

THE GOSPEL OF MARK "Struggle"

PRAYING JESUS

- *ismDisse the Crowd—with authority
- *If Jesus needed time to pray what about you and I?
- *Mark notes Jesus praying three times (Mark 1:35, 6:45, 14:35-39). Each prayer is at night and in a lonely place, each finds the disciples removed from him and failing to understand his mission, and in each Jesus faces a formative decision or crisis.
- *What was Jesus praying for? Hebrews 2:17-18, Luke 22:32, John 17:1-26

DISCIPLES STRUGGLING

- *"He saw" - how could he have possibly seen them at night and some 3 miles away?
- *If they left in the middle of the first watch and Jesus sees them in the middle of the fourth then they had been struggling at the oars for 9 hours. **Why did Jesus take so long to go out to them?**

WALKING ON WATER JESUS

- *He knew precisely where they were because He always knows where His own are so that He can come to them in the hour of their desperation.
- *"Pass them by" - Job 9:8-11, Exodus 33:19-34:7 and 1 Kings 19:11-12
- *God walking on or through the sea—Psalm 77:19, Isaiah 43:16
- *"Shriek" believed it was a ghost/phantom—no other explanation—thus they were panicked
- *"Take Courage. It is I" - means to be brave, buck up, get a grip on yourselves.

IGNORANCE AND HARD HEART

- *Hard heart - emphasizing a settled state of dullness, callousness and lack of understanding
- *Despite their unique calling (Mark 1:16-20; 3:13-19), privileged instruction (3:31-35, 4:13-20, 34), commissioning, gift of miracle working power, and participation in Jesus ministry (6:7-13, 30, 35-44), they still do not understand.
- *We rarely see God walking past or recognize his blessings, bounty, or presence in our lives. We must look in our past and recognize similar experiences where God met us but we were too dense or afraid to see it at the time.
- *Mark is aware of their failures but they serve to provide hope to the readers. That even though the disciples failed time and time again, they were nevertheless Jesus' servants and apostles. Mark's readers, despite their failures, can also through repentance and faith continue to be Jesus' servants (that includes you and me!)

Mark 6:45-56 (NIV)

⁽⁴⁵⁾ Immediately Jesus made his disciples get into the boat and go on ahead of him to Bethsaida, while he dismissed the crowd. ⁽⁴⁶⁾ After leaving them, he went up on a mountainside to pray. ⁽⁴⁷⁾ When evening came, the boat was in the middle of the lake, and he was alone on land. ⁽⁴⁸⁾ He saw the disciples straining at the oars, because the wind was against them. About the fourth watch of the night he went out to them, walking on the lake. He was about to pass by them, ⁽⁴⁹⁾ but when they saw him walking on the lake, they thought he was a ghost. They cried out, ⁽⁵⁰⁾ because they all saw him and were terrified. Immediately he spoke to them and said, "Take courage! It is I. Don't be afraid." ⁽⁵¹⁾ Then he climbed into the boat with them, and the wind died down. They were completely amazed, ⁽⁵²⁾ for they had not understood about the loaves; their hearts were hardened. ⁽⁵³⁾ When they had crossed over, they landed at Gennesaret and anchored there. ⁽⁵⁴⁾ As soon as they got out of the boat, people recognized Jesus. ⁽⁵⁵⁾ They ran throughout that whole region and carried the sick on mats to wherever they heard he was. ⁽⁵⁶⁾ And wherever he went--into villages, towns or countryside --they placed the sick in the marketplaces. They begged him to let them touch even the edge of his cloak, and all who touched him were healed.

Roman Watches

1st—6 pm to 9 pm
2nd—9 pm to 12 midnight
3rd—12 midnight to 3 am
4th—3 am to 6 am

Job 9:8-11 (NIV)

⁽⁸⁾ He alone stretches out the heavens and treads on the waves of the sea. ⁽⁹⁾ He is the Maker of the Bear and Orion, the Pleiades and the constellations of the south. ⁽¹⁰⁾ He performs wonders that cannot be fathomed, miracles that cannot be counted. ⁽¹¹⁾ When he passes me, I cannot see him; when he goes by, I cannot perceive him.