



Growth Group Questions
February 9, 2025
“Jesus in the Storm”

CONTEXT

Mark wants us to see that the story of the feeding of the 5000 in verses 30-44 is connected with Jesus walking on the water in verses 45-52. Jesus has sent the disciples ahead because he needs to pray. The gospel of Mark only records Jesus going away by himself to pray three times. The first is when he begins his ministry in 1:35, the second time is here, and the final time is in the garden of Gethsemane in 14:35-39.

The Sea of Galilee could normally have been crossed in six to eight hours, but the disciples are struggling. The word used for “straining” in verse 48 is also used for suffering and torment. They are in a real struggle, but since many of them are fishermen, there is not the sense of fear that we saw in an earlier episode of a storm at sea in chapter 4.

They think they see a ghost because no one else could walk on water and the seas were seen as places of chaos and uncertainty. This is when their fear arises. However, they soon discover that this is no ghost, but actually Jesus. In the Old Testament God is the only one who is able to walk on the waters and now Jesus is walking where only God can walk. This is yet another sign that Jesus is indeed God and does what only God can do.

As Jesus passes by, he does what God did not do in Old Testament. He makes the mysterious God seen and visible which was not possible for past generations. Moses was not able to see fullness of God’s glory, but now the disciples see the fullness of God revealed in Jesus as he gets into the boat with them.

He tells them to not be afraid and then literally says “I AM.” He is taking the name that God gave to Moses at the burning bush in Exodus 3. The disciples are seeing Jesus for who he truly is. The one who will calm the storm is the true I AM of God.

SCRIPTURE

John 6:14-15

¹⁴ After the people saw the sign Jesus performed, they began to say, “Surely this is the Prophet who is to come into the world.” ¹⁵ Jesus, knowing that they intended to come and make him king by force, withdrew again to a mountain by himself.

Mark 6:45-52

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. Shortly before dawn he went out to them, walking on the lake. He was about to pass by them, ⁴⁹ but when they saw him walking on the lake, they thought he was a ghost. They cried out, 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, ⁵² for they had not understood about the loaves; their hearts were hardened.

Job 9:8-11

⁸ He alone stretches out the heavens
and treads on the waves of the sea.
⁹ He is the Maker of the Bear^[a] and Orion,
the Pleiades and the constellations of the south.
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.

Exodus 33:18-20

¹⁸ Then Moses said, “Now show me your glory.” 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 3:14

¹⁴ God said to Moses, “I AM WHO I AM.”^[a] This is what you are to say to the Israelites: ‘I AM has sent me to you.’”

QUESTIONS

1. In Mark 6:49, we are told that when the disciples were struggling in the boat and saw Jesus walking on the lake they thought he was a ghost. Why do you think the disciples didn’t recognize Jesus?
2. How do we sometimes fail to recognize Jesus’ presence when we are struggling?

3. In Mark 6:51-52, we read that when Jesus climbed into the boat, the disciples were “completely amazed, for they had not understood about the loaves. . . .” What did Mark mean when he said that they did not understand about the loaves?
4. In Mark 6:52 we are also told that the hearts of the disciples were “hardened.” What is a “hardened heart”? What can cause our hearts to harden?
5. What Bible verses help us to understand the kind of hearts God wants us to have?
6. What lessons can you take away from the story found in Mark 6:45-52?
7. What do you think Pastor Paul meant when he said that a lot of us focus on scarcity, but Jesus wants us to focus on abundance?
8. How is this story an object lesson on abundance rather than scarcity?
9. Pastor Paul’s sermon focused primarily on Mark 6:45-52. As you read through the rest of Mark 6 this week, was there anything else that particularly spoke to you?

PASTOR PAUL’S SERMON QUESTIONS:

1. Is there a place in my life where I am living with a sense of scarcity rather than abundance?
2. Where has my heart been hardened and what can I do about it?