

NBC Devotional
November 15, 2023
“Storms”

Jesus received heartbreaking news. He received word that his cousin, John the Baptist, was brutally murdered. Matthew 14:13 tells us that in his grief he withdrew by boat to a solitary place.

He was heartbroken.

He needed to be alone.

He needed to grieve.

But the people in the surrounding towns raced on foot to find him. When he got out of the boat there was a sizable crowd and was growing. Jesus had compassion on them and healed their sick.



Jesus With You

The disciples came to him late in the day. They encouraged him to send the people home so they could find food. “You give them something to eat.”

Five loaves and two fish. The miracle of the feeding of the 5,000 is more wonderful than we have time to tell. But I will tell you this. This wasn’t all Jesus. If Jesus was the only one working on this miracle, it would have taken well over 1,000 hours. If only he were breaking the loaves and fish. However, the disciples helped. Other people helped. This was a massive miracle.

Afterward, 12 baskets full were left over. It was the greatest miracle since manna fell from the sky in the Old Testament.

Matt 14:22 says, “immediately” Jesus made the disciples get into the boat and go on ahead of him to the other side of the lake while he dismissed the crowd.

Jesus went up into the mountains to pray. Finally, he was able to pray and grieve. Later in the night he was alone. The boat was already a considerable distance from land, buffeted by the waves, because the wind was against it.

When the disciples got into the boat they were rejoicing. They were experiencing the highest spiritual high ever. They had been part of the biggest miracle since manna. Their hands helped produce the miracle. They were giddy with excitement. They each imagined their futures in a new kingdom and what that would mean for each of them, their families, and for Israel.

The wind began to kick up. But no one noticed. But then the waves began to grow. And grow and grow.

Before long the sail came down and oars came out. They had five miles to sail which would have been about an hour under favorable conditions. But, for ten hours they rowed, rowed, and rowed. They took turns rowing and throwing up their aching arms and burning backs.

Mark’s gospel says they “were straining against the oars.”

They were rowing just to keep in place and to keep from capsizing and drowning. The giddiness of the miracle was long gone. They knew they were in a life and death struggle. It was pitch black. They were far from shore. They didn't even know which way was the shore. They were frightened - VERY FRIGHTENED. Their faith was gone.

Storms come:

- Lose a job - storm
- Have to take a reduced price on your home - storm
- Relational conflict - storm
- The doctor doesn't bring good news - storm

Ten hours ago, they were so excited, and now they were without hope. Without hope.

If you haven't been caught in a storm you've just not lived long enough.

You've got a storm coming

1. Storms will come.
2. Storms will make you question your faith.
3. A storm is not an indication that you have been disobedient. After all, the disciples were obeying Jesus by crossing the sea.
4. JESUS WILL ALWAYS COME TO YOU IN THE STORM.

"Shortly before dawn Jesus went out to them, walking on the lake. When the disciples saw him walking on the lake, they were terrified. "It's a ghost," they said, and cried out in fear."
Matthew 14:25-26

They thought they were going to die. "But Jesus immediately said to them: "Take courage! It is I. Don't be afraid." Matthew 14:27 I AM.

The story here is actually a longer one, but we'll have to come back for the last part another time.

5. You aren't made to weather the storms alone.

One of the ways that Jesus walks to us on the water is in the form of another believer that you are doing life with. All in - even in a storm.

"Let us hold unswervingly to the hope we profess, for he who promised is faithful. And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another and all the more as you see the Day approaching." Hebrews 10:23-25

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