

Speaker: Associate Pastor Richard Yun
Text: Mark 6:45-56 NKJV
Title: "Take Courage! It is I"

45 Immediately He made His disciples get into the boat and go before Him to the other side, to Bethsaida, while He sent the multitude away.

46 And when He had sent them away, He departed to the mountain to pray.

47 Now when evening came, the boat was in the middle of the sea; and He was alone on the land.

48 Then He saw them straining at rowing, for the wind was against them. Now about the fourth watch of the night He came to them, walking on the sea, and would have passed them by.

49 And when they saw Him walking on the sea, they supposed it was a ghost, and cried out;

50 for they all saw Him and were troubled. But immediately He talked with them and said to them, "Be of good cheer! It is I; do not be afraid."

51 Then He went up into the boat to them, and the wind ceased. And they were greatly amazed in themselves beyond measure, and marveled.

52 For they had not understood about the loaves, because their heart was hardened.

53 When they had crossed over, they came to the land of Gennesaret and anchored there.

54 And when they came out of the boat, immediately the people recognized Him,

55 ran through that whole surrounding region, and began to carry about on beds those who were sick to wherever they heard He was.

56 Wherever He entered, into villages, cities, or the country, they laid the sick in the marketplaces, and begged Him that they might just touch the hem of His garment. And as many as touched Him were made well.

I. The Storms of Life

- We face the winds and the waves and the storms of life just as the disciples faced them out on the Sea of Galilee.
- And many times, like the disciples, we wonder why we have to struggle. We question where Jesus is through all of this.
- Why did Jesus tell us to go to the other side while He stayed behind?"

II. The Great I Am is With Us

- By the end of the story the disciples are full of courage. They are no longer afraid.

Why? What happened?

- Jesus saw the disciples straining at the oars. He knew their predicament. He knew all about the wind and the waves. And, He knows everything each of us faces too.

- So He "went out to them, walking on the lake." He revealed Himself as He really was. He was assuring the disciples of His presence with them and by them in the storm that they were facing.
- Did you catch what Jesus said to the disciples? He said, "It is I." In these words we hear echoes of the great "I AM WHO I AM" of God to Moses.
- Every time God, the great "I AM," appeared to man in the Old Testament He had to assure them that everything was okay, that they had nothing to fear. "Do not be afraid," He says over and over again.
- We see this when God appeared to Abraham, Hagar, Isaac, Jacob, Gideon, and Isaiah (Gen 15:1; 21:17; 26:24; 28:17; Judges 6:23; Isaiah 6). This happened in the New Testament too with Zechariah (Lk 1:13) and Mary (Lk 1:30). The presence of the Lord awakes fear. And, the same thing happened when Jesus appeared before the disciples on the lake. They were full of fear. So Jesus said, "Take courage. Don't be afraid."
- Notice what happened after Jesus climbed into the boat. "The wind died down," writes Mark. Just like that, no more wind, no more waves, no more straining and fighting to keep the boat straight. Just like that, no more fear, no more danger, nothing to be afraid of.
- As we face life's storms we too should not be disturbed because the I AM WHO I AM cares for us.

III. Jesus Prays

- What was Jesus doing when the disciples spent nine hours on the Sea? And, what does He do while we too endure the storms of life? When we read our Scripture passage carefully we notice that He was praying.
- Prayer was and is part of the ministry of Christ on behalf of His own as they face the storms of life. Jesus prays for us right now, this very moment.
- Hebrews 7:24-25 tells us that Jesus is praying for us while we are in the storms of life. He always lives to intercede for us. And, we know that the Father always listen to the perfect prayers of the Son He loves.

IV. In His Time

- One last point. Why do you think Jesus waited nine hours to go to the disciples? The Bible doesn't tell us specifically. But we are given a partial answer in Deuteronomy 8:2-5

"Remember how the LORD your God led you all the way in the desert these forty years, to humble you and to test you in order to know what was in your heart, whether or not you would keep his commands. (3) He humbled you, causing you to hunger and then feeding you with manna, which neither you nor your fathers had known, to teach you that man does not live on bread alone but on every word that comes from the mouth of the LORD. (4) Your clothes did not wear out and your feet did not swell during these forty years. (5) Know then in your heart that as a man disciplines his son, so the LORD your God disciplines you."

- God waits until just the right moment because God is disciplining us. He is improving us. He is making us more and more into His image and likeness. God waits because He knows it is best for us that He does.

Conclusion

There are so many storms in life. But we have this comfort: the great I AM is with us; He prays for us; and He always comes to us at the time that is best for us.