

As the long day came to an end, Jesus tells His disciples to get into a boat and cross over to the other side of the lake. While the story is literal, it is pregnant with symbolic insights. Check it out. Christ tells His disciples to go on a journey to a distant land which they cannot reach by foot. Similarly, when we come to Christ we are called to begin the Christian journey to a distant heavenly land that we cannot reach by foot. At the beginning of the journey Jesus is not with them, but He meets them when a storm arises. Similarly, because of sin we start out our lives separated from God but many finally meet Christ in the midst of life's storms. As the disciples travel, Jesus prays and intercedes for them from a distant mountain. Similarly, Christ is interceding for us in the midst of our storms.

As the boat enters the sea, the waves begin to crash and water starts filling the boat. The disciples work tirelessly to keep the boat above water, but it seems as if their efforts are futile. As the boat tries to make its way across the sea it is "tossed by the waves" (Matt. 14:24). In their efforts to keep the boat above the water, the disciples grow tired. Their strength is quickly failing them and they are losing hope. It appears that death is about to suck them under its mighty hand. Have you ever felt that way? Have you ever felt beaten, defeated, and tossed around by the storms of life so much that your strength has begun failing you? Do you ever feel too weak to go on? Has your hope been engulfed by the overpowering waves of life's trials so much that it feels like you are about to sink?

Perhaps the waves of sin and temptation are beating against you and you feel too weak to withstand their pull. Perhaps you are being tossed around by the devil from one addiction to the next. Perhaps you are a slave to some sin and you seem to have no way of controlling it? Whatever your case, don't lose hope. The Savior wants to lift you out of the chains of sin. He desires to release you from your burden of guilt. He longs to walk with you through the trials of life. He offers to come into your boat and steer you out of

your storm. Just hang in there. Don't lose hope now. Your Rescuer is on the way.

Now, as the ship wrestled in the midst of the sea and the winds violently beat the angry waves against the boat Christ looked down from the mountain and "saw them straining at rowing; for the wind was against them. And about the fourth watch of the night he came to them, walking on the sea" (Mark 6:48). Similarly, there are trials on our journey through life, but if we are trying to find Jesus we need not fear. Whatever you are going through, Jesus has His eye on you, watching you through the storms of your life. While darkness surrounds you, He is making His way towards you, preparing to meet you in the midst of your storm.

Now as the disciples look before them, they see a vision of a man coming towards them. Here the Savior made His way to them walking on the sea and we are told that He "would have passed them by" (Mark 6:48). Don't miss that verse. There are many today who are going through storms. The tempests of life are beating against them and the Savior is coming near them "so that they should seek the Lord, in the hope that they might grope for Him and find Him, though He is not far from each one of us" (Acts 17:27). Jesus puts Himself within our reach, close enough that we simply need to reach out our arms in the dark we will bump into Him. He is that close. Still, if we do not call out to Him the Savior will pass us by. Christ draws near and even puts Himself within our reach, preparing to rescue us, but He cannot force Himself on us. In order to get help from Jesus, we must cry out to Him from the midst of the storm.

As the disciples saw the image of a man walking on the sea, they did not recognize who it was, but "they supposed it had been a spirit, and cried out" (Mark 6:49). The dark pall of death seemed like it was about to overtake them and the image appeared to be an omen of their impending doom. Because they did not discern Jesus through the storm, they thought that it was some kind of spirit or Ghost. Similarly, many today do not discern that the Savior is their midst and they try

to fight the tempest alone. Perhaps the storms of life cloud their vision and as Jesus draws near to them they do not recognize Him.

In spite of their blindness, Jesus looked on them with sympathy and "spoke to them" words of comfort saying, "Be of good cheer! It is I; do not be afraid" (Matt. 14:27). Still a bit uncertain, Peter calls out, "Lord, if it is you, command me to come to You on the water" (Matt. 14:28). Peter had seen the word of Christ heal the sick and raise the dead and knowing that there is power in His word Peter calls out, "command me," trusting in the power of the word. Without the word of Christ, Peter knew that his efforts to walk on water would be impossible, but he also knew that if Jesus would only speak the word, power would accompany the command because there is power in the command of Christ to do the impossible.

Hearing the cry of His disciple, Jesus replies to Peter with one word. "Come" (Matt. 14:29). Just as Jesus called Peter, He is still calling men and women today to "Come." Come away from your life of sin. Come away from your bad habits. Come away from your endless pursuits of happiness which only bring moments of pleasure but end up leaving you restless. Just as Peter found power in the words of Christ, we may still find power in God's word today. Inherent in the commands and requirements laid out in the Bible is power. We may be drowning in guilt or depression, sinking in debt or despair, bound by the chains of some addiction, or suffering from any number of things but God's word to you today is, "Come." Jesus said, "Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest" (Matt. 11:28).

The water waits before you. The waves of your trials and temptations are crashing around you. The ocean of sin is deep and powerful and is trying to suck you back under to your destruction. Perhaps the darkness of debt, divorce, death, disease, or some disability may be drowning you and the way to Jesus seems impossible. All appears hopeless but Jesus is standing before you calling to you, "Come." Cling to that word and step out in faith right now. If you will simply step

onto the water with Peter, you too will find supernatural power to walk above the waves.

When Christ gave the command, Peter stepped out of the boat in simple faith and “walked on the water to go to Jesus” (Matt. 14:29). After a moment Peter took his eyes off of Jesus and in that moment he started “to sink” (Matt. 14:30). So often we do the same thing. We take our eyes off of the One who gave us power to walk above the waves and instead, we perhaps grow proud and start looking at ourselves and our accomplishments or we lose faith and start doubting the power of God, thinking that our sins are too big for even Jesus to save us. Whatever the case, the devil gets us to take our eyes off of Jesus and we begin to sink.

Have you fallen back into the waters of sin? Have you drifted away from the Lord and lost sight of Jesus. As the waves of life billow around you, do not lose hope. Look up again. Cry out with Peter, “Lord, save me” (Matt. 14:30)! As Peter cried out, “Jesus stretched out His hand and caught him” and walked with him safely back into the boat (Matt. 14:31). No matter how far you have sunk into the pit of sin, Jesus can catch you too. No matter how deep you have gone, Jesus “will redeem you with an outstretched arm” (Exo. 6:6). The arm of Jesus is longer than your deepest fall, so do not be afraid to call on Him.

Are there any storms stirring in your life, beating you down, draining your energy? Do you at times feel weak, helpless, or hopeless? If so, this lesson is for you. Jesus longs to give you peace. He longs to calm the storms in your life but you must cry out to Him. Why don’t you call on Jesus right now?

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