

TODAY we mark the words of Jesus in Mark 6:50 where he says: ***“Take courage; it is I, do not be afraid.”***

- 45 And immediately He [Jesus] made His disciples get into the boat and go ahead of *Him* to the other side to Bethsaida, while He Himself was sending the multitude away.
- 46 And after bidding them farewell, He departed to the mountain to pray. [*Mt: alone*]
- 47 And when it was evening [*6-9 pm*], the boat was in the midst [middle] of the sea, and He *was alone on the land. [John 6:19 - having gone 3-4 miles]*
- 48 And seeing them straining at the oars, for the wind was against them, at about the fourth watch of the night [*3-6 am*] He came to them, walking on the sea; and He intended to pass by them.
- 49 But when they saw Him walking on the sea, they supposed that it was a ghost, and cried out;
- 50 for they all saw Him and were frightened. But immediately He spoke with them and said to them, ***“Take courage; it is I, do not be afraid.”***
- 51 And He got into the boat with them, and the wind stopped; and they were greatly astonished, [*John 6:21 – they were immediately at their destination*]
- 52 for they had not gained any insight from the *incident of the loaves*, but their heart was hardened.

NOTE:

1. This account is the second “storm” story. The first was about PEACE FROM THE STORM - the person and power of Jesus in calming the storm – a miraculous “life threatener” This second is about PEACE IN THE STORM.
2. This account in Matthew 14 and John 6 features Peter walking on the water to Jesus. Lessons of our ability to do “the impossible” when we keep our eyes on Jesus abound. Yet this account by Mark (and Peter) omits this amazing part of the story. Why? It might well be that there are other lessons that might otherwise be overlooked.

OBSERVATIONS

#1 – v.45: “He made the disciples get into the boat and go ahead”

GOD’S CALLING INTO THE STORM

We cannot always say God causes our storms – we might well be the cause of many. But since nothing happens without His knowledge and since He could prevent the storm if He so chose we can say: God allows the storm. Here, we see Jesus “making” or “compelling” his disciples to go where he knew there would be a storm. Life is full of storms. We could even say life is a series of storms with moments of calm between them. Therefore, we must learn obedience, peace and

courage in the midst of our storms. We should not try so hard to get out of what God calls us into.

#2 - v. 48: Jesus... “seeing them” / “walking on the sea” / “intended to pass by”

GOD’s CARING IN THE STORM

Jesus saw them straining when He was still on the shore. (Jesus sees our straining as well). Jesus came to them (He comes to us as well). Jesus walks on the water demonstrating his total control over their storm (and our storm). The Jesus intended to pass by them. (v. 48 - unique to Mark) This too shows his watchfulness and protection – and he is ever watching over us ready to protect and defend.

#3 - v. 50: “take courage” – “it is I, do not be afraid”

GOD’s COURAGE IN THE STORM

Spiritual courage (not physical courage) is what is needed here, and in our storm.

Spiritual courage means TRUSTING.

COURAGE (“take courage”) COMES FROM KNOWING JESUS WITH US (“it is I”) AND IT BANISHES FEAR (“do not be afraid”)

Deuteronomy 31:6 Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid or terrified because of them, for the LORD your God goes with you; he will never leave you nor forsake you.” [Heb. 13:5]

Joshua 1:9 Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous! Do not tremble or be dismayed, for the LORD your God is with you wherever you go.”

v. 51: When Jesus got into the boat, presumably by invitation, the wind stops (Mark and Matthew). More than acknowledge his nearness and even His power we need Him actively WITH US – by invitation. Yes, the Spirit is always in us, but Paul commanded “be filled with the Holy Spirit.” (Eph. 5:18)

#4 - v. 51: “He got into the boat with them” / “the wind stopped” / Jn: “the boat was at the land”

GOD’s CALMING IN THE STORM

GET JESUS IN YOUR BOAT! The disciple were in the “middle” or “midst” of the storm. Yet when Jesus is invited into the boat, not only does the storm calm, but John records “and immediately the boat was at the land to which they were going” – that is, the very storm became a non-issue.

Philippians 4:6-7 Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which passes understanding, shall guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

#5 - v. 52: “greatly astonished” / “they had not gained any insight”

GOD’s COACHING IN THE STORM

We must grow in our knowledge of Jesus to where we are not astonished at the marvels that Jesus brings. That they were astonished was proof that they had not gained any insight of Jesus' person and power. God wants to teach us that trust. There are many insights to learn in the storm.

Oswald Chambers (author of "My Utmost for His Highest" observes, regarding this passage, that Jesus is not always concerned with the outcome of journey (as we are) but with the process and the lessons learned. READ.

SPIRITUAL COURAGE is the challenge and the need!

A GREAT EXAMPLE OF SPIRITUAL COURAGE

Martin Luther (Worms, 1521)

"Unless I am convinced by Scripture and by plain reason and not by popes and councils that have so often contradicted themselves - my conscience is captive to the Word of God; to go against conscience is either right nor safe - I cannot and I will not recant. Here I stand, I can do no other. God help me."

SPIRITUAL COURAGE means **breaking out of ourselves** to be more of what God would want us to be. Most of us imagine or dream what it might be like to "break out" – to have the courage to share unashamedly our hope in Jesus; to be unafraid to bring Jesus into our marriage, family or relationships; to worship in utter abandonment.

SPIRITUAL COURAGE means **taking a stand** – often an unpopular or potentially awkwardly visible stand – for what you know God wants you to be or do.

PERSONAL APPLICATION

What is YOUR STORM right now? – name one.

Where do you need courage?

Will you get Jesus into your "boat?"

What specific action will you take to show courage?

CONCLUSION

In the MGM movie, "The Wizard of Oz" the wizard gave

1. the scarecrow a diploma
2. the tin woodsman a testimonial
3. the cowardly lion a medal

Ephesians 1: 13-14 In Him, you also, after listening to the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation--having also believed, you were sealed in Him with the Holy Spirit of promise, who is given as a pledge of our inheritance..."