

Mount Olive Wednesday Night Bible Study and Prayer Meeting

September 23, 2020

John 6: 15 - 21

15 When Jesus therefore perceived that they would come and take him by force, to make him a king, he departed again into a mountain himself alone. **16** And when even was now come, his disciples went down unto the sea, **17** And entered into a ship, and went over the sea toward Capernaum. And it was now dark, and Jesus was not come to them. **18** And the sea arose by reason of a great wind that blew. **19** 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. **20** But he saith unto them, It is I; be not afraid. **21** Then they willingly received him into the ship: and immediately the ship was at the land whither they went.

Pastor Tom asked us to recall the facts about the Sea of Galilee shared last week and keep in mind that 2000 years ago the disciples would be rowing in this lake/sea.

Verse 15

“When Jesus therefore perceived that they would come and take him by force, to make him a king, he departed again into a mountain himself alone.”

*Timing is everything. Do you believe God does things for a reason and those things don't jive with our timing?

*For example: This COVID situation. God could take that away in an instant but perhaps He is using this for His purpose somehow.

*In this verse the Jews wanted Jesus to be an Earthly King. But that's not why Jesus came.. He came to save us from our sins. That is His priority. His human side probably saw an attractive offer to become an Earthly King (that was one of Satan's ploys to tempt Jesus in the wilderness even). But Jesus knew His purpose and destiny so He removes Himself from this tempting situation.

*We should depart also from even the appearance of evil. Think about places where you are tempted and don't go there!

*There are some difficult, uncomfortable conversations we need to have say church (example with teen Sunday School Class discussion on sharing explicit photos on cell phones). Going to certain sites on the internet lead to bad places in our minds.

*Jesus knew the Scriptures to battle against the Devil's temptations. We should also! If you have the Holy Spirit in your life, He will set off an alarm to alert us to the dangers of a place to warn us to get out of there.

*And so Jesus removes Himself from this situation.

Verses 16 & 17

"16 And when even was now come, his disciples went down unto the sea, 17 And entered into a ship, and went over the sea toward Capernaum. And it was now dark, and Jesus was not come to them."

*It was getting on to evening (like now at Bible Study), and it would be dark before they row to the land on the other side of the lake.

*The word ship used here really means a small boat or rowboat!

*Imagine that and being alone without Jesus.

Pastor Tom then took us to Matthew's account of this event:

Matthew 14: 21 - 33

21 And they that had eaten were about five thousand men, beside women and children. 22 And straightway Jesus constrained his disciples to get into a ship, and to go before him unto the other side, while he sent the multitudes away. 23 And when he had sent the multitudes away, he went up into a mountain apart to pray: and when the evening was come, he was there alone. 24 But the ship was now in the midst of the sea, tossed with waves: for the wind was contrary. 25 And in the fourth watch of the night Jesus went unto them, walking on the sea. 26 And when the disciples saw him walking on the sea, they were troubled, saying, It is a spirit; and they cried out for fear. 27 But straightway Jesus spake unto them, saying, Be of good cheer; it is I; be not afraid. 28 And Peter answered him and said, Lord, if it be thou, bid me come unto thee on the water. 29 And he said, Come. And when Peter was come down out of the ship, he walked on the water, to go to Jesus 30 But when he saw the wind boisterous, he was

afraid; and beginning to sink, he cried, saying, Lord, save me. 31 And immediately Jesus stretched forth his hand, and caught him, and said unto him, O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt? 32 And when they were come into the ship, the wind ceased. 33 Then they that were in the ship came and worshipped him, saying, Of a truth thou art the Son of God.

*In verse 22 Matthew used the word 'constrained' which means to urge, to force or to compel. Jesus forced them to get in the boat because He knew what was about to happen.

*In verse 23, Jesus is alone on the mountain praying.

*What was He praying about? Some guesses would be:

- His disciples safety
- His temptation to be the Earthly King

*Jesus still constrains us to go into situations where we have to rely on Him. And He still holds us up in prayer to the Father!

*Verse 25 tells us that Jesus walked out to the boat around 3 AM (4th watch). The storm was full-blown by this time. The rowboat was not just in high waves at this time, but in the storm.

*Pastor Tom believes that we are just in the high waves in our world now. The storm is yet to come for us. The Bible tells us that evil will grow worse and worse before Jesus returns. We are just beginning to see how this is playing out today.

*In verses 26 and 27, the disciples are scared but Jesus tells them to smile. The phrase 'It is I' means I AM in Greek.

*In verse 28 Peter asks to come into the water like Jesus.

*This was a display of amazing faith for Peter who was not without shortcomings of his own.

- How many of us would have gotten out of the boat like Peter?
- How many times has Jesus asked us to step out of the boat?
- Why don't we encourage our own children to step out of the boat more (for example to go into ministry or missions) We should be encouraging them to listen for God's call.

Jesus is still calling us to walk outside of the boat today.

*In verses 30 and 31, Peter prayed the shortest prayer in the Bible and IMMEDIATELY Jesus caught him and then scolded him (why do you doubt?)

*Finally, in verses 32 and 33, the disciples recognize Jesus as the Son of God. This recognition, or lack of, by various people has been a recurring theme in the Gospel of John.

Returning now to the verse in John 6:

Verse 18 & 19

“18 And the sea arose by reason of a great wind that blew. 19 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.”

*This measurement would put them 3 to 4 miles across the lake, rowing, at night.

Verse 20

“But he saith unto them, It is I; be not afraid.”

*Again ‘It is I’ is the Greek for I AM.

Verse 21

“Then they willingly received him into the ship: and immediately the ship was at the land whither they went.”

*Here the term ‘willingly received Him’ could be a little humor added to the story.

*Again the word IMMEDIATELY is used to tell how fast the action is occurring. In Matthew’s account, the waves stopped immediately. And here in John, immediately, they were on the land (3 or 4 miles away!)

*How many times has Jesus changed your life immediately, in a split second? How often have we prayed, “God, help me!” Or “I need help right now!”

- End of a good study on a beautiful evening in late September.
 - Thank you, Lord

*May the Lord watch between me and thee,
While we are absent one from the other.*
