

THE GOSPEL *of* JOHN

CHAPTER 6:15-21

MEDIA REFERENCE NUMBER SM-377 JUNE 18, 2000

THE TITLE OF THE MESSAGE:

“When God is the Nearest”

THE THEME OF THE BOOK:

John 1:12

But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name:

SUBJECT TOPICALLY REFERENCED UNDER:

Encouragement, Feeling Alone, Keeping Your Eyes on Jesus

The Summation Sentence

Something I have found to be true in my Christian walk as others have discovered as well - is that there are times when we all experience apparent highs and lows in our relationship with God.

It's as though our fellowship / friendship with God is based on emotional fluctuations

When the difficult and trying days are upon us, there is a great temptation to ask the most emotionally based question of all time...

God, Why is this Happening to me?

Jesus is always near to us and is always in control of what is going on in our lives.

John 6:15-21

Therefore when Jesus perceived that they were about to come and take Him by force to make Him king, He departed again to the mountain by Himself alone. **16** Now when evening came, His disciples went down to the sea, **17** got into the boat, and went over the sea toward Capernaum. And it was already dark, and Jesus had not come to them.

18 Then the sea arose because a great wind was blowing. **19** So when they had rowed about three or four miles, they saw Jesus walking on the sea and drawing near the boat; and they were afraid. **20** But He said to them, "It is I; do not be afraid." **21**

Then they willingly received Him into the boat, and immediately the boat was at the land where they were going.

When God is the Nearest

1.) *Is when God seems the farthest away* vv. 15

Therefore when Jesus perceived that they were about to come and take Him by force to make Him king, He departed again to the mountain by Himself alone.

Jesus was apart from the disciples

When God is the Nearest

a.) *Because Jesus has a certain mission for your life* v.15

Therefore when Jesus perceived that they were about to come and take Him by force to make Him king,

His Priorities were Clear – *He was already king*

Jesus was already King

But not by earthly means or thrones

The people thought that this would be the perfect kind of a king to have. A king that turns water to wine, heals the sick and deceased and feeds us for free

The Disciples Didn't Need this kind of P.R.

Even Though You're Not Feeling His Presence

Psalm 138:8

The LORD will fulfill [his purpose] for me; your love, O LORD, endures forever—(the spiritual truth) do not abandon the works of your hands. (the emotional threat)

Psalm 37:23

The steps of a good man are ordered by the LORD, and He (the Lord) delights in his way.

Is when God seems the farthest away

b.) Because Jesus has a set a course for you to travel v.15

He departed again to the mountain **by Himself alone.**

**This would almost seem cruel
if it wasn't for what God has said to us in His Bible**

Matthew's account says:

Matthew 14:23

He went up on the mountain **by Himself to pray.**

I Think He Prayed about a lot of things. The multitude that had just been fed...
the disciples that were about to enter into their hour of trial

Hebrews 7:25

Therefore He is also able to save to the uttermost those who come to God through
Him, **since He always (constantly) lives to make intercession for them.**

**Jesus is presenting your life's situations
before His Father in prayer...**

apparently, prayer is how the Godhead communicates

The Bible

Therefore He is also able to save to the uttermost those who come to God through
Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them.

by Himself alone

I don't think Jesus had any problem being apart from the disciples, but I bet you that
they had a problem being apart from him

Mark's account says this

Mark 6:48

Then He **saw them** straining at rowing,

In This We Learn That

Jesus is always *watching* over us

Psalm 139:2-6

You know when I sit and when I rise; you perceive my thoughts from afar. 3 You discern my going out and my lying down; you are familiar with all my ways. 4 Before a word is on my tongue you know it completely, O LORD. 5 You hem me in-- behind and before; you have laid your hand upon me. 6 Such knowledge is too wonderful for me, too lofty for me to attain.

Matthew 28:20

and lo, (and high) I am with you always, even to the end of the age."

always watching

Every Step You Take, Every Move you make
I'll be watching You

They had been sweating at rowing and fighting
the waves

They had been stressed by the storm and
weary...

Did they feel like giving up?

Have you ever felt like giving up?

Personally, in my life

Since the day I met Jesus I have never felt lonely,
But there are times when He allows me to feel very
alone...

Psalm 37:5

Commit your way to the LORD, trust also in Him, and He shall bring it to pass.

Psalm 139:7-10

Whither shall I go from thy spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence? 8 If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there: if I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there. 9 If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; 10 Even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me.

The Storms of Life

Are to strip us from what we lean on and to get our attention
and to teach us His truth

When God is the Nearest

2.) *Is when God doesn't seem to care* vv. 16-17

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

Jesus was attentive to the disciples

a.) *The Lord is always at work to build our faith* v.16-17

Now when **evening** came, His disciples went down **to the sea** , **17** got into the boat, and went over the sea toward Capernaum...

got into the boat

Matthew 14:22

Immediately Jesus **made** (with a directive and with effort) His disciples get into the boat and go before Him to the other side, while He sent the multitudes away.

He Sent Them

But Jack a Storm was Brewing – didn't Jesus know that

James 1:2-3

My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into various trials, 3 knowing that the testing of your faith produces patience.

They were in trouble

And trouble was exactly what Jesus had ordered for them

APPLICATION

Being a follower of Jesus Christ
Means that you will be sailing against the winds of life

Taking an Airplane off on a windy/stormy day
Putting the nose of that aircraft head-on into the gale will guarantee lift

b.) The Lord is always preparing what is ahead v.17b

And it was already dark, and Jesus had not come to them.

(not yet come - he was expected)

Jesus had not **(yet)** come to them

They were expecting Him to go with them

- 1.) They're waiting - He's not coming!
- 2.) It's getting dark - that's not good!
- 3.) The wind is starting to blow - and it could get worse!

When God is the Nearest

3.) Is when God seems to have given up vv. 18-19

18 Then the sea arose because a great wind was blowing. **19** So when they had rowed about three or four miles, they saw Jesus walking on the sea and drawing near the boat; and they were afraid.

Is when God seems to have given up

a.) *Jesus had sent them into the storm*

Then the sea arose because a great wind was blowing. **19** So when they had rowed about three or four miles,
the sea arose (woke up)

The Sea would have been something that I think I could have handled. The boat was something I could have handled – most of us on board are fishermen even though they had diverse backgrounds they all had this situation in common

1 Corinthians 10:12-13

Therefore let him who thinks he stands take heed lest he fall. **13** No temptation has overtaken you except such as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear it.

b.) *Jesus conquers our problems*

they saw Jesus walking on the sea **and** drawing near the boat; **and** they were afraid.

Matthew's account says

Matthew 14:25-26

Now in the fourth watch of the night Jesus went to them, walking on the sea. **26** And when the disciples saw Him walking on the sea, they were troubled, saying, "It is a ghost!" And they cried out for fear.

Mark's account says

Mark 6:47

Now when evening came, the boat was in the middle of the sea; and He was alone on the land. **48** Then He saw them straining at rowing,

The Passover Moon Would Have Been Bright

would have been at it's full and almost like day, Jesus would have easily seen them rowing

Jesus was about to appear

As they rowed against the wind,

Their backs would have been toward the shoreline that they had departed from

A body shaped like a man's begins to approach them at a speed faster than they could row and stronger than the wind...

The freaky thing was...

This human shape was walking on the waves and gaining on them -

Notice

Jesus comes to them walking on the problem -

Mark 6:47-48

Now when evening came, the boat was in the middle of the sea; and He was alone on the land. 48 Then He saw them **straining at rowing**, for the wind was against them. Now about the fourth watch of the night **He came to them, walking on the sea, and would have passed them by.**

“I’m Just Passing By”

I’m not concerned with your problem, your problem is my tool in your life.
What I am concerned about is you

{God has no problems}

Matthew 28:1-2

Now after the Sabbath, as the first day of the week began to dawn, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary came to see the tomb. 2 And behold, there was a great earthquake; for an angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and came and rolled back the stone from the door, and sat on it.

**Jesus is never under the circumstances.... Because
Jesus is always over the circumstances**

Philippians 4:11-12

...for I have learned in whatever state I am, to be content: 12 I know how to be abased, and I know how to abound. Everywhere and in all things I have learned both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need.

He Learned How to Suffer

(Jesus is with me, there is reason to all this, God is in control, Jesus knows all about it)

Ecclesiastes 3:11

He has made everything beautiful in its time.

Romans 8:28

And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the **called according to His purpose.**

When God is the Nearest

4.) *Is when we seem to have come to our end* vv. 20-21

20 But He said to them, "**It is I; do not be afraid.**" **21** Then they willingly received Him into the boat, and immediately the boat was at the land where they were going.

a.) *The Lord brings revelations of Himself* v.20

But He said to them, "**It is I; do not be afraid.**"

There is no greater way to increase

in the knowledge and understanding of who God is than by going through storms

Job 42:5

My ears had heard of you but now my eyes have seen you.

Mark 6:50

for they all saw Him and were troubled. But immediately He talked with them and said to them, "**Be of good cheer! It is I; (I AM) do not be afraid.**"

Egoo Eimi

I AM

It's a Ghost!!!

Peter have you ever seen a ghost? Well no...
James have you ever seen a ghost? Well no...
John have you ever seen a ghost? Well no...

Why are we so Willing to Believe in the Disastrous?

Matthew 14:27

But immediately Jesus spoke to them, saying,
"Be of good cheer! It is I; do not be afraid."

They must have felt that Jesus was **No-Where**

When in reality He was **Now-here**

Psalm 34:15

The eyes of the LORD are on the righteous, and His ears are open to their cry.

I Wonder if Peter Remembered his Old Testament?

Jeremiah 29:11

For I know the plans I have for you," says the Lord. "They are plans for good and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope.

Matthew's account says this:

Matthew 14:28-31

And Peter answered Him and said, "Lord, if it is You, command me to come to You on the water." 29 So He said, "Come." And when Peter had come down out of the boat, he walked on the water to go to Jesus. 30 But when he saw that the wind was boisterous, he was afraid; and beginning to sink he cried out, saying, "Lord, save me!" 31 And immediately Jesus stretched out His hand and caught him, and said to him, "O you of little faith, why did you doubt?"

I could never look at that sea the same, the wind the same, the boat the same... Jesus the same... and that was the purpose to the trial – that they would see Jesus more

When God is the Nearest

b.) *Our hearts are more open to receive* v.21a

Then they **willingly** received Him into the boat

With Great Joy and Relief

Mark 6:50-51

for they all saw Him and were troubled. But immediately He talked with them and said to them, "Be of good cheer! It is I; do not be afraid." 51 **Then He went up into the boat to them, and the wind ceased.**

Whenever we receive Him willingly - the storms cease -

Isaiah 26:3

You will keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on You, because he trusts in You.

Jesus was accepted by the disciples Back to Mark 6:51-52

Mark 6:51-52

...and the wind ceased. And they were greatly amazed in themselves beyond measure, and marveled. 52 **For they had not understood about the loaves, because their heart was hardened.**

Hardened grk 4456 poroo (po-roo);

a kind of petrified stone native to Israel, something callous, lifeless, unable to receive

Hosea 10:12

... break up your fallow (petrified ground, callous, lifeless, unable to receive ground) for it is time to seek the LORD, till He comes and rains righteousness on you.

The Miracle of the Five Thousand and the walking on the Water was intended to Soften their hearts toward who Jesus was.

c.) *We will see greater things of God* v.21

and immediately the boat was at the land where they were going.

a supernatural destination

Psalm 107:28-30

Then they cry out to the LORD in their trouble, and He brings them out of their distresses. 29 He calms the storm, so that its waves are still. 30 Then they are glad because they are quiet; so He guides them to their desired haven.

immediately

with Jesus their Desired haven was made and in an Instant

I Wonder Just How Close I am to My Desired Haven?
I Wonder Just How Close You Are to Your Desired Haven?

Willingly receive Him

John 1:12

But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name: