

Lighthouse Bible Church

February 24th, 2013

John 6: 16 – 21 *Scripture Reading Mark 6: 45 - 52*

‘They saw Jesus walking on the sea’

Stand – Read – Pray

As we continue to study the book of John it is my hope that several things will happen. Number one, that you who are already born again believers, will have an ever increasing and growing love for Christ as you see Him presented in all His power and glory throughout this book.

Number two, that any unbelievers that come here on their own or that we’ve invited or listen to these messages, would believe that Jesus is the Christ to eternal life.

Let me remind you why the Apostle John, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, wrote the things that he did in the book of John. In **John 20: 30 – 31** it says **and truly Jesus did many other signs in the presence of His disciples, which are not written in this book, but these ARE written THAT you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His name.**

His main purpose in writing the book of John was to present Jesus Christ for who He is, the Son of God, God in human form. And we see all throughout this book different people acknowledging that, either because of what Jesus says or what He does or both.

They come to the place where, by God’s grace and Spirit, they believe who Jesus is based on the testimony of others, based on the testimony of the Father, based on the testimony of His own works and based on the testimony of His words and they believe to eternal life.

Well, this is another one of those passages where Jesus shows His glory by His display of power and authority over time and space and gravity and all of the known elements that leads His disciples, as **Matthew 14: 33** says, **to worship Him saying truly You are the Son of God.**

You remember that Jesus had just finished feeding nearly 20,000 people with 5 loaves and 2 fish and as a result they wanted to take Him by force and make Him a king. They wanted to follow Jesus and have Jesus rule over them as long as it was on their terms and not His. And that is where we want to pick it up in Vs 16.

Verses 16 - 17: now when evening came, His disciples went down to the sea, got into the boat, and went over the sea toward Capernaum and it was already dark and Jesus had not come to them.

So Jesus, knowing their thoughts, sends His disciples away in a boat to head toward Capernaum and He goes up on a mountain by Himself alone, **to pray** **Matthew 14: 23** says. Remember, the disciples are on the N/E side of the sea of Galilee and they are heading to the opposite side of the sea and further south.

One thing about these disciples, even though they did not know exactly what was going on, they were obedient to what Jesus has asked them to do. From their perspective, Jesus would finally be recognized for who He is and they would have been excited about that.

But Jesus knew better, they wanted a Prophet, a Messiah, on their terms and not His. So, both Matthew and Mark say that **He strongly urged them to get into the boat** and go to the other side to Capernaum.

By this time it was already dark and Jesus had not come to them so they get into the boat and take off by themselves.

They didn't understand why they couldn't stay with Him and they didn't understand why He didn't come with them, but they obeyed without question and unhesitatingly, what was asked of them, even in the midst of their of the uncertainty of it all.

And whatever Jesus tells them, and us, to do, we can be sure that we are in His will, right? But being in His will does not always mean smooth sailing either. We know that we are to **count it all joy ... James 1: 2 – 4** says, and that we can **also glory in tribulations, knowing that tribulation produces perseverance and character and hope Romans 5: 3 -4** says.

That is a mark of a true follower of Christ, one who hears God's word and obeys it, even though they may not understand it, it becomes an obedience of trust. It is not questioning what Jesus says, it is doing what He says in spite of any questions you have or circumstances that may come along.

You see, that was the reason for the fall of Adam and Eve in the garden, when Satan came along and said "did God really say", causing them to question His words. Sometimes the same for people today.

Well, according to Mark, Jesus was apparently going to meet the disciples at Bethsaida and then go across to Capernaum. So the disciples get into the boat and plan on going down shore a little ways and picking up Jesus there.

Well, Jesus had not come to them and a storm began to arise and pull them away from their destination toward the middle of the north end of the Sea of Galilee. From all the descriptions I have read about the Sea of Galilee, the sea is well below sea level and there are rising hills around it that cause sudden and severe storms.

If you remember back in **Matthew 8: 24** it said the disciples were in a boat on the Sea of Galilee and it says **and suddenly a great tempest arose on the sea so that the boat was covered with waves**. So those kinds of storms can come up quickly and they did in this case look at Verse 18.

Verse 18: then the sea arose because a great wind was blowing.

Matthew 14: 24 and **Mark 6: 48** says that **the boat was tossed by the waves for the wind was contrary ... and against them**. As a result, Matthew and Mark add that the boat ended up in the middle of the Sea of Galilee and that they were **straining at rowing** **Mark 6: 48** says.

What John doesn't record here, **Matthew 14: 25** and **Mark 6: 48** do, and that is that it is about the **4th watch of the night** and they are still rowing against the wind and waves.

Remember, when they got into the boat, it said it was **evening** which would have been right after the sun was down. The 4th watch of the night would be between 3 in the morning and 6 in the morning. So they have been rowing for between 9 and 12 hours and have only gone a few miles.

Remember that this is taking place at the time of the Passover, the Feast of the Jews, celebration and it would have been a near full moon. So the disciples and Jesus would have been able to see for some distance around them. As a matter of fact **Mark 6: 48** says that **Jesus saw them straining at the oars**.

Whether He saw them visibly with the full moon and being on a hillside overlooking the sea or by His sovereign omniscience, He knew exactly where they were and what they were going through because they were obedient to what He had commanded them. So Verse 19 says.

Verse 19: so when they had rowed about 3 or 4 miles, they saw Jesus walking on the sea and drawing near the boat and they were afraid.

The disciples are tired from rowing, the wind is blowing and the moon is shining on the waves of the water and they see out in the distance a figure of a man walking on the water.

And, according to Mark, they thought He was going to walk right on by, but He wasn't. He was able to walk on top of the water as if He were walking on dry ground. He was walking through the wind and the waves and He was able to catch up with the 12 men rowing the boat.

Again, this is one of those passages where there is no explanation given as to how this miracle took place, any details as to what He was doing as He was walking, it just says **they saw Jesus walking on the sea and drawing near to the boat.** He was suspending the physical laws and the law of gravity and that's all it says.

At the end of Verse 19 it says **they were afraid.** Matthew and Mark add that **they cried out for fear and were troubled because they thought it was a ghost.**

You notice what it doesn't say; they were afraid of the storm. They had fished these waters many times and no doubt had been through others storms that were harrowing from time to time but that didn't seem to scare them or trouble them as much as the ghost they saw walking on the water. They had never seen a person walking on water and there was no natural explanation for it, and it frightened them. They thought that they were seeing a ghost. Then Jesus says to them in Verse 20.

Verse 20: ...It is I, do not be afraid

Matthew and Mark also record that He talked with them and said ‘be of good cheer, it is I, do not be afraid. He had to calm their fears and He did so by speaking to them.

Then the next thing John records is that Jesus gets into the boat. What John and Mark don’t record, Matthew does, about what happens next, so lets go to **Matthew 14: 28 Peter answered Him and said, Lord if it is You, command me to come to You on the water.**

Peter would have rather been in the midst of the storm with Jesus than in the security of the boat without Him. It tells you something of the character of Peter who wanted to be where Jesus was, to be with Him.

So Jesus says to him in **Verse 29 come! And Peter came down out of the boat and walked on the water to go to Jesus.**

Peter had fished these waters many times but he had never walked on them before, what made him think that he could do it now. Only seeing Jesus doing the very same thing and only knowing that Jesus could have the power to allow him to do such a miracle as to walk on the water he was struggling to row through.

Again, these verses say very little about the details of this miracle. Was Jesus just kind of standing there away from the boat waiting for Peter? Did Peter put one foot in first to see if it would hold him up? We don’t know, again it just says ‘he came down out of the boat and walked on the water’. A second incredible miracle that suspends the natural laws that we live by.

And as Peter is walking on the water towards Jesus, he takes his eyes off of Jesus and begins to focus them on his circumstances around him and in this case **Verse 30 says he SAW that the wind was boisterous and he was afraid.**

Had Peter not seen the wind before? Yes he had! But now he is seeing it from a different perspective. He is seeing it from the perspective of doing something that he has never done before. And, since he took his eyes off of Christ he had nothing to depend upon but his own understanding of his circumstances. This reminds me of **Proverbs 3: 5 – 6** which says **trust in the Lord with all your heart and (what) lean not on your own understanding**

His faith gave way to fear. He says ‘I am walking on this water, it is windy and there are a lot of waves, I can’t be doing this’, and **beginning to sink he cried out, saying Lord save me’.**

Peter cried out to the right source for being saved, physically. People today are called to cry out to the right source, Jesus, to be saved spiritually. Jesus saves today, not from drowning in the sea but from sin and death and the eternal punishment of hell when one dies in their sin.

Well **Verses 31 – 31** says that **Jesus stretched out His hand and caught him and said to him, O you of little faith, why did you doubt?**

You see, like Peter, we are the most vulnerable to fear and failure when we focus on our circumstances and think that something is an impossibility or doubt God’s provision or protection, and stop focusing on Christ, when we conclude from our own understanding that we cannot do what God has **allowed** or **called** or **commanded** us to do.

Verse 32 says **they got into the boat and the wind ceased.**

Another miracle takes place. Right when they get into the boat, the wind immediately stops. In **Mark 4: 39** it says that Jesus rebuked the wind and it **ceased**, the same word, and then it says **there was a great calm.** Now back to John 6 and verse 21

Verse 21: then they willingly received Him into the boat and IMMEDIATELY the boat was at the land where they were going.

Jesus gets into the boat and IMMEDIATELY the boat was at the land where they were going. That word immediately (*you-theh-occe*) means immediately, or at once or straightway.

They had been in the middle of the Sea of Galilee and now they are immediately at the shore. Again, nothing is said about how this happened, it just happened, it is a miracle that transcends time and physical laws that bring the disciples to acknowledge Jesus for who He is.

Mark 6: 51 says they were greatly amazed in themselves beyond measure and marveled. But look what else this series of miracles caused them to do. Go back to Matthew 14 as we close and look at Verse 33.

Verse 33 then those who were in the boat came and worshipped Him saying truly You are the Son of God.

After all that they had been through, they came to the place of recognizing who Jesus truly is and responded in the only appropriate way possible; worship of Him.

That is the desire of Christ for all who would come to Him; that they would see Him for who He is and not for what they can get from Him or how they could use Him or of what benefit He would be to them; and to give Him the worship that is due Him and Him alone for who He is.

What about you today? Gospel here.

Lighthouse Bible Church

February 24th, 2013

John 6: 16 – 21

‘They Saw Jesus Walking on the Sea’

Introduction:

John 20: 30 – 31, Matthew 14: 33

Verses 16 – 17: The disciples down at the Sea

Matthew 14: 23, James 1: 2 – 4

Romans 5: 3 – 4

Verse 18: The Sea arose because of a great wind

Matthew 14: 24, Mark 6: 48

Matthew 14: 25, Mark 6: 48

Verses 19 - 20: They saw Jesus walk on the Sea

Matthew 14: 28 – 33, Proverbs 3: 5 – 6

Mark 4: 39

Verse 21: They willingly received Him into the
boat

Mark 6: 51, Matthew 14: 33

Lighthouse Bible Church

February 24th, 2013

John 6: 16 – 21

‘They Saw Jesus Walking on the Sea’

Introduction:

John 20: 30 – 31, Matthew 14: 33

Verses 16 – 17: The disciples down at the Sea

Matthew 14: 23, James 1: 2 – 4

Romans 5: 3 – 4

Verse 18: The Sea arose because of a great wind

Matthew 14: 24, Mark 6: 48

Matthew 14: 25, Mark 6: 48

Verses 19 - 20: They saw Jesus walk on the Sea

Matthew 14: 28 – 33, Proverbs 3: 5 – 6

Mark 4: 39

Verse 21: They willingly received Him into the
boat

Mark 6: 51, Matthew 14: 33