

BECAUSE OF JESUS WE DON'T NEED TO BE AFRAID IN THE STORMS OF LIFE

John 6:16-21

"It was a dark and stormy night." We are increasingly in this darkness ourselves. What should we do? Let us not panic or be afraid. Jesus is with us and He alone has the power to bring calm!

1.FOLLOWING JESUS MAY LEAD US INTO THE STORMS – John 6:16-18

- The sea, including the Sea of Galilee, was a place of danger and uncertainty. But Jesus sent His disciples into this coming storm – Mark 6:45. Jesus compelled the disciples to go into the boat. The storms on the Sea of Galilee can be sudden and violent. A strong wind comes up – verse 18. The sea is over 600 feet below sea level while the surrounding hills are 2,000 feet above sea level. This sudden drop can lead to high winds and the churning of the sea. After 8 hours or so, they have only gone about three miles. Their boat was battered by the waves – Matthew 14:24.
- Jesus is Lord over the trials of life. It is no accident that the disciples are caught in this storm. It is part of God's plan to reveal Jesus to them and grow their faith. Jesus is in control of the winds and waves. He uses them for His own purposes. *"Trial...is part of the diet which all true Christians must expect. It is one of the means by which their grace is proved, and by which they find out what there is in themselves. Winter as well as summer, cold as well as heat, clouds as well as sunshine – are all necessary to bring the fruit of the Spirit to ripeness and maturity."* – J.C. Ryle, John.

2.BUT JESUS COMES TO US IN THE STORMS – John 6:19

- We are never alone in our trials or afflictions. Don't despair or get angry. Even in the storms Jesus never lets His people out of His sight or care! – Mark 6:48. Jesus will never forsake His people. He is still seated on High, praying for us now –Romans 8:34; Hebrews 7:25. The disciples probably thought they were alone and Jesus had forsaken them. But Jesus comes walking to His disciples during the fourth watch of the night (3 AM to 6 AM) – Matthew 14:25. Jesus suspends the natural law of gravity, giving visible proof to His Deity again. He is God's agent of creation and the controller of the physical universe. The Lord who made the waves can walk on the waves.
- But Jesus may not "show up" on our schedule – verse 17. He sovereignly waits until the fourth watch. Jesus is Lord over the timing of our lives and of our trials. The disciples struggle for a long time against a contrary wind. Jesus may not stop the storm for a long time. But He is perfect in His timing. *"Divine sovereignty, omnipotence, and omniscience are never in a hurry."* – John MacArthur.

3.JESUS DRIVES OUT FEAR AS LORD OF THE STORMS – John 6:20

- The disciples are suddenly more afraid of Jesus than they are of the storms. They cry out in fear, thinking Jesus is a ghost – Matthew 14:26; Mark 6:49,50. But He is the Loving Sovereign One.
- Jesus is sovereign over all creation. He controls the sea and storms. Jesus performs four miracles: walking on the water, Peter walks momentarily on the water too; the winds and waves immediately stop; and the boat instantly travels to the western shore of the Sea of Galilee. Jesus will bring His people home safely in His time and way – Psalm 107:29 -31.

- Jesus bids our fears cease. Jesus in saying “It is I” is actually saying “I AM”, that He is the Lord and in sovereign control. Jesus tells His disciples “stop being afraid” or “don’t go on being afraid.” We can turn to the Lord in our fears – Psalm 34:4; Psalm 56:3. Evidently overjoyed and relieved to see Jesus, the disciples receive Him into the boat. The response of the disciples is worship – Matthew 14:33. It should be our response today – Revelation 1:17,18. Adoration and worship of Jesus is essential in a growing trust of Jesus. This passage seems out of place in the Bread of Life chapter, but it does explain why Peter and the rest of the 12 do not walk away from Jesus when everyone else is – John 6:66-69.
- Application: This passage *“shows our greatest need is not to be preserved from earthly troubles, but to realize the divine majesty of our Lord and Savior, a truth that we often neglect in sunnier days. This is how Christians learn to bless their trials for the lessons they have taught of God’s grace...just as the darkest sky best displays the glory of the stars, Jesus chooses the sorest trials to unveil His divine majesty to our eyes of faith.”* – Richard Phillips, John.

Concluding Applications:

- When you are afraid, who do you turn to? If it is not Jesus, you are helpless and hopeless.
- Don’t forget Jesus sends us into the storms for His own purposes. But He comes to us in the storms of life. He will never abandon or forsake us.
- In your trials don’t despair or become bitter – look unto Jesus. Trust Him who is our Sovereign and good Lord. *“God moves in a mysterious way, His wonders to perform: He plants His footsteps in the sea, and rides upon the storm....Judge not the Lord by feeble sense, but trust Him for His grace: Behind a frowning providence, He hides a smiling face. His purposes will ripen fast, unfolding every hour: The bud may have a bitter taste, but sweet will be the flower. Blind unbelief is sure to err, and scan His work in vain. God is His own interpreter, and He will make it plain.”* – William Cowper, 1700’s.