. They were exhausted from their rowing ordeal and were respectful of the Sea, but they were terrified when they saw Jesus walking on the water. When people encountered the supernatural (God or angels) in the Bible, they were nearly always terrified (Moses, Isaiah, Mary, the disciples here and at the empty tomb).

Immediately he spoke to them and said, (3 things in 8 words)

1.) **TAKE COURAGE!**

2.) **IT IS I.** We lose the meaning of this because of translation but it really means: "It is I AM." Remember when Moses asked God what His name was – God's response was: "I AM!" That's what's happening here. "It is I" = "I AM." Jesus is claiming to be "I AM" or God.

3.) **DON'T BE AFRAID.** Matthew 14 tells us of Peter's water-walking episode.

These are 8 words to memorize and repeat!

⁵¹ *Then he climbed into the boat with them, and the wind died down.*

*They were completely **AMAZED**,*

Astonishment again! Jesus had calmed an earlier storm, cast out unclean spirits, raised a dead girl who was 12 years old, and fed the multitude.

⁵² *for they had not **UNDERSTOOD** about the loaves; They are "thick headed."* They are blind to what God was doing. I get that...but this next line is very troubling. **THEIR HEARTS WERE HARDENED.** What a bad combination – "thick headed and hard hearted." We want neither part of this combo – spiritually dull or dead. Jesus truly loved His disciples and didn't give up on them. Yet, He was always challenging, teaching, correcting and training them. The Book of Acts show the disciples lose their "thick heads" and "hard hearts" and learn to Trust

God. They became great ambassadors for Jesus. Good seed found good soil and paid off well.

Application:

1.) **WE ALL FACE STORMS** in life. In chapter 4, the disciples were terrified they'd drown. This time, they didn't seem so fearful of death but were frustrated because of a lack of progress in the face of a very strong wind. Ironically, sometimes it's not the presence of turbulence, but the absence of wind that causes problems.

Think about some of the storms we are facing today (world/culture) Terrorism – the Syrian refugee crisis (so glad we're going to respond on April 23rd). Educational crisis in Oklahoma. Drug/Alcohol Addiction. There are also personal crisis people face: Death/grief. Physical & Emotional Health. Finances. Relational issues.

2.) **JESUS IS PRESENT** Don't lose sight of the big picture. We may not see Him, but He is there. Those 8 words (He only spoke 8 words) He said to the Disciples are applicable for us, too: **"TAKE COURAGE. IT IS I. DON'T BE AFRAID."**

3.) **"Help OTHERS follow Jesus."** As I talk about this today, I wonder how many of thought immediately: "I'm not having any major problems or crisis, but I know someone who is!" I hope a LOT of us were thinking like that. It may not be storm season in your life right now. But, there may be some folks who are not following Jesus that you can help. Or there may be some fellow Jesus followers who could use some encouragement. PRAY. That's what Jesus did. Be PRESENT. That's what Jesus did.