

CHRIST WALKING ON THE SEA

John 6:14-21 Matthew 14:22-32

Introduction:

1. *"And when even was now come, his disciples went down unto the sea, and entered into a ship" (16,17)*
 - The Lord wanted to be alone, ordered his disciples to go on ahead.
 - The Lord intended to teach them another lesson on faith.
2. *"And entered into a ship, and went over the sea toward Capernaum. And it was now dark, and Jesus was not come to them" (17).*
 - What follows speaks unmistakably to us: it describes conditions through we must pass as we journey through this life to our Home above.
 - We do not belong to this world anymore, but we are still in this world until God calls us home.
3. *"It was dark, and Jesus was not come to them." (17)*
 - Sometimes Christ withholds His light from us: *(when I waited for light, there came darkness) Job.*
 - Sometimes Christ withholds His light from us **in order that we might discover things that we might never have known.**
4. *"Jesus was not come to them. And the sea arose by reason of the great wind that blew" (17,18)*
 - This tested the faith and patience of the disciples....the longer they waited the worse things became.
 - It looked as though Christ was neglectful of them.
 - It seemed as though He had forgotten to be gracious.
 - Perhaps they were saying, "if the Master was here, this storm would not have come up.."
 - Being able to see Him would have cheered them.
 - But He was not there - and the darkness was all around them - the angry waves tossing them about.
 - It was a real test of their faith and patience.
5. And similarly does God often test us today:
 - Often our circumstances are dark and conditions are all against us - we cry unto the Lord but He "does not come."
 - We need to remind ourselves, that **God is never in a hurry.** No matter how much our impatience and unbelief cry for him to hurry and help us - He waits His own good time.
 - God can afford to wait, for His ways will always bring success and just at the right time.
 - ***"And therefore will the Lord wait, that He may be gracious unto you, and therefore will He be exalted, that He may have mercy upon you: for the Lord is a God of judgment: blessed are all they that wait for Him." (Isa 30:18)***
6. Sometimes the Lord "waits" until it is very dark before He appears in His delivering grace and power.
 - The darkness surrounds us and becomes more gloomy and scary, and still He waits - to be gracious.
 - But why? Couldn't He be gracious without all this waiting and the painful suspense such waiting usually brings us? Yes...then why God's delay to intervene?
 - One reason is **that His hand may be the more evident.**

- Another reason is **that His hand may be the more appreciated** when He does intervene.
- Why does He wait even though the darkness is almost unbearable? Is it not **that all our hopes may be disappointed** - that our plans may be frustrated till we reach our very end. And then, just as we had given up hope, He breaks forth unexpectedly and we react like these disciples on the stormlashed sea.

7. "So they had rowed about five and twenty or thirty furlongs, they see Jesus walking on the sea." (v19)

- For you, too, has there ever been a night so fearfully dark and the waves of adverse circumstances were tossing you and it looked as if they would completely swamp you?
- Notice that the disciples did not give up in despair - they continued "rowing." And eventually the Lord came to their side and delivered them from the angry tempest.
- Whatever may be the path appointed by the Lord, however difficult and distasteful, **continue therein** and in His own good time the Lord will deliver you.
- Notice that the disciples were doing all they could do - rowing - and that was all that was required of them and in a little while the Lord appeared.

8. While the storm-tossed disciples were pulling at the oars and making little or no progress, the Lord was on high - not below, but above them - master of the situation. **Praying for them.**

- Our great High Priest is touched with our infirmities and is ever interceding for us.
- Our Lord was not indifferent to their peril - His eye was upon them.
- We may be toiling and rowing, weary of the buffeting and shaking, but there is One above who is concerned, who sees and knows our painful lot, and who, even now is preparing to come to our rescue. **"...Look off unto Jesus, the author and finisher of faith.." (Heb 12:1)**

9. "So when they had rowed about five and twenty or thirty furlongs, they see Jesus walking on the sea, and drawing nigh unto the ship: and they were afraid." (19)

- The fears of the disciples had mastered them - they were not expecting deliverance - they had already forgotten what they had witnessed only a few hours before ..Christ and His miracles..
- How accurately (and tragically) do the disciples portray us - so quickly do we forget the Lord's mercies and deliverances in the past. So little do we expect Him to answer our prayers of the present.

10. "But He saith unto them, 'It is I; be not afraid'" (20)

- Even here, the unbelief of these disciples did not quench the Lord's love for them.
- **"He hath not dealt with us after our sins; nor rewarded us according to our iniquities." (Ps 103:10)**
- He first directs their eyes to Himself (**It is I**) then a word to calm their hearts (**be not afraid.**)
- Our fears can only be dispelled by looking at faith to and having our hearts occupied with HIM.
- If we look around we shall be dishearted...if we look within, we shall be discouraged..
- But if we look unto Him, our fears will vanish.

11. "And they willingly received him into the ship and immediately the ship was at the land whether they went." (21).

- Christ does not force Himself upon us - He waits to be received - Is not this why His presence is so often withheld - why He is so slow in coming to our relief - **waiting for our surrender to Him?**
- When Christ does come to us, it does not mean that trials and difficulties are over but it will mean that our hearts will have found a place of rest - our fears will be quieted and we will look at Christ, not fears.