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LIFE LESSONS FROM WATER WALKING (John 6:16-21)

Right after Jesus fed a huge crowd with just a few pieces of food that he multiplied, the crowd was amazed and believed that he was the promised Prophet. They were ready to make him King, but that wasn't his goal, so he moved away from them. Night was coming and what happened next was another great miracle for the disciples' eyes only, and we can learn lessons from it today.

*John 6:16-21 - When evening came, his disciples went down to the sea, got into a boat, and started across the sea to Capernaum. It was now dark, and Jesus had not yet come to them. The sea became rough because a strong wind was blowing. When they had rowed about three or four miles, **they saw Jesus walking on the sea and coming near the boat, and they were frightened.** But he said to them, "It is I; do not be afraid." Then they were glad to take him into the boat, and immediately the boat was at the land to which they were going.*

I've never traveled there, but I've heard people say that storms can whip up out of nowhere on the Sea of Galilee. Experienced fishermen, like some of these disciples, would have known the risk, but they were headed to Capernaum on the other side. And on this night, one of those quick storms blew in unexpectedly.

JESUS CARES ABOUT OUR STORMS

The Scriptures are clear that God has no plan to remove people from the difficulties of life. In fact, these "storms" of life are some of the most effective tools he uses to teach us about ourselves and about him. He may allow them or he may cause them, but he is never unaware of them. Whatever your storm – past, present, or future – I can promise you that God knows about it and cares.

*Psalm 121:5, 7-8 - **The LORD watches over you – the LORD is your shade at your right hand ... he will watch***

*over your life; the LORD will watch over your coming and going, both **now and forevermore.***

For the disciples, this was no small storm. In a parallel passage in the gospel of Mark, we're told that the disciples were "straining at the oars, because the wind was against them." (Mark 6:48) We all know that feeling - a harsh, unpredictable wind that bends our oars as we try to keep our lives from capsizing.

JESUS COMES INTO OUR STORMS WITH US

The text says that the disciples were in the boat, on the water, it became dark, and they were by themselves. Then the storm came and Jesus appeared. Since God knows our storms, ordains that we go through them, and cares for us, we can be sure he will not leave us alone in our struggles.

Also, let's be reminded that Jesus often will not show up in the way we expect. The last thing the disciples were looking for was someone walking toward them on the water. When your storm is getting the best of you, consider it a new opportunity to trust God in a new way and don't limit God with some preconceived idea of how he should show up and help. He will most likely intervene in a way you never imagined.

*Isaiah 41:13 – For I, the Lord your God, hold your right hand; it is I who say to you, "Fear not, **I am the one who helps you.**"*

**JESUS IS NO SECURITY AGAINST LIFE'S STORMS,
BUT HE IS PERFECT SECURITY IN THEM.**

~ Anonymous ~

JESUS CALMS THE STORM FOR US

It's not recorded in John's account, but we know from other gospel writings that Peter got out of the boat and began to walk toward Jesus on the water. He became afraid and started to sink, but Jesus helped him back into the boat, where we're told, "the wind died down." (Matthew 14:32)

One of the best verses I can think of to give help in the problems of life (and is proven in this story we're looking at now) was written by Paul:

1 Corinthians 10:13 – No temptation has overtaken you that is not common to man. God is faithful and he will not let you be tempted beyond your ability, but with the temptation he will also provide the way of escape, that you may be able to endure it.

JESUS CURES THE FEAR IN US

Fear is insidious. Here's a very good description of what it can do to us if we're not careful (from Paul David Tripp, *Dangerous Calling*)

Fear can overwhelm your senses. It can distort your thinking. It can kidnap your desires. It can capture your meditation so that you spend more time worrying about what could be than considering the God who is. Fear can cause you to make bad decisions in the short term and fail to make good decisions in the long run. Fear can cause you to forget what you know and to lose sight of who you are. Fear can make you wish for control you will never have. It can cause you to distrust people you have reason to trust. It can cause you to be demanding rather than serving. It can cause you to run when you should stay and to stay when you really should run. Fear can make God look small and your circumstance loom large. Fear can make you seek from people what you will only get from the Lord. Fear can be the soil of your deepest questions and your biggest doubts. Your heart was wired to fear, because you were designed for life shaped by fear of God. But horizontal fear cannot be allowed to rule your heart,

because if it does, it will destroy you and your ministry.

*John 14:27 - Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and **do not be afraid.***

IF THE LORD BE WITH US, WE HAVE NO CAUSE FOR FEAR. HIS EYE IS UPON US, HIS ARM OVER US, HIS EAR OPEN TO OUR PRAYER – HIS GRACE SUFFICIENT, HIS PROMISE UNCHANGEABLE.

~ John Newton ~

JESUS COMMANDS THE WORLD AROUND US

God is not at the mercy of the physical world, it's the other way around. All aspects of nature like the weather, our health, the hearts of other people – are under his authority and can be changed as he sees fit for his purpose.

*Matthew 8:27 – The [disciples] were amazed and asked, "What kind of man is this? **Even the winds and waves obey him!**"*

JESUS CAUSES WORSHIP TO COME FROM US

John's account of this story ends abruptly, but is pretty amazing. It says that the disciples gladly welcomed him into the boat and the boat immediately showed up on the shore. In Matthew's version, understandably, the disciples couldn't help but fall down and worship Jesus after what they had experienced.

*Matthew 14:32-33 – And when [Jesus & Peter] climbed into the boat, the wind died down. Then those who were in the boat **worshiped him**, saying, "Truly you are the Son of God."*

BIBLE STUDY

Legislators and Staff (During Session)
Thursdays, 8:00 a.m.
(ZOOM)