

Jesus Walks on Water

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[0 : 00] So, let's see, yeah, a few announcements. Let me look and see what we got here. So, first of all, let's go ahead and dismiss the kids, which we always forget to do, but usually right after announcements, which is right now, any kids who want to take advantage of the children's class are free to do so.

I think we had a good crowd last week. There were, I think, 10 kids in there. So, that's great. Of course, kids are always welcome in the service as well. So, both options. It's really up to the parents, whatever you'd like to do.

We're happy either way. Let's see, a few other things. We mentioned the marriage class being canceled for Tuesday. The primary reason is because we actually use this church building as a polling location for the election on Tuesday, and so this whole room gets transformed into a voting area, and we figured it'll just be easier to just skip. We'll take a little break from the marriage class. And like Joe said, even if you haven't come and you still want to check it out, even if you just want to check it out once to kind of see what we're up to, you're welcome to come and check it out. But the next time we'll meet is going to be on the 14th of November, so two weeks from this coming Tuesday.

Also, I wanted to start doing this some more. So, we have a book table out there. I don't know if you've noticed. Out in the hallway, we have a table. It's got books on it. It's actually kind of sparse.

[1 : 23] I think as people have been taking books, we just haven't put new ones on there. So, I've already started buying some more books, and we'll continue to do so. So, there's lots of options.

One, because every month, we have a book giveaway. So, if your birthday is in the month of November, so we're in November. If your birthday is in November, you get to go out there and pick any book that you'd like.

Now, right now, it's still a little bit sparse, so throughout the month of November, we'll be adding more to it. So, you might want to wait. But I wanted to share some of the stuff that we have out there. So, here's a book. I think we have just a few copies of this one.

It's called Classic Christianity. I'm not sure when this book was written. Maybe in the 80s or 90s, I believe. But a great little book by a guy named Bob George. Used to be on the radio for a long time. And really, it's a book about two different kinds of Christianity. One is a performative Christianity in which you have to do all of these things in order to measure up to God.

[2 : 25] Whether it's in order to find salvation, you have to do all these things. Or in order for God to be pleased with you and just kind of find yourself approved before God. In order to become righteous.

I've got to do all these things. And he takes the other approach, which is the biblical approach. That's where I think the classic comes in. Is that our life as Christians, we become Christians through grace.

Through the free gift of God. We don't have to go through a bunch of religious rituals. We don't have to try to reform our life as best we can. We can come to him purely based on his free gift, his free offer.

But if we'll just trust in him, he'll give us eternal life. And a lot of Christians know that part. But then, when it comes to living out your Christian life, okay, now this is where I have to try to do a bunch of works, try to do a bunch of things to make God happy.

And that's not true either. And so, not only do we come to Christ through faith alone, by that gift, but also we live out our Christian life based on what he's done for us.

[3 : 34] And who we are in him. God has made us, the Bible says, the righteousness of God in him. We are righteous already, declared to be so, because of what he said in the scriptures.

So, a great little book. Lots of stories in here. That's usually what makes a good book, right? People tell great stories. But he comes from a life of legalism and really trying to, you know, please God. And he realized, I don't know how far into his Christian life, but it was pretty far in, that that was not how God wanted him to live.

So, we have a few copies out there. If that's something that you're interested in. Issue one. Seen a lot of signs out there.

And we've talked about this over the last couple of months. But this is an important one. This has to do with the right to life of little baby boys and girls. And they're looking to amend the Constitution. That's going to make it really hard to make any changes in the future. And so, I think we've had maybe 50 some signs that you all have taken, which is great.

[4 : 38] So, letting people know that they should vote no on this issue. These, we have about, I don't know how many of these we have, 50 or 80 of these out on the table.

And this is the last week. Once this election passes, these are going to be useless. So, I'd like to encourage you to maybe take five of these.

Just take five. When you go out to lunch today, and what this is, it just says no, but it actually has the wording of the amendment. Some people don't. All they saw was a commercial. All they saw was a commercial full of lies.

And so, they don't know what this is. And so, they see the commercial, oh, this is good for women. You know, that's all they've heard. Oh, this is good for women. This actually, they can actually read what the amendment says.

The wording. It's got some little notes on there to kind of explain a few things. When you're out, if you go out to lunch today, maybe grab five of these. You can grab 20 if you want.

[5 : 36] But maybe just grab five. When you go out to lunch at the restaurant, just take five and go to five cars and put them on the windshield. That's pretty easy, right?

Just takes a couple minutes. I want to get rid of these. I don't want to see any left over, okay, when church is over. So, grab five, 10, 15, 20, 50 if you want, as long as you're going to get rid of them. But pass these out so people know and can be informed when they go to vote on Tuesday. Let's see if there's anything else. Okay, so, I maybe will have time for questions.

And I would like to maybe, if there's time, talk a little bit about the Middle East conflict after we're done going through Mark. And so, just keep that in mind. But for right now, we're actually going to have Pam come up and share a little bit about a ministry that is happening.

And some of you may not know about it at all. Come on up while I'm talking. And Pam runs a coordinator, or director for our local area, I guess, for a ministry called Kids Hope USA.

[6 : 52] And you might have seen things up on the bulletin board that we'll have about it, but you might not know what it is. And today, she's going to share a little bit about that and then talk about some of the other people in our church who are involved.

Here, get this out of the way. Okay. It was 10 years ago that Grace began a partnership with Northwestern Elementary, and it's through Kids Hope USA.

And we began this partnership because we understood that God was calling our church to make a bigger impact on our church community by building relationships. And we do this through mentoring students that have been identified by the school and the teachers as needing some additional one-on-one time with an adult.

And the program is a one church, one school, one child, one hour. It's a weekly one hour. It's been our privilege to continue these relationships and to add two more mentors this year.

And each mentor has a prayer partner. And although the work of these mentors and prayer partners do each week may not see fruit for many years, they're honoring God and representing our church.

[7 : 58] And an example of this is how this ministry has been a blessing that would include a young boy I mentored a few years ago. And the pandemic put an end to the mentoring for almost two years.

And so by the time that it was over and the schools opened up again, he had gone on to middle school. But the funny thing is, is that wasn't the end of our relationship.

It was the end of mentoring, but this guy calls me and texts me from time to time and asks me to have dinner with him. And with his parents' blessing, we go out and we catch up.

And he's a smart little kid. He has common sense, which is amazing. But he was really proud to tell me the other day, do you know what my GPA is? And I said, no, it's 3.8.

Now, this kid was struggling when I first started working with him. And the fact that he wants to hang out with an old lady like me still amazes me, you know, after an hour a week.

[9 : 00] And I know that some of our other mentors, Joyce and Chris, they still stay in touch with their kids that they mentored prior to. And they go to some of their events and things like that.

So it's my pleasure today to commission Rob Shipley and Beth Burkall as new mentors with Kids Hope for Grace Bible and Northwestern.

In 2 Corinthians 5.20, the Lord calls us his ambassadors. And in Ephesians 2.10, we're told that we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus' undecided works, which God has before ordained that we should walk in them.

And it's our desire to fulfill this call. And we sometimes overlook the needs that exist right near our church. Beth and Rob will be joining current members, Christine Below and Joyce Gannon and me, who have accepted the Lord's call to go to Northwestern in order to show these children in the community the love of the Lord.

So if Beth and Rob will come up here, we will commission them. I'll be meeting with them at the School to Give a Mature this coming week.

[10 : 23] Details still being worked out. But these new Kids Hope USA mentors will use this opportunity to build relationships and encourage children with whom they will work and to do in such a way that they will actually model the love of Christ.

They will encourage the children, love them, and pray for them. May God's Spirit enable and energize them to be models of Christ's love as they befriend these children with joyful hearts and opened arms.

Their prayer partners, which is Sharon Crider for Rob, and Sheila Cutlip for Beth, if you guys will stand up, along with Christine's prayer partner, Barb Cremeans, Joyce's prayer partner is Susie Drummond, and my prayer partner is Loretta Daniel, and will bring the needs of the mentors and the children with whom they will work before God in his almighty throne of grace so that his power will uphold them and support their efforts.

We ask that everyone here at this church also keep them in your prayers as they volunteer there at this school. We're committed to encouraging you and helping you along.

So I'm going to let you pray. All right, I'll pray. Well, Father, thank you so much for this opportunity to reach some kids, for you to love on them, and if opportunities arise, to share with them important truths.

[11 : 45] Pray for each of the ones who are involved in this ministry to these children and building relationships, that you would lead and guide them, give them the wisdom that they need each and every day to have insight into where these kids are at and what their needs are each week and how they can minister to them.

Thank you for all the prayer partners and all those involved in this whole thing and everyone's willingness to spend the time and effort to be salt and light and laborers out in the harvest.

In Jesus' name, amen. All right. Well, thank you.

That's wonderful. You know, over the years, we've been here at Grace, our family has for, I don't know, six or seven years, and it seems like, you know, every month I find out about another ministry that is going on here in the church.

There's a lot of people here that are doing the work of the ministry and it is tremendous. It's not always that way in a lot of churches. I've found any way in my experience, a lot of people are just pew sitters.

[13 : 04] And, you know, there's time for just sitting in the pews, just kind of growing and learning, and that's great, but the Lord really wants us to grow, to mature, and to go out and to reach other people in different ways.

And this is a tremendous time commitment. I mean, this is every week during the school year and building a relationship with a child. And, you know, some of these kids, they don't have many relationships.

And just have somebody every week, sit down with them and look them at the eye and say, how was your week? I mean, that will build a bond because for a lot of them, or some of them anyway, they never get that.

And so you can build great relationships and have an opportunity to make not just a temporary impact, which is great, but an eternal impact as well.

So, thank you again for everyone involved in that ministry. Well, are you ready to jump into the book of Mark here? So, we've been in the book of Mark looking at the life of Jesus.

[14 : 14] And last week, we looked at the account, the story of the feeding of the 5,000. And so this next section here is going to be immediately following that.

We're just going verse by verse through the Bible. And trying to understand and explain as best we can what's going on. And what kind of lessons we can learn, what kind of truths we should take away and consider.

And hopefully application also to apply to our lives. But really, the best application is just knowing Jesus. Who is he? Knowing who Jesus is is the greatest application that we could have.

Because our life, especially as Christians, or even if you're not a Christian, knowing who Jesus is is the most important thing that you could ever know.

Let's see where we're at. We are in verse 45. So, Mark chapter 6. Mark chapter 6, verse 45. We're just going to read through this section and then we're going to go back through and we're going to talk about it.

[15 : 23] Again, verse 45. Immediately, he made his disciples get into the boat and go before him on the other side to Bethsaida while he sent the multitude away. And when he had sent them away, he departed to the mountain to pray.

Now when evening came, the boat was in the middle of the sea and he was alone on the land. 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 by them.

And when they saw him walking on the sea, they supposed it was a ghost and they cried out 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. Then he went up into the boat to them and the wind ceased and they were greatly amazed in themselves beyond measure and they marveled for they had not understood about the loaves because their heart was hardened.

When they had crossed over, they came to the land of Gennesaret and anchored there. And when they came out of the boat, immediately the people recognized him, ran through the whole surrounding region and began to carry about on beds those who were sick to wherever they heard he was.

[16 : 41] Wherever he entered into villages, cities, or the country, they laid the sick in the marketplaces and begged him that they might just touch the hem of his garment. And as many as touched him were made well.

So again, provide a little context. Jesus had just, well, a bigger context. Jesus is basically crisscrossing the Sea of Galilee. He's in this region we call Galilee. It was called Galilee back then as well.

This region of Israel called Galilee and just all the surrounding regions around this huge lake. It's a, it's, we call it the Sea of Galilee.

It wasn't technically a sea, but just a very large lake, miles and miles across. And he had just finished feeding, performing this miracle, which amazed everyone.

And it actually says that after this, I can't remember, I didn't write this down, but in one of the accounts of the feeding of the 5,000, it says that the people wanted to take Jesus and make him king right then and there.

[17 : 51] And, well, that's an odd thing. You see a miracle. Why would you want to make somebody king? Well, because they saw what was happening and the things that Jesus was saying, one, the kingdom of God is at hand.

And then the miracles which he performed and they were convinced this is the coming king. This is the Messiah who the prophets told us about.

And when that miracle of feeding 5,000 or really probably more like 10,000 people, when that occurred, that was, that convinced a lot of people and they were ready. Hey, we need to get the Romans out of here.

They've been over our land for too long and we need to take back over. We need to have our own country again like the prophets have said. So let's just make you king right now. But Jesus wasn't ready for that.

So it says, immediately he made his disciples get into the boat and go before him to the other side, to Bethsaida, while he sent the multitude away. So he's like, alright, disciples, I'm going to have you get out of here.

[18 : 56] We're going to try to put a stop to all this. And I'm just going to send the crowds away. Tell them to go home. And so that's what he did. It was late in the evening. They had just had dinner.

So this feeding of the 5,000 was a dinner meal. It had gotten late. It had gotten really past mealtime and that's when Jesus proposed that they have everybody sit down and have a meal.

And so he's going to send them away by boat to another part of Galilee here on the other side of the Sea of Galilee.

And so one of the things we know about the Sea of Galilee even to this day is that it becomes somewhat dangerous at night. There are winds that kind of funnel through the mountains and it goes right over the Sea of Galilee and especially at night can become quite dangerous can cause stormy weather strong winds.

You know at night time it starts to get what? Colder. So you have hot air and cold air mixing together and that's when you get strong winds. And so Jesus told them I want you to get in the boat late at night is the context and go to the other side.

[20 : 07] Now this has happened before. I don't know if you remember back in Mark chapter 4 this is the story of Jesus calming the sea but in Mark chapter 4 it was evening.

Mark 4.33 says when evening had come he said to them let us cross to the other side. So before they had left in the evening in the boat but for the previous time Jesus had gone with them.

This time he said I want you to go by yourselves. I'm going to stay here. So I can imagine his disciples thinking okay that doesn't sound like a great idea but this is Jesus alright Jesus whatever you say.

And then the next verse 46 and when he had sent them away he departed to the mountain to pray. So he had an agenda here the reason he was sending them away by themselves without going with them is because he was looking for an opportunity to pray.

And not just to pray with his disciples which I'm sure he had done plenty of times but he was looking for a time to go off and to pray by himself. And we see a few examples of this anyway in the life of Jesus that he would take opportunities for private prayer.

[21 : 22] A lot of times he was in the middle of the night. And you know back then especially it was difficult to find privacy to pray.

Jesus was looking for privacy and he wanted to pray to the father alone but he's in a traveling group here. And if you've ever traveled let's say you're traveling and you're staying in a hotel with your whole family you don't get any privacy do you?

And so when you're traveling in a big group it's hard to get privacy. And so he sent them off. What's he going to pray about? Why does he want specifically now to go pray?

Well we don't know. The scriptures don't tell us here and most of the time when Jesus prays in private as you can imagine it's private so we don't know what he's praying about.

And we'll talk in a second about one example where we do get some insight into what he was praying about privately. But there is one thing that happened and I think it's I can't remember which of the gospels but it tells us that right before the miracle of the loaves and the fishes the feeding of the 5,000 he had just heard and been told about the death of John the Baptist.

[22 : 44] And John the Baptist was a relative. John the Baptist was his cousin. And you know we don't know for sure but his parents his mom and John's mom were very close it seems and so it's very possible that him and John had known each other had grown up they were about the same age and they had known each other and John was an important part of Jesus' ministry as the we call him the harbinger of Christ he was the one that proclaimed that somebody is coming after me and that was his job and his role.

So hearing about John and not just that he died but how he died he had been beheaded by Herod I'm sure was quite disturbing. Why does Jesus need to pray anyway?

I mean he's God right? Why does he need to pray to the Father? This is an example where the Bible says that Jesus became like us right?

He became he shared in our weaknesses the emotional distraught state that we can get in when a loved one or a close person to us passes away or whatever it is that we might be suffering or going through.

Jesus experienced those things just like we do. He experienced our weakness in many of the same ways that we do.

[24 : 15] I want to talk briefly about this whole concept of prayer but specifically private prayer. You know we see in the life of Jesus both public prayer he prayed in public with others and then he also goes off into private at times.

He did both. In fact we just talked about last week about when he prayed to give thanks for the food that he was about to not only serve but to multiply miraculously. There are other times where Jesus prays in public.

John chapter 17 the entire chapter is a prayer by Jesus for his disciples. And you would think well if you're praying for somebody you know you probably do that in private but in this case he did it right in front of them.

He wanted to pray for them and he wanted them to know how and what he was praying for them in that opportunity. Another example I thought of is in the book of Acts we see the early apostles the early disciples when they were told don't preach anymore in Jesus name.

You can't do that by the leaders. it says they went back and they prayed for boldness and they did it together. They prayed for boldness together.

[25 : 32] Acts chapter 4 verse 23 says this and being let go they went to their own companions and reported all that the chief priests and the elders had said to them.

So when they heard that they raised their voices to God with one accord all together and said Lord you are God who made heaven and earth and the sea and all that is in them. And they continued on to pray for boldness together.

But doesn't the Bible didn't Jesus actually specifically teach that you should never pray in public that you should only pray in private? There's a passage in Matthew chapter 6 where Jesus is talking about the hypocrisy of the Pharisees.

And he says this Mark chapter 6 verse 5 and when you pray you shall not be like the hypocrites for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and on the corners of the streets that they may be seen by men.

Assuredly I say to you they have their reward. What is their reward? That they're seen by men. They get the accolades the religious accolades that they're looking for.

[26 : 44] Because when they pray like the hypocrites what he's talking about when they pray in public they're doing it not because of their devotion to the Lord not because they love him but because they just want what other people will see from them.

But he says this in Mark chapter 6 now verse 6 So you might think well I should never pray in public because it might look like I'm trying to make religious make it look like I'm a spiritual person or something like that.

But when you kind of look through the scripture you see public prayer is pretty common and it's certainly not condemned in most cases. So what's going on in Matthew chapter 6 actually Jesus mentions three things that he sees the Pharisees doing in public.

One is giving alms or charity. They're making sure everybody sees when they put money in the offering box. And so he said when you give you should do it privately.

That's the best way to do it. Then he talks about prayer and then the other thing he talks about is fasting. He says the Pharisees when they fast they want everybody to know it. They want everybody to know that they haven't had a meal in a few days or whatever it is.

[28 : 25] And so don't let that be that way. with you. Do these things in private. It's better. But he wasn't saying that it's only appropriate ever to do these things in private. He was just saying don't do these things for the purpose of public admiration.

That's wrong. That's not why we should be doing these things. We should be doing these things because of our love for the Lord. It's really about our hearts.

the Pharisees themselves at least the ones that he was talking about they didn't pray in private because it wasn't useful to them.

Connecting with the Lord wasn't what they were after. Looking pious in public and feigning devotion is what they were after. And you know it's is other people like that today who are like the Pharisees who maybe are even religious people religious leaders who they don't really know the Lord.

They don't have a relationship with him. They're not really interested in knowing him but they are interested in having other people see how religious or spiritual or devoted that they are.

[29 : 49] Let's talk about private prayer. In our prayer lives we should have times where we pray in public with each other especially with our families. It's important if we only ever prayed in private for example as fathers and mothers let's say our children would never see an example of how they ought to pray.

And isn't that important that our kids see how to pray? Not just reading words on a page of how to pray but just seeing an action from their own parents.

And even us as Christians as fellow believers we get together we have a prayer meeting each Wednesday night here at the church where folks will get together and talk about what's going on in our church the needs in our church what's going on in the community what's going on in the nation and sometimes even the world right?

There are world events going on and those are opportunities and points of prayer where we can pray together and we can encourage one another to pray and if we're only ever praying in private those opportunities to encourage one another to pray is not there.

So public prayer is important but so is private prayer. It's easy for our faith to become ritualistic and performative and so if we only ever pray in public why would that be?

[31 : 18] Why would that be? We see this tendency throughout church history with the church becoming kind of stale and lifeless and the only prayers are the public ones where people just want to be seen for respected for their religiosity.

Really I think our public prayers should really come out of the heart that we have when we talk to the Lord in private. Our relationship with God is meant to be personal and when we pray to the Lord this is a one-on-one thing.

We have the opportunity to talk to Him one-on-one. there's a psalm that says this who is God who is man that you are mindful of Him?

Who is man that you're mindful of Him? Why would God want to talk to me? I mean who am I? I'm not anybody special but He does.

He wants us to talk to Him and to come to Him in prayer. the creator of the universe one-on-one to express our love for Him our gratitude to Him but not just that He wants us to come to Him with our needs with our concerns with our sorrows with our grief with the cares of life that we carry and to bring them to Him.

[32 : 55] He wants to hear about it. He wants us to talk to Him about it. There is one private prayer by Jesus that we have some insight into. I'm not sure how we got insight into this if Jesus shared this private prayer with His disciples later on or what.

But this is the time when Jesus was praying right before He went to the cross. We call it the passion of Christ. In Mark chapter 14 verse 36 it says this, He went to the garden of Gethsemane, He left His disciples just beyond, just kind of within a stone's throw away if you will.

He asked them to watch and He asked them to pray. They didn't. They fell asleep because it was late at night. But He went off a little bit of a distance away to pray privately and it says this in Mark 14 36 and He said, Abba Father, all things are possible for you.

Take this cup away from me. nevertheless, not what I will but what you will. And that was His prayer. One, you know, that word Abba is a term of affection.

You know, like we would have Daddy, Papa. And He spoke to His Father and He said, you know, God, Father, all things are possible for you. There's nothing that's impossible for you.

[34 : 22] would you take this cup away? This cup that I have to bear? That you've given me to bear, would you take it away? One of the things about this prayer is, do you think that Jesus really thought this was an option?

I mean, I don't think so. I think He knew. This is the only way for Him to rescue mankind from their sins.

Because if there was another way, God would have done it. He would have. This was the only way. But still, Jesus went to His Father and said, Father, if there's another way, I know anything's possible with you.

If there's another way, would you take this cup away from me? And even for us, you know, we can go to the Father with things, and we're suffering.

We have people in our lives who are suffering, and we want our prayers answered, and God will answer our prayers. And I've seen it happen over and over again.

[35 : 36] But sometimes the answer is, nope, this is how it has to be. And even then, God wants us to come to Him.

He wants us to come to Him regardless, because He wants an opportunity to care for us, to strengthen us when we need strength. And that's really, I think, what we see in that Garden of Gethsemane.

Jesus was strengthened in His time of great, great trial. One of the opportunities that we have when we can go to the Lord in private is, you don't have to worry about other people listening to your prayer.

Am I saying the right words? Am I getting my theology right? Anybody ever worried about that when you're praying in public? Am I saying the right things? Am I using the right words? Do I sound dumb?

When you're praying in private, you don't have to care about any of that kind of stuff. Because God's not looking at you, oh, I hope He doesn't mess up and say the wrong thing. Some people might think that.

[36 : 41] God knows we're growing.

We don't know it all. There's lots of things that we need to understand better. I've heard some people say this, that if you're mad at God, it's okay, I've heard people say, it's okay to be mad at God.

That is totally not true. It's totally not true. It's not okay to be mad at God. You shouldn't be mad at God. There's no reason to be angry with the Lord. He's done everything for us.

But are people sometimes upset because they don't understand? People sometimes confused? Yeah.

We even see in the Psalms, have you seen the Psalms of David? Lord, it seems that I'm forsaken. What's going on? All my enemies around me, they're persecuting me.

[37 : 45] People are telling lies about me. It's like, well, David, this isn't something where the Lord is against you.

But David goes to the Lord in prayer. At least that's what the Psalms says. It's like, God, it seems like you're against me. That's what it seems like. You know, God's okay with that. He still wants to comfort us even if we don't fully understand what's happening around us, the circumstances, what's going on.

He still wants to comfort us and have an opportunity to connect with us. Really, ultimately, God wants us to know how much we need Him.

He wants us to regularly express our need for Him. I'll tell you, this is actually the hardest thing for me. I'm like, and I don't know if this is a man thing or what, but I like to just fix things on my own.

I like to be my own man, you know, and make things happen and solve problems and all that. So I don't know how many times, you know, instead of taking a moment and going to the Lord and said, you know, God, I need you.

[38 : 59] I just try to fix problems myself. Anybody else kind of relate to that? But God wants us to go to Him. And at the very least, express our need, express our inadequacy, to let Him know that we need Him.

That's one of the greatest ways, I think, for us to grow in the Christian life, is to constantly, constantly know and grow in how much we need the Lord.

Lord. Go on. Mark chapter 6, again, verse 47. Now when evening came, the boat was in the middle of the sea, and He was alone on the land.

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 by them. So this is explaining a lot.

There's a lot of detail in this. Now when evening came, so it's evening, it's night time, the sun is probably either setting or has already gone down. He had already sent them away, and He was probably up on the mountain.

[40 : 08] And it says at this time, the boat was in the middle of the sea of Galilee. In fact, we read in a different account, it specifically tells us how far out it was. and it's in John chapter 6 verse 19, it tells us, so when they had rowed about three or four miles, it says.

So we know that's pretty far, three or four miles. I mean, you rowing, they didn't have motor boats back then, right? It wasn't a sailboat. They were rowing. How long does it take to row three or four

miles?

Oh, probably a good long while. And so he sees them struggling out on the shore or on the water but from the shore or from the mountain near the shore and sees that they're struggling because there's these strong winds that they're dealing with.

It mentions that he's alone on the land. Why would it mention that? Well, I mean, it's possible, right? He could have sent maybe nine of his disciples and left three there. But I think it just wants to make clear in this account, Jesus didn't have anybody with him.

He probably didn't even have another boat. It was just him and so they were separated. They were separated. There was a separation going on. One of the things I think I thought about with this miracle is this miracle seems different from other miracles that Jesus did.

[41 : 35] This one seems more like a novelty or like a parlor trick. Walking on water, I mean, that's pretty cool, right? You can impress your friends by walking on water, right? And so a parlor trick is something you do to entertain guests, right?

To amuse them, to impress them. And it might seem like this whole miracle of walking on water was a way for Jesus to kind of just impress. Hey, guys, look at me.

I can do something you can't, right? But was that the whole purpose of this? most of Jesus' miracles are ways to meet needs, works of compassion, healing people who are sick, desperate to get better, people who need deliverance from demonic oppression, raising the dead.

and so at first this seems kind of gratuitous, a gratuitous miracle, more of like a, it's kind of showing off.

But as we read or talk about this more, I think we'll see that's not the case. Because it does seem out of character for Jesus. So there's a storm brewing, there's winds blowing, that's what Jesus is observing here, the wind was against them, it says, and they were straining it rowing.

[42 : 53] You know, it wasn't just the, you know, regular rowing, they were straining because the wind was against them. They were really in peril. And so Jesus is observing this, it says in the evening he observed this.

And he sees them out in the middle of the sea several miles away, that he's alone. So here's the scenario I think that's going on. Jesus wanted some time to himself, he sent the disciples ahead of him in a boat, but then he sees they got into trouble.

Now last time they got into the trouble, Jesus was in the boat with them. He was sleeping then, but he was in the boat with them. And so they just had to go to him and wake him up, right?

This time, they're by themselves, it's just the twelve of them. They don't have Jesus. Jesus is looking at this, he's seeing this out on the water, miles away.

Then it says that he came to them. He came to them. And it was about the fourth watch of the night when he came to them.

[44 : 00] Now what does that mean? That's not language that we're familiar with, but in the Roman period, they divided up the night into four three-hour segments.

There were four watches, as they called them. Four watches of the night of three hours. The first watch, six p.m. to nine p.m. So from about dinner time, about three hours after that, the second watch, nine p.m.

to midnight, the third watch, midnight to three a.m., and the fourth watch was three in the morning to six a.m. as the sun was getting ready to rise.

So it wasn't until the very last watch of the night, somewhere between three and six in the morning, we see Jesus finally came to their rescue, if you will.

And I think that's really what's going on. And so it mentions, and so he's trying to, you know, think through all the details of what's happening here. It's the evening time when he perceives what's happening.

[45 : 05] He sees what's happening, that there's strong winds, that they're struggling out there three or four miles out in the water. And it's not until at least three in the morning to when he finally gets there.

So how long did Jesus wait when he saw that they were struggling to when he actually went to go help them? Well, we don't know how long he waited. It could be that he left immediately.

Or, you know, maybe he waited a little while. But when you look at, well, when was evening time? Probably sometime between six, nine, maybe midnight, possibly.

After that wouldn't be evening anymore. And then 3 a.m. It was probably about six to nine hours between the time that Jesus saw that they were struggling and when he actually got there. Well, what took him so long? What took him so long? I think Jesus looked and he saw that they were struggling and I need to go help them.

[46 : 18] And so he walked on the water. Not to show off his cool tricks, but because, well, there wasn't a boat. I mean, I guess he could have what?

He could have maybe flown. We don't ever see Jesus doing that except, right, at his ascension when after his death, burial, and resurrection. How long would it take for him to walk, even on land, for three or four miles?

Probably a little while, right? When you've got strong winds blowing against you? I can see Jesus all through the night walking on the water, trying to get to his disciples.

Through the wind, now he's walking on the water, so he doesn't have the water necessarily slowing him down, but he still has the wind that it seems he probably dealt with. He's going to go rescue his disciples.

This is a miracle of compassion. He's trying to meet their needs. They're in trouble, and they need his help. It says this, it says, now about the fourth watch of the night, he came to them walking on the sea, and it says he would have passed them by.

[47 : 36] Now when I read that, the first thing I think of is like, you know, he's walking across the sea, and then he sees them, and he would have passed them by, he would have just kept going, and maybe he was looking over, I wonder if they're going to see me, you know, are they going to look, are they going to see, oh, oh, but I don't think that's what was happening at all.

I think the language is just a little bit foreign to us, and maybe it could have used a better translation, I don't necessarily want to judge the word, that word when it says would have passed by them, that word would is something that means, you know, wanted to, or wished to, or purposed to, or even, I think, maybe the best, intended to.

He intended to pass by them, and then when it comes to that phrase passed by them, it doesn't necessarily mean to walk past, but to pass nearby them, to come up to them, and so I think an alternative rendering of this, could be he intended to approach them, he was coming up to them, he was coming up to help them, and when they saw him approaching them, that is when they got scared, and it says in verse 49, and when they saw him walking on the sea, they supposed it was a ghost, and they cried out, but they all saw him, and they were troubled, now a ghost, what, they thought they saw a ghost, you know, an apparition, now actually, actually, if you look at the King James Bible, back in the old days, when the King James was written, ghost just meant a spirit, and so it actually describes the Holy Spirit as the Holy Ghost, and you see that whenever you see a spirit, a lot of times it uses the word ghost, but this is actually a different word than spirit, they're not talking about just a spirit, this word ghost actually means more of an apparition, or a, in fact, let me see,

I think I wrote down, a phantasm, the Greek word is the root, you know, that we get that word phantasm, and so they think they see a ghost, and then Jesus says, he says to them, be of good cheer, it is I, do not be afraid, now that's probably not how he says it, right, it sounds a little funny to us, like it's Santa Claus coming or something, be of good cheer, ho, ho, ho, I'm sure that's not exactly how this went, but I'm sure he's saying, hey guys, don't worry, it's me, it's just me, I'm not a ghost, don't be afraid, it's just me, and it says then he went up into the boat, to them, and the wind ceased, he didn't even say anything, the wind just ceased, and that was it, and they were greatly amazed, amazed in themselves beyond measure, and they marveled at what had happened, now the funny thing is they had seen this before, right, Jesus had calmed the storms, peace be still, he said, they'd never seen the walking on water, that was new, they had seen the calming of the storm before, which is quite a sight,

I'm sure, in and of itself, you know, and in one sense, I think it's important, like, it says they were amazed, and we're going to read here, it says, for they had not understood about the loaves, because their hearts were hardened, so it seems like there's this indication that their being amazed was a negative thing, I think it's important that we realize, we should never cease to be amazed at what the Lord has done, all the things that he does, we should always keep that wonder about our Lord, even just his creation and what he's done through creation, but all the things, all the works at his hand, the things that he's done, we should never cease to be amazed and look in wonder at the Lord and what he's done, but in this case, it says this, for they had not understood about the loaves,

because their heart was hardened, now first of all, their heart was hardened, like, to us that sounds counterintuitive, these are his disciples who are following him, usually the hard-hearted ones are the

[51 : 55] Pharisees, right, or others, so what's going on here, well, this isn't really in the sense of being opposed to him, this is in the sense their heart was hard, as in, like, we would say, your skull is thick, right, we know what that means, they were thick-headed, thick-skulled, their perceptions were dulled, they should have understood, they should have known something that they didn't, we might today say they were knuckleheads, do people still use that word, I still use that word, knucklehead, and we see this several times actually throughout the scriptures in the life of Jesus and with his disciples, in Mark chapter 8 verse 14 it says this, now the disciples had forgotten to take bread and they did not have more than one loaf with them in the boat, so they're traveling, they got just one loaf of bread in the boat as they're traveling, then he charged them saying, take heed, beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and the leaven of Herod, and they reasoned among themselves saying, it is because we have no bread,

I guess, but Jesus being aware of it, he said to them, why do you reason because you have no bread, do you not yet perceive nor understand, is your heart still hardened? It wasn't that they were opposed to him, they were just like knuckleheads, they didn't get it, there were things that they were not getting that they should have.

The same thing was said about the doubts of his disciples when Jesus rose from the dead, in Mark chapter 16 later he appeared to the eleven as they sat at the table and he rebuked their unbelief and their hardness of heart because they did not believe those who had seen him after he had risen.

So they heard from those they were close to that he had risen and they didn't believe him, they should have, but they didn't because they were knuckleheads. So what's this whole connection with the multiplied loaves?

Again it says for they had not understood about the loaves because their heart was hardened. What's this connection here? Is it, well they had seen a miracle and so they should have expected another miracle? I mean that's a possibility but that just doesn't seem right, it doesn't sit right with me.

[54 : 04] It doesn't even say that they were afraid, nowhere on this account does it say that they were afraid until he shows up right and they think it's a ghost. But I think if we look at a different account, in Matthew's account it says this, Matthew 14 33, then those who were in the boat, they came and worshipped him saying truly you are the son of God.

After they had seen Jesus walk on the water and him calm the winds, truly you are the son of God. And really this is an expression of doubt, previous doubt anyway.

Wow, you really are him. you really are the son of God. I think that's probably what Jesus was speaking to when he was saying, you knucklehead, I just multiplied all these loaves, didn't you see the connections there?

You know, the multiplying of the loaves alone, just by itself, should have been evidence enough for them to know that he was not just the Messiah, which many of them already believed, they already knew he was the Messiah, but this is the creator of the universe, the one who made all things standing before you.

You know, I think among all of us, some of us are more quick to believe than others. Some of us are knuckleheads. I can be a knucklehead. The Bible talks about having faith like a child.

[55 : 35] When a parent tells a child something, the kid believes it. Right? As long as they have a healthy family life, you believe your parents what they say. We need to have that same kind of faith where when evidence is provided, when somebody tells us something that's true, that has the earmarks of truth, we should receive it, not be a constant skeptic.

And it is true that we should be skeptical about certain things, we shouldn't just receive everything that comes in front of us, but when there's something that has substance to it, we shouldn't, well, I need five more pieces of proof, or ten more pieces, or a hundred more pieces, and there are people out there that it doesn't matter how many pieces of evidence you give them, I need one more, I need just one more.

And Jesus, he criticized the Jews specifically, they're always seeking after a sign. In fact, we read yesterday, after the multiplying of the loaves, people came and they said, hey, we heard about what you did with the loaves, hey, can you do that trick again?

Can you do it again? I want to see it. Oh, well, you need the bread of life. Well, I need a sign, we need a sign, Jesus, I can't really believe just based on that one thing, we need one more miracle, and then maybe we'll believe.

And there are some people out there that will never believe no matter how much evidence is put before them. But you know, God is so gracious and patient with us. Even with us knuckleheads, it takes a while.

[57 : 10] You know, and eventually his disciples got there, right? Later on, towards the end of Jesus' ministry with his disciples, he asked his disciples, who do men say I am, right?

And they said all these things, and then, well, who do you say that I am? And it was Peter that spoke up. You are the Christ, the Messiah. Not just the Messiah, he said, you are the Son of the living God.

God is the Lord. The last thing I want to bring up, we'll kind of wrap it up here, is there's so many things with the miracles of Jesus that have connections with the Old Testament, and there's just one that I want to bring up here.

We see Jesus, the miracle here, and kind of is the new one anyway, is Jesus walks on the water. We see with so many of Jesus' miracles that there's connections with the miracles that he does with what the prophets spoke of in the Old Testament.

There's this passage in the book of Job, Job chapter 9. Job chapter 9, we'll start with verse 4, it says, as God is wise in heart and mighty in strength, who has hardened himself, or who has hardened himself against him and prospered, he removes the mountains and they do not know when he overturns them in his anger.

[58 : 30] He shakes the earth out of its place and its pillars tremble. He commands the sun and it does not rise. He seals off the stars. He alone spreads out the heavens and he treads on the waves of the sea.

This is God, our creator, who treads. That's just another word for walk. He walks on the waves of the sea. He made the bear Orion and the Pleiades. He's talking about the stars and the constellations and the chambers of the south.

He does great things past finding out, yes, wonders without number. This is the identity of Jesus. We see this all throughout Mark. Jesus revealing little by little who he is.

With his miracles, they're not just all random. You see all these connections tying him to the Father, to the God, to God, our creator.

We'll just finish up real quick with the rest of this. When they crossed over, they came to the land of Gennesaret and they anchored there. When they had come out of the boat, immediately the people recognized him. Jesus had become extremely famous in the area of Galilee by this time.

[59 : 42] Everybody knew who he was. He ran through that whole surrounding region and began to carry about on beds those who were sick to wherever they heard he was. Wherever he entered into villages, cities, or the country, they laid the sick in the marketplaces and begged him that they might just touch the hem of his garment.

As many as touched him were made well. Some people had figured things out. That one lady, remember, she just touched his garment and she was healed. So people are like, hey, that's all we have to do.

We don't have to necessarily lower somebody through the roof or all these things. Just touch them as a garden. Man, that'll be enough. Up to this point, Jesus was kind of, you know, some people didn't know who he was, but by now, everybody, at least in this region, knew who he was and his fame will continue to spread throughout all of Israel.

But I'll end with this, you know, one thing later on that happens is that Paul is preaching the gospel and he's talking about Jesus and what Jesus has accomplished and he goes before King Agrippa, actually Herod Agrippa, one of the later Herods, and he's explaining this gospel and about this life of Jesus and how he died and he says this, Acts 26, 26, for the king before whom I also speak freely, he was talking to King Agrippa, knows these things for I am convinced that none of these things escapes his attention since this thing was not done in a corner.

Like, you've heard about all this, this wasn't done in secret, you know, I might be filling in some extra details, but you've heard of Jesus, you know who he was, you know all the things that he did while he was doing his traveling and you know about his death and you know about all the mysteries and things surrounding his death and his body is missing, you know all, this thing was not done in a corner, and today, is Jesus a secret?

[61 : 50] he's not, there are still places, pockets in the world where people have never heard, and we need to continue to get the word out. By this time, especially in this nation, the word has gotten out, there are still especially young people that, you know, we went to the fair and shared the gospel with people, some of these young people did not know much, if at all, about Jesus.

Jesus, but once we hear, we got to do something with him. It's not a secret, these things aren't done in a quarter, there's churches all around where you can find out more about Jesus, Bibles in every store, almost, we can find out more about him.

We have to do something with him, what are we going to do with Jesus? He is the bread of life as we talked about last week, and we need to partake of him as the bread of life, to receive him and he will give us eternal life, if we're willing.

Don't ignore him, Jesus, he shows up everywhere, politicians speak about him, people get angry and upset about him, they yell about him, he's everywhere, but it's not enough just to know about him, we got to do something, he is the bread of life and we need to receive him, and if we will, if we put our trust in him, we can have eternal life, amen?

Alright, I ran out of time, I'm sorry, but maybe next week we'll have time for some Q&A; and some other things, but let's wrap up this morning with a word of prayer.

[63 : 27] Father, we love you, thank you for this account and for all the things that we can learn. May we come to you with humility and faith, and each one in this room come to you with all of our needs, with all of our needs to draw closer to you.

That's ultimately what you want. It's so easy for us to go through life and let the cares of this life overwhelm us and just neglect the one who cares for us.

May you remind us each and every day to come to you, put our life in your hands, to love you, to cast our cares on you, as you said, in everything.

And may we be witnesses to you and everywhere that we go, in Jesus' name, amen. Amen. All right, thanks everybody. Don't forget, grab some of those little flyers, just put them on a few cars or whatever, but that would be great.