

Jesus in the Storm

Gospel of Mark Ch. 6 - Week 4

INTRODUCTION

After Jesus fed the 5,000, the people were going to try to make Him king, and that wasn't in His plan. He was ready to move on. So, He sent the disciples on ahead and got alone with God to pray. What happened next is probably one of the best-known miracles in Jesus' life; He walked on water. But let's look at what else was happening and why this is significant in understanding who Jesus is.

Ice Breaker

Have you ever experienced a storm from inside a boat? If so, describe your experience.

Key Passages

50 because they all saw him and were terrified. Immediately he spoke to them and said, "Take courage! It is I. Don't be afraid." 51 Then he climbed into the boat with them, and the wind died down. They were completely amazed, - Mark 6:50-51 NIV

STUDY QUESTIONS

1. Distant from Jesus

Before the crowd could get out of hand and the disciples got sucked into the controversy of making Jesus king, He took control and sent the disciples on ahead while He calmed the crowd. These were fishermen, acquainted with the conditions of the lake, but their skills were inadequate against the opposition they encountered.

45 Immediately Jesus made his disciples get into the boat and go on ahead of him to Bethsaida, while he dismissed the crowd. 46 After leaving them, he went up on a mountainside to pray. 47 Later that night, 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.... - Mark 6:45-48a NIV

What the disciples encountered was a an anemos (Greek) which means a *very strong tempestuous wind that opposed them. Although they were accomplished fishermen, they were unable to control the boat and struggled with the oars in a tortuous manner. Do you think Jesus knew what they would face when He sent them ahead? Can you think of a time you met unusual opposition in a situation that would not normally be a problem for you to handle? Were you relying on yourself or on Jesus for the solution?*

The disciples had just learned that they were able to feed 5,000 with seemingly inadequate supplies by trusting Jesus and stepping out in faith. Could this be a similar lesson to demonstrate that even the skills of experienced fishermen may be inadequate to handle the storms they would face, apart from Jesus? *Do you think Jesus would send us into challenging situations as a means of teaching us to trust Him? Have you had such an experience and if so, what did you learn from it?*

2. Jesus Comes to Us

At times when we are struggling, we might wonder if God sees us. He does. And when the time is right Jesus comes to us.

48 He saw the disciples straining at the oars, because the wind was against them. Shortly before dawn he went out to them, walking on the lake. He was about to pass by them, - Mark 6:48 NIV

The disciples were facing the forces of nature or possibly the forces of nature were being wielded by demonic forces against them. In either case, Jesus had already established His authority over both by casting out demons and calming the storm. So, when the disciples found that their own resources were inadequate for the task, Jesus came to them.

Jesus could have grabbed a boat and rowed out to them, but He chose to come to them walking on water. In his gospel, Mark does not state that Jesus is God, but he shows us Jesus doing what only God can do.

8 He [God] alone stretches out the heavens and treads on the waves of the sea. ... 10 He performs wonders that cannot be fathomed, miracles that cannot be counted. 11 When he passes me, I cannot see him; when he goes by, I cannot perceive him. - Job 9:8, 10-11 NIV

In this passage Jesus has done some things that reveal His divine nature.

Who does Job say is able to walk on the waves?

19 And the LORD said, "I will cause all my goodness to pass in front of you, and I will proclaim my name, the LORD, in your presence. I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion. 20 But," he said, "you cannot see my face, for no one may see me and live." - Exodus 33:19-20 NIV
50 because they all saw him and were terrified. Immediately he spoke to them and said, "Take courage! It is I. Don't be afraid."
- Mark 6:50 NIV

God told Moses He would proclaim His name. At the burning bush God answered the question about His name by saying "I AM". When Jesus joined the disciples in the boat, He said "eimi ego", which in Greek means "I AM." Jesus identifies Himself by God's name.

Why were those in the Old Testament limited to a glimpse of God as He passed by (Ex 33:20)? How did Jesus' presence in human form change what people were able to see and understand about God?

51 Then he climbed into the boat with them, and the wind died down. They were completely amazed, - Mark 6:51 NIV

28 Then they cried out to the LORD in their trouble, and he brought them out of their distress. 29 He stilled the storm to a whisper; the waves of the sea were hushed. 30 They were glad when it grew calm, and he guided them to their desired haven. - Psalm 107:28-30 NIV

Jesus' presence calmed the storm, just as it was described in Psalm 107.

Have you experienced a storm in your life that was calmed when you sensed the presence of Jesus enter into it?

The disciples failed to believe that Jesus was God at this point because they were not expecting God to look like this. Their inability to trust in Him resulted in hardened hearts.

What are the difficult circumstances in your life that may be hardening your heart? If you find your trust wavering, Jesus gives us 3 steps to remain focused on Him; Take Courage, realize the great I AM is here for you, and choose not to give in to fear.

3. Who is Jesus to You?

54 As soon as they got out of the boat, people recognized Jesus. 55 They ran throughout that whole region and carried the sick on mats to wherever they heard he was. - Mark 6:54-55 NIV

Jesus was recognized but the people didn't see the complete picture yet of who He was.

How do you think they viewed Him based on what who brought? If they had recognized Him as God, how would you expect them to approach Jesus?

Jesus was known for His physical blessings of healing and food. But the people hadn't recognized Jesus as God. If we aren't careful, we can fall into the same mindset.

When you come into God's presence in prayer, do you bring Him worship, adoration and thanksgiving or do you bring your list of requests? Are you only seeing Him as wonder worker or do you see Him as your Lord and Savior?

56 And wherever he went--into villages, towns or countryside--they placed the sick in the marketplaces. They begged him to let them touch even the edge of his cloak, and all who touched it were healed.

- Mark 6:56 NIV

God can take our messes, brokenness and misconceptions and turn them into something good. Yes, He is the healer and people were made well, but those temporary healings were not the end game. Eventually the people died. But Jesus is the healer at a deeper level, He heals us of sin and gives us eternal life.

WRAP-UP

After feeding the 5,000, Jesus withdrew from the crowd to avoid being made king, which wasn't His mission. Instead, He sent the disciples ahead by boat and went alone to pray. As the disciples struggled against a fierce wind, Jesus came to them walking on water—revealing His divine nature and authority over creation. Though terrified, He reassured them with, "Take courage! It is I. Don't be afraid." This moment wasn't just a display of power; it was a lesson in trust, showing the disciples—and us—that human strength and experience are not enough in life's storms. Jesus comes to us in our struggles, inviting us to recognize Him not just as a miracle worker, but as God Himself, worthy of worship and trust.

MEMORY VERSE

50 because they all saw him and were terrified. Immediately he spoke to them and said, "Take courage! It is I. Don't be afraid." - Mark 6:50 NIV

Challenge – Spend some time in prayer without making requests, but instead recognize that you are in the presence of the Great I AM.