

# The Gospel of St. John

John 6:16-29

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- Matthew 14:22-33
- Mark 6:45-51
- John 6:16-21
- What do we see in common?
- What do we see that's different?
- What stands out in particular to you and why?
- John's gospel was written 30-40 years after the others; so, he may not have been led to repeat many of the details already given.

## Overview, Mechanics, Setting:

- Disciples rowing to Capernaum by way of Bethsaida:
  - departed after 6:00 p.m. sometime
  - waited at Bethsaida until it was *dark*
- Gennesaret - plain or city near Capernaum on the west side of Sea of Galilee.
- Sea of Galilee:
  - 700 ft. below sea level.
  - 14 miles long and 6 miles wide.
  - Situated in “Jordan Rift”.
  - Surrounding hills are 2,000 ft. above sea level.

## Overview, Mechanics, Setting (cont'd):

- Steep elevation drop causes fierce storms to come down, similar to our Lake Powell.
- 4th watch is 3:00 - 6:00 a.m.
  - watches start: 6-9 p.m. in 3 hour shifts
- From 6-9 p.m. to 3-6 a.m. ( $\approx$  6-9 hours) the disciples rowed 3-4 miles.
- Stadion (pl. Stadia)  $\approx$  1/8th mile
- 5th miraculous sign given in John's gospel.

## Purpose:

- It reads almost as if Jesus had yet another test for his disciples, the true and false ones.
- The Bible spends a lot of time comparing the true disciples to the false. (wheat and tares, good and bad fish, sheep and goats, those within and those standing outside, wise and foolish virgins, wise and foolish slaves with talents, good ground and bad, apostates, those that fall away, continue in sin). Why??
- Because, this is a serious matter!

## Purpose (cont'd):

- We mustn't be deceived or even deceive ourselves.
- This short story gives us another comparison between true and false disciples and how Jesus deals with each.

## Verses 16-21:

- Jesus “saw” their struggles.
- Divine sovereignty, omnipotence, and omniscience are never in a hurry!
- Jesus walked out to them rather quickly.
- Many of these guys were fishermen (as many as 7?); so, they were most likely used to storms and being out at dark on the water.
- Thought they were seeing a ghost. Believe in ghosts? How brave are you in a cemetery??

## Verses 16-21 (cont'd):

- This is one of the most known of Jesus' miracles.
- Walking *along* the shore? Immediately there?
  - Too far out to see someone on shore
  - Experienced fishermen this mistaken?
  - Had to be close enough to hear over the wind.
  - 50-100 yards off shore could have been their plan, but 50-100 yards is usually over your head.
  - Why bother getting in the boat?
  - Why did Peter sink?

## Verses 16-21 (cont'd):

- Walking along the shore? Immediately there?
  - They were scared because they thought he was a ghost and he was somewhere he shouldn't be and he probably startled them coming up fast.
- What do you think?
- 4 signs for the price of 1:
  - Jesus walked on water
  - Peter walked on water
  - Wind and storm stopped
  - Warp speed to destination

## Verses 16-21 (cont'd):

- And how did they respond?
  - Matt 14:33 Then those who were in the boat worshiped him, saying, “Truly you are the Son of God.”
  - They responded with adoration, worship, and praise.
  - The response of true disciples!
- This miracle was [is] for believers.
- Along with “examine/compare” and “remember”, it seems that the other predominant words of our master are “fear not”, “don’t let your heart be troubled”, “come to me you who are heavy laden”, “I am with you.”

## Verses 16-21 (cont'd):

- This miracle *illuminates* the response of true believers and is *for* true believers!
- We have resources at our disposal that are not known to the world. (Like the fish and loaves.)
- “In the midst of life’s storms, I am here with you. Do not be afraid.”
- We do not *fear* because we are so smart we can figure a way out, or because we have wealth or wealthy friends, or influence, or whatever. We “fear not” because Jesus is with us and he is in charge.
- Why don’t we believe this?
- On the starting line of 2008? Scary? nah...

## After thought...

- John shows us 3 things here:
- The proper response of true disciples of Christ.
- The unlimited resources at the disposal of believers.
- Fish/Loaves - Dark Storm - Jesus arrives
  - Sacrifice of Jesus' flesh for the world
  - Terrible night and darkness that followed
  - Triumphant and glorious resurrection
- A foretaste of glory to come...

## Verses 22-29:

- These folks wanted to follow Jesus and were quite resourceful at it; but their motives were wrong.
- Where was their focus?
- One way we can *examine* ourselves is by looking at the fruit of *motives*.
- An indication of a false disciple is their almost complete focus on things of the world vice the things of God.
  - What do we talk about?
  - What do we think about?
  - What do we read?
  - What do we dream about?

## Verses 22-29 (cont'd):

- Do we want God or the things God gives us?
- Is he Lord or Genie?
- Focus on worldly things makes us an easy target for false promises of personal prosperity.
- How did Jesus respond?
  - He ignored their superficial questions and addressed the deeper issue of their sinful motives.
- Truly, truly... (pay attention!!)
- Jesus did not need anyone to tell him what was in a man, omniscient Jesus knew these people's hearts.

## Verses 22-29 (cont'd):

- We cannot seek God for things, but only for him.
- Nothing, *nothing* is to come between you and God: not family, wealth, health, well being, peace, world causes, acts of mercy, even his gift of eternal life.
- The question is posed in EE from God, “Why should I let you into my heaven?” for the unbeliever.
- I have often thought that a similar question should be asked of us believers: “Why do you *want* to be in my heaven?” What is our motive?
- Do we want intimacy and the closest possible fellowship and happiness with our Creator, or do we want the *things* he provides?

## Verses 22-29 (cont'd):

- Our Lord wills that every person be active and diligent in the service in which providence has placed him. This is not an excuse to go on the dole.
- But it is his will also that employment and all the concerns of life be subservient to the interest of our relationship with God and the eternal destination of our soul. What is it that lives forever?
- Our souls! And our new body... one day.
- What *food* can our souls receive for eternal life?

## Verses 22-29 (cont'd):

- Everything that can be possessed, except the salvation of God, is a perishing thing; this is its essential character. But when the earth and its produce are burned up, this *bread of Christ*, his grace and salvation, will remain eternally. This is the portion after which an immortal soul should seek. Grace and salvation = “soul food”
- “... God the Father has placed his seal of approval.” By this expression our Lord points out the commission which, as Messiah, he received from the Father to be prophet, king, and priest to an ignorant and sinful world.

## Verses 22-29 (cont'd):

- [Work the works of God?] That is, Divine works, or such as God can approve.
- [This is the work of God] There is nothing in which you can be employed that is more acceptable to God than in yielding to the evidence set before you, acknowledging Jesus as Messiah and the savior of the lost world, and yielding to him as Lord of your life, i.e., “*believing* in him.”