

Series: Peter: The Transformed Life
Text Matthew 14:22-33; Mark 6; John 6
Title: Fixing Your Eyes on Jesus

Coaching Baseball and receivers in football
Watch the ball ... all the way
Do not take your eye off the ball

Setting

- John the Baptist has been beheaded on Herod Antipas' birthday and word has come that Herod thinks Jesus is John reincarnated and this causes some concern.
- Luke 9 says that Herod wanted to see Jesus
- Jesus and his disciples have been followed by this crowd for some time and they are moved to go to the seas to find a respite from the crowds and potentially Herod's aggression.
- They are at the Sea in a desolate place.
 - Luke says that they are at Bethsaida
 - Jesus teaches and feeds the 5000 by the sea.

Matthew 14:22 ESV

Immediately he made the disciples get into the boat and go before him to the other side, while he dismissed the crowds.

He made them go the other side

- God many times sets us on a course and a direction, and we are to be obedient to Him.
- Whatever he says to you.... Do It.

When the Lord is working... He wants you to grow.
He wants you to move from one point to another.
We are to stay stagnant.

Where were they going?

Mark and John

Mark – Disciples get in boat to the other side, to Bethsaida.

John says - ¹⁶ *When evening came, his disciples went down to the sea, ¹⁷ got into a boat, and started across the sea to **Capernaum**.*

Luke said they were going to **Bethsaida**

- Matt and Mark say they landed in **Gennesaret**
- What is the answer?
 - The North coast of the sea of Galilee has the Bethsaida valley to the Northeast and the district of Ginosar (Gennesaret) to the Northwest.

- Intended to land at Capernaum in the district of Gennesaret to walk to Bethsaida.
 - Bethsaida Julius is inland so they would land at Capernaum - controlled by Philip the Tetrarch, the brother of Herod.
 - Bethsaida the hometown of Andrew, Simon, James, and John but says they lived there in Capernaum.
 - Capernaum the hometown of Matthew.
- Winds drive them off and they land in Gennesaret the port in the district of Gennesaret.
 - Lake of Gennesaret
 - Tiberius, Galilee, Gennesaret
 - District of Gennesaret
 - The Gennesaret area was one of the most prosperous and crowded districts of Israel. Capernaum lay on the great Via Maris highway between Damascus (Syria) and Caesarea Maritima on the Mediterranean Sea, and between Tyre and Egypt. Customs taxes were collected from travelers at this crossroads (Matthew 9:9). This was the job of Levi, the tax collector, who became Christ's disciple and was later named Matthew. Jews criticized Jesus for befriending him and other tax collectors.
 - The Plain of Gennesar – Josephus (4 miles long and 2 miles wide)
 - He lived there... he should know
 - Very fertile area
 - Rabbis called it “the Garden of God”
 - There is also a small port village known as Gennesaret – fishing port Gennesar.

Matthew 14:23 ESV

And after he had dismissed the crowds, he went up on the mountain by himself to pray. When evening came, he was there alone, ...

- That side of the coast can go from 650 ft below sea level to 1200 ft above sea level.
 - He went up from that place to pray.
 - Praying –
 - Distress or anger over John?
 - Weariness over the crowds?
 - Temptation that they would make Him King?
 - Just renewal with the father for He was weary.
 - He wanted to be alone with His Father.
 - Jesus teaches us that even when things are bad... especially when things are bad, we need to get alone with the Father.

Matthew 14:24-25 ESV

²⁴ *but the boat by this time was a long way from the land, beaten by the waves, for the wind was against them.*
²⁵ *And in the fourth watch of the night, ...*

MARK 6 - ⁴⁸ *And he saw that they were making headway painfully, for the wind was against them. And about the fourth watch of the night ...*

JOHN 6 - *It was now dark, and Jesus had not yet come to them. ¹⁸ The sea became rough because a strong wind was blowing. ¹⁹ When they had rowed about three or four miles, ...*

They are in trouble

- It would be a 4½ hour walk to Bethsaida Julius – But they wanted to escape the crowd.
 - It is 6 miles to Capernaum on foot.
 - 2 – 3 hours on foot
 - Another two hour walk to Bethsaida, which is inland.
 - Jesus could have prayed for hours and then begin walking.
 - He could have walked there and back in the amount of time they were on the sea.
 - The time it should take for the men to row there is just over three and a half to four hours.
- The time they leave is before evening
- In the evening they got in a boat and started to cross to Capernaum.
 - These were seasoned fishermen. They knew how to handle a boat and they knew how to handle these waters. They grew up fishing these waters on the North coast of the Sea.
 - The entire sea is only – 13 miles long and 8 miles wide
 - Lake Washington from Kenmore to Mercer Island and twice the width at it's widest point near Rte. 520
 - They were rowing from Kenmore to Kirkland
 - Just before Passover – John 6:4
 - Late March early April (28AD-30AD)
 - Rainy season
 - November to May
 - **No rain falls** from June through mid-October.
 - The winds coming from the North
 - And they come in quicker and stronger this time of year.
 - Just before the fourth watch...in the Fourth watch
 - 3AM – 6AM
 - One person wrote "The fourth watch is that point where you wake up and it is so dark, you look at the clock beside your bed, and you sigh deeply – you can still sleep for another 2 hours."
 - Before sunset (evening) – to just before sunrise
 - Late march – Early April in Jerusalem
 - 6:36pm - 6:32am
 - They were fighting that storm close to 8 hours and only made it 3 to four miles.
 - It was still a long way from land.
- Jesus saw that they were making no headway.

Strong Winds are Against You

– a physical manifestation that we can see how it applies to our storms in life.

- Are they of God?
 - He is sovereign and all things are overseen and allowed by Him for His glory...
 - They work together for the good of those called to His purpose.
- Are they sent by the enemy?

- We know that God gave Satan a brief ruling over the winds and weather when we see the story of Job. Lighting and winds were sent ... Job's family was destroyed.
- He is called the Prince of this World.
- The Prince of the Air.
- Are they natural causes?
 - Storms happen!
 - There are weather patterns and seasons for a reason.
 - Sometimes it is just a natural storm. But it is still no fun. It can hurt you.
 - People get sick... people die.
- Are they of our own making?
 - Jonah brought on his troubles.
 - Ananias and Saphira brought on their judgment
 - There are consequences to our actions or consequences thrown upon you because of another's sin.

Storms in your life

- Many times, we face headwinds in our lives.
- We keep trying to work our way through and are getting nowhere
- We are hoping and praying for a place of rest... a port to moor our weary boat in. Yet the storm will not let you stop.
- There is no end in sight, and you are getting nowhere.

Matthew 14:26-27 ESV

²⁶ But when the disciples saw him walking on the sea, they were terrified, and said, "It is a ghost!" and they cried out in fear. ²⁷ But immediately Jesus spoke to them, saying, "Take heart; it is I. Do not be afraid."

Mark 6 – ⁴⁸And he saw that they were making headway painfully, for the wind was against them. And about the fourth watch of the night he came to them, walking on the sea. He meant to pass by them, ⁴⁹ but when they saw him walking on the sea, they thought it was a ghost, and cried out, ⁵⁰ for they all saw him and were terrified. But immediately he spoke to them and said, "Take heart; it is I. Do not be afraid."

John 6 - they saw Jesus walking on the sea and coming near the boat, and they were frightened. ²⁰ But he said to them, "It is I; do not be afraid."

THAT WE MAY SEE HIM ...THAT WE MIGHT COME TO HIM

- They saw Him –
 - They ALL saw HIM
 - Walking on the water
 - Thought it was a ghost
 - It was HIS ghost
 - Did he not make it out?
 - Did Herod kill Him?
 - Is He dead?
 - Has to be a spirit

- Were terrified
 - Cried out in fear
 - They had every reason to be afraid
 - The storm
 - The master is dead
 - Why is His ghost coming toward us?
- Maybe you are terrified?
 - You cannot make it through the storm
 - You have tried to see Jesus
 - But the silence feels as though He is a ghost
 - That God is dead to your needs
 - You have cried out to God. Yet have not seen an answer
 - But you feel, that if God is not with you.... You are truly in trouble
 - You are crying out in fear

HE SEES US... HE COMES TO US... HE CALMS US

Do not fear my friend! Jesus sees you!

- **He saw them**
 - They were making headway painfully
 - The wind was pressing against them
- **He came to them**
 - Mark – “He meant to pass by them”
 - *Parerchomai* - (par-er'-khom-ahee)
 - pass them by / neglect
 - *Para* – alongside
 - *Erchomai* – to come / to pass
 - He planned on coming alongside them!
 - Jesus is with you. He is right alongside you
 - He experienced suffering as you have (Heb. 2:18)
 - He experienced loss as you have. He is our great High priest... he has gone through and understands with true empathy and understanding your fear and sorrow.
- **He calmed them**
 - *“Take heart; it is I. Do not be afraid.”*
 - Take heart – take courage!
 - good courage, good cheer, am bold.
 - To be courageous; to regain one's courage. Used when encouraging someone to bear or take up a difficult situation. To be courageous;
 - OVERCOME YOUR FEAR!!!!
 - Fear is a killer! It robs you of your present.... It has you linked to an unknown outcome at all times.

Matthew is the only Gospel that adds this portion of the story.

Matthew 14:28-29 ESV

²⁸ And Peter answered him, "Lord, if it is you, command me to come to you on the water." ²⁹ He said, "Come." So Peter got out of the boat and walked on the water and came to Jesus.

GET OUT OF YOUR BOAT

- Christ's presence was there
- Peter wants to come close to Jesus
- Lord if it is you.... Command me.
- Obedience to the word of Christ – COME
- He got out of the Boat
- He walked on water
- He came to Jesus
- What BOAT are you relying on to save you?

Matthew 14:30-31 ESV

³⁰ But when he saw the wind, he was afraid, and beginning to sink he cried out, "Lord, save me." ³¹ Jesus immediately reached out his hand and took hold of him, saying to him, "O you of little faith, why did you doubt?"

- He saw the wind
 - The invisible air that swirls
 - We are moving toward the Lord and miracles are taking place all around us... though we may still be in the storm
 - Then we take our eyes off the Lord and look at the wind
 - You can't even see the wind
 - Those invisible things that grip you.
 - The what ifs
 - What if I am found out – the past
 - What if there are consequences – the past and future
 - What if I am not saved from this – the future – worry and fret.
 - Things you cannot control and even though you have been fighting it and not making headway you still fret over it.
- Fear gripped him and he began to sink
 - When you take your eyes off of Jesus you will be filled with fear and worry because you have eliminated the giver of peace. The prince of peace.
 - You will sink and drown in the stress, in the worry, in the struggle.

SALVATION AND FAITH

- **He cried out to Jesus – Lord save me!**
 - Where else do you turn?
 - Tell it to Jesus.
 - Cry out, "Lord, save me!" –

- He is the authority.
 - He is in charge.
 - He has been given control.
 - You trust Him though the storm STILL rages.
- SAVE Me!
 - Are you looking to be rescued?
 - Do you truly desire to have victory through this storm?
 - What does salvation look like for you?
- **Immediately Jesus did just that**
 - Reached out to him.
 - Took hold of him.
 - There was no delay.
 - There was no hesitation.
 - The storm is still raging. But they were saved.
 - He was saved before the storm settled.
- **“O you of little faith, why did you doubt?”**
 - Hang On... Peter was the only one who called to Jesus
 - Peter was the only one to get out of the boat
 - Peter was the only one to walk on water.
 - Is Jesus shaming Peter?
 - Are you to be shamed if you do not have faith?
 - Faith as a grain of mustard seed is sufficient. Surely Peter had that much... small.... But sufficient.
 - *Oligopistos* – (ol-ig-op'-is-tos)
 - Incredulous of little faith, trusting too little:
 - *Oligo* - small, a while.
 - Of uncertain affinity; puny (in extent, degree, number, duration or value); especially neuter (adverbially) somewhat -- + almost, **brief(-ly)**, few, (a) little, + long, **a season, short**, small, a while.
 - *Pistis* – Faith, belief, trust, **confidence**; fidelity, faithfulness.
 - **conviction** of the truth of anything, belief (Plato, Polybius, Josephus, Plutarch;
 - (Economics Oligopoly)
 - A monopoly is a market with only one producer, a duopoly has two firms, and an oligopoly consists of two or more firms. There is no precise upper limit to the number of firms in an oligopoly, but the number must be low enough that the actions of one firm significantly influence the others.
 - Your faith is in multiple things and outside trust mechanisms are influencing you and keeping you from believing.
 - You must have a monopoly of Trust in Jesus.
 - Other things you lean on will take your eyes away from Him.
 - Peter.... How did you let your conviction last such a short time?
 - Why did you let doubt rob you of your faith?

TRUST AND OBEY

When we walk with the Lord in the light of His Word,
What a glory He sheds on our way!
While we do His good will, He abides with us still,
And with all who will trust and obey.

Trust and obey, for there's no other way
To be happy in Jesus, but to trust and obey.

Not a shadow can rise, not a cloud in the skies,
But His smile quickly drives it away;
Not a doubt or a fear, not a sigh or a tear,
Can abide while we trust and obey.

Matthew 14:32-33 ESV

³² And when they got into the boat, the wind ceased. ³³ And those in the boat worshiped him, saying, "Truly you are the Son of God."

Mark 6 - ⁵¹ And they were utterly astounded

John 6 - ²¹ Then they were glad to take him into the boat,

HOW WE RESPOND TO CHRIST

He Gets In their boat

- They got in the Boat
 - **John** – They were glad to have Him in the boat.
 - You think?!
 - They welcomed Him – into their safety net.

The Storm stops

- It ceases.
- It has no power over them.
- When He got into their boat... He calmed the sea.
- He is looking at you.
- Are you looking at Him?
- The wind stopped.
 - The storm of their life was gone.
 - When we welcome Him as our problem solver.

Matthew – They worshipped Him

- They had already seen Him calm the storm (Mark 4).
- Fed 5000.
- Now walk on water.

- They now see Him as the Son of God
 - Power over creation
 - But they did not totally understand (the bread and Their relationship to Him)

Not till he feeds the 4000 and they are again in the boat do they understand who he really is- the Bread of Life and they must take part in Him.

Mark 6:51-52 ESV

⁵² *for they did not understand about the loaves, but their hearts were hardened.*

- they were shocked – utterly astonished
- Did not understand – we see after the feeding of the 4000 that they will then understand about the bread and Who he is.
 - Peter’s confession
 - They would need to take Him in as eating bread.

SLOW TO LEARN

- Their hearts were hardened.
 - Their "mind" was dull to perceive it. This does not mean that they were "opposed" to Jesus, or that they had what we denominate "hardness of heart," but simply that they were slow to perceive his power.
 - They did not quickly learn, as they ought to have done, that he had all power, and could therefore allay the storm.
 - **How often has God blessed us and we quickly forget?**
 - He has done miracles in our lives so many times ... yet we continue to be shocked and not understand.
 - The word "heart" is frequently used in this sense. See Ephesians 1:18, in Greek; Romans 1:21; Romans 2:15; 2 Corinthians 4:6. - Barnes Notes
 - Are we slow to learn that God is faithful and He knows what we need?

The last verse that relates to this story is found in the Gospel of John

John 6:21 ESV

... and immediately the boat was at the land to which they were going.

- And immediately they were at their destination
 - Landed at Gennesaret (4.1 km from Capernaum)
 - *eutheós* - Definition: at once, directly
 - Usage: immediately (32), soon or shortly (1), at once.
 - KJV - Straightway
- Looking at a map and calculating:
 - the distance between Tiberius and Capernaum
 - The distance they had rowed
 - The direction they were aiming
 - When the storm stopped... they were just off the coast at Gennesaret.
- Is there a need to see it as a transportation miracle as we see in Philip’s ministry?
 - Certainly the God who just fed the 5000 ...
 - Who just walked on water ...

- Who just calmed the winds ...
- Could immediately move the boat a half mile to a port.
- But we do not to have that... The word can mean soon or shortly.
- The thing is that with Jesus in their boat and in their hearts
 - The storm was stopped and they were brought to shore safely.

NOT WHAT YOU WANTED

- **Note that it was not the destination they wanted.... It was the destination that was meant to be.**
- The results of God's answer don't match up to what you [raved for].
- He answers NO
- He answers...Not yet
- He answers.... I Got This! I know what I am doing and why!
 - Jesus ministers in Gennesaret.
 - The answered prayers of Gennesaret
 - Mark 6 - ... *they came to land at Gennesaret and moored to the shore.* ⁵⁴ *And when they got out of the boat, the people immediately recognized him* ⁵⁵ *and ran about the whole region and began to bring the sick people on their beds to wherever they heard he was.* ⁵⁶ *And wherever he came, in villages, cities, or countryside, they laid the sick in the marketplaces and implored him that they might touch even the fringe of his garment. And as many as touched it were made well.*
 - Matt 14 - ³⁵ *And when the men of that place recognized him, they sent around to all that region and brought to him all who were sick ³⁶ *and implored him that they might only touch the fringe of his garment. And as many as touched it were made well.**

Closing

- What storm are you going through?
- Are you not making any headway though you struggle?
- Are you looking to Jesus?
- Are you willing to get out of YOUR Boat and move by faith toward Jesus?
- How long will your faith last? What other securities are looking to?
- Will you cry out to Jesus to save you?
- Will you let Him into your safety net and allow Him control over the situation?
 - Even if you do not end up where you thought?
 - Even if it is at a cost to you but is a blessing to people in need that you do even know?