

Endurance With the I AM

Intro

The year was 1992.

The city. Barcelona, Spain.

DEREK REDMAN lines up to run the 400 meter dash.

This was the semifinal race, a race he qualified for by the fastest overall time in the previous heat.

A strong finish here would place him in the championship race, and a chance at OLYMPIC Gold.

But 15 seconds into that race, Redman came up limping.

A torn hamstring ended reduced him to a man who could hardly even walk.

Race OVER.

But this was an OLYMPIC ATHLETE, possessing a COLOSSAL WILL TO FINISH the race.

So he continued down the track, hopping on one leg to the finish line.

His face displayed the seriousness of the injury.

He was in OBVIOUS agony.

It was unclear if he still had what it took to merely FINISH the race.

UNTIL a man from the stands rushes on to the track.

He takes Redmans arms around his own shoulders.

And by supplying the length of a second, healthy leg, the man enables Redman to cross the finish line.

The man's identity? Jim Redman. Derek Redman's father.

What a PICTURE for ENDURANCE in the Christian life.

A Christian must ENDURE with Jesus to the end.

SOMETIMES THE AFFLICTIONS are so POWERFUL that they

ERODE OUR OWN ABILITY TO CONTINUE WITH JESUS CHRIST.

Until A POWER EXTERNAL, Foreign to us, wholly outside our own natural abilities, ENABLES US TO KEEP GOING.

CHRIST CALLS ALL OF HIS PEOPLE TO ENDURE WITH HIM IN AFFLICTION.

- **Tribulation.**
- **Pain.**
- **Difficulty.**

And beloved, we are in a season of affliction.

AND the call Jesus Christ issues forth to you today?
ENDURE by the POWER HE SUPPLIES.

But this is an endurance THAT IS NOT equivalent to survival.

- Beat your neighbor to the grocery store.
- Stay healthy.
- Get our lives back to NORMAL.

NO, the call to endure, IN THIS SEASON, is a call to FAITHFUL DISCIPLESHIP.

- In Revelation, Jesus calls his churches to ENDURE tribulation.
- His call? Survive it!
- No—CONQUER IT.
- That is, OBEY JESUS CHRIST.
 - SERVE JESUS CHRIST.
 - BE A FAITHFUL WITNESS TO JESUS CHRIST UNTIL YOU REACH HEAVEN.

And the only way to ENDURE TO THE END, is by accessing a power outside your own willingness to continue.

IT'S AN EXPERIENCE the disciples TASTE DURING THE STORM at Sea.
JESUS COMMANDS THESE MEN—GET TO THE OTHER SIDE.

But a storm turns their attempts at obedience into an exercise of FUTILITY.
These men wear down.

They are overcome by the power against them.

And all willingness to continue with Jesus slowly erodes.

Until Jesus Christ brings them POWER FOREIGN TO THEIR OWN WILLINGNESS TO CONTINUE.

If you're studying Mark with us, you'll realize that this is the SECOND STORM MIRACLE.

- In the first miracle, a storm THREATENED TO KILL THE DISCIPLES.
- AND JESUS REBUKED THE STORM.
- Now, Jesus leads the disciples into ANOTHER STORM.
- But this storm does not threaten their LIVES.
- It frustrates their WILLS.
- IT OBSTRUCTS THEIR ABILITY TO OBEY JESUS.

In the first storm, these men needed *rescue from death*.

In the second storm, they need *power in life*.

Also, notice 6:32-56 is one TEXTUAL UNIT.

The text begins and ends in the same way.

Crowds Recognize Jesus, and all the towns go out to meet them.

In the middle of these bookends JESUS PERFORMS TWO NATURE MIRACLES.

- THE FIRST—A SUPERNATURAL GENERATION OF BREAD FROM BREAD.
- THE SECOND—A SUPERNATURAL CONQUERING OF THE SEA.
- Both of these stories are DRIPPING WITH OT ECHOES.

AND BOTH STORIES CENTER ON A REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST AS GOD IN THE FLESH.

- In the first nature miracle, Jesus does only what God can do.
- In the second nature miracle, Jesus walks only where God can walk.

THE FIRST STORY ANSWERS THE QUESTION: WHY CAN JESUS SATISFY YOU IN THE DESOLATE PLACE?

Our text under consideration asks:

Why can Jesus Christ ensure your endurance when the force of affliction erodes your willingness to CONTINUE FOLLOWING HIM?

LET'S TAKE A LOOK SHALL WE?

45 Immediately he made his disciples get into the boat and go before him to the other side, to Bethsaida, while he dismissed the crowd.

The story begins an unusual feature in Jesus's ministry.

- Jesus Christ is a traveling preacher.
- This ministry has centered upon the towns surrounding THE SEA OF GALILLEE.
- His normal course of action?
- Use his disciples and their boat as A WATER TAXI.

But NOW, JESUS SENDS HIS TRANSPORTATION AWAY.

And the language of the text portrays DECISIVE ACTION and INTENTIONAL PURPOSE.

Jesus MADE them GET INTO THE BOAT.

- Literally he URGED THEM, HE COMPELLED THEM to get in.

AND he SUPPLIES their destination:

- **GO TO THE OTHER SIDE**, toward a fishing village called BETHSAIDA.

AND Jesus issues a promise. He tells them to GO BEFORE HIM.

- Jesus has a plan here.
- He sends his disciples away.
- And he promises that he will meet them on the other side of the lake.

Here we see a Jesus who is deceive, in charge, and in control.

Get into the BOAT.

Sail to Bethsaida.

I'll meet you there.

46 when Jesus is alone, he prays.

46 After he had taken leave of them, he went up on the mountain to pray.

Now Mark tells us NOTHING about this prayer.

We don't know WHY Jesus prayed.

We don't know WHAT Jesus prayed.

Mark's concern is WHERE Jesus prayed.

He went up ON THE MOUNTAIN.

IN MARK'S GOSPEL ACCOUNT this the mountain is a SIGNIFICANT LOCATION.

- Every JESUS is said to be ON THE MOUNTAIN, Jesus is with his disciples.
- And he gives them SECRET even DRAMATIC REVELATION.
 - THE Mountain top was a place of EXCLUSIVE TEACHING.
 - ILL. It was like the OVAL OFFICE.
 - A place of REVELATION only entrusted to his disciples.
- Therefore, we should expect that Jesus in PRAYING, Jesus has in mind the same purpose.

Why is he on the MOUNTAIN?

WE SHOULD EXPECT THAT JESUS WANTS TO REVEAL SOMETHING TO HIS DISCIPLES.

This special REVELATION takes on a SPECIFIC OCCASION.

The DISCIPLES at Sea.

And there are TWO ASPECTS to this OCCASION.

FIRST—THERE IS GEOGRAPHICAL SEPARATION.

47 AND WHEN EVENING CAME, THE BOAT WAS OUT ON THE SEA, AND HE WAS ALONE ON THE LAND.

- **MARK HIGHLIGHTS the LONG DISTANCE** that separates Jesus and his disciples.
- The language of the original text is even more graphic.
- It says the disciples are in the **MIDDLE OF THE LAKE.**
 - Which would be about 3 or 4 miles from **LAND** on every side.
- **ILL.** It's a camera shot from a blimp.
- **MARK IS SAYING—LOOK AT THE SEPARATION!**

IN ORDER TO DEPOSIT HIS REVELATION, JESUS WILL HAVE TO BRIDGE THE GAP.

THE SECOND ASPECT—Centers upon the experience of the disciples themselves. How are the disciples faring out on the sea alone? Apart from Jesus Christ? Not well.

48 And he saw that they were making headway painfully for the wind was against them.

So while the disciples are traveling across the lake, a **STORM FIRES UP.** High velocity winds are in their face.

The **WAVES NOW** become **A POWERFUL CURRENT** moving **AGAINST THEM.** This has made it **VERY DIFFICULT** to follow Jesus's order of **GETTING TO THE OTHER SIDE.**

How difficult?

47 tells us that these men were rowing since **THE EVENING CAME.**

That is, since it became **DARK OUTSIDE.**

48 says Jesus does not come to them **UNTIL THE 4TH WATCH OF THE NIGHT.**

That's the time period just before **DAWN.**

THESE men have been **DRIVING THE BOAT** for, for 8 or 9 hours.

This boat THEY'RE using was a small fishing boat.

- It was probably 30 feet in length, four feet deep, with a capacity to hold 15 people.
- **IT WAS A ROWING BOAT** operated by 4 rowers.
- The Sea of Galilee was about 7 miles wide.
- **ONE TRIP AT MOST** that should take about 7 hours.

- **THESE** men have been **TOILING** for 8 hours—and they're only halfway **ACROSS**.
- They're on track to complete a 16 hour boat ride.

This is miserable.

This is why Mark says that Jesus sees them in PAIN.

Did you hear that language?

He says "they were making headway painfully."

The Greek text is more colorful:

They are IN TORMENT AS THEY ROW.

Agony.

ILL. Have you ever tried to row a boat?

It sound easy until you try it.

It's a full body workout.

After awhile your back begins to hurt.

Your forearms are burning.

Your legs turn into noodles.

Try it for 8 hours, with a storm in your face!

You'd be in agony too!

These men are experiencing FUTILITY in FOLLOWING JESUS.

THEY ARE in agony. They were likely FRUSTRATED, UPSET, DEJECTED.

These men were wet. Probably cold and hungry.

WHAT IS MORE, THEY'RE STUCK IN THE MIDDLE.

THEY'RE GOINNG NOWHERE.

THEY'RE READY TO QUIT.

The FORCE of the storm ERODES THEIR WILLINGNESS THEIR WILLINGNESS TO CONTINUE FOLLOWING JESUS CHRIST.

WHY?

BECAUSE JESUS PUT THEM THERE.

GET IN THE BOAT.

GO TO THE OTHER SIDE.

I'LL MEET YOU THERE.

What do we make of this?

Is Jesus an incompetent captain, OBVLIOUS TO THE WEATHER PATTERNS?

Or maybe this is MERELY the Random and unfortunate experience of suffering due to living life in a FALLEN WORLD.

“STORMS JUST HAPPEN.”

And they are caught in the wrong place at the wrong time.

No beloved, THIS AFFLICTION IS DESIGNED BY CHRIST WHO IS ABLE TO MANIPULATE NATURE.

The Feeding of the 5,000 and the walking on water are to be read TOGETHER.

- IN THE DESOLATE PLACE, JESUS REVEALED HIMSELF AS GOD WHO PROVIDES IN AFFLICTION.
- BUT WHAT MADE THAT OCCASION POSSIBLE?
- JESUS LED THEM TO THE DESOLATE PLACE.
 - JOHN TELLS US of this miracle, “HE KNEW WHAT HE WAS GOING TO DO.”
 - JESUS Designed AFFLICTION FOR THE SAKE OF REVELATION.
- And by SENDING HIS DISCIPLES INTO A STORM, he reveals HIMSELF as GOD WHO RULES AFFLICTION.
 - It’s an AFFLICTION DESIGNED FOR REVELATION.

WHY DO WE EXPERIENCE AFFLICTION IN FOLLOWING JESUS CHRIST?
THEY ARE DESIGNED BY A SOVEREIGN CHRIST.
HIS INTENTION? THAT YOU MIGHT SEE THE GLORY OF CHRIST MORE CLEARLY.

PETER who was on the boat that day says it this way:

—you have been grieved by various trials SO THAT the tested genuineness of your faith—more precious than gold that perishes though it is tested by fire—may be found to result in praise, glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ.

Did you hear the PURPOSE of afflictions? SO THAT.

That’s a PURPOSE STATEMENT.

IT’S A STATEMENT OF DESIGN.

BECAUSE CHRIST IS SOVEREIGN, YOU CAN BE CERTAIN THAT YOUR AFFLICTION IS A FURNACE.

A DESTRUCTIVE FURNACE.

BUT A REFINING FURNACE.

To BENEFIT YOUR FAITH.

To see Christ more clearly.

BELOVED, DO YOU BELIEVE THIS?

- The sovereign Christ has designed your present affliction for your benefit.

Why can Jesus Christ ensure *your endurance* when the force of affliction erodes your willingness to CONTINUE FOLLOWING HIM?

JESUS DESIGNS AFFLICTION THE BENEFIT OF YOUR FAITH.

LISTEN: THE MOST PRESSING QUESTION FOR YOU IS NOT, “WHEN WILL THIS CORONA SEASON END?”

But: WHEN THIS SEASON OF AFFLICTION DOES END, WILL I COME OUT OF IT WITH STRONGER FAITH IN JESUS CHRIST?

Will you PARTICIPATE with Jesus Christ in the building up of your faith?

- Or will you complain. PANIC. QUIT on Jesus?
- THIS IS THE WILL OF CHRIST FOR YOU.
- SEE HIM MORE CLEARLY.
- RECEIVE THE BENEFITS OF YOUR PRESENT PAIN.

And Jesus, THE GOOD SHEPHERD OF THE SHEEP know their floundering. So he Comes to them.

48 AND ABOUT THE FOURTH HOUR OF THE NIGHT HE CAME TO THEM WALKING ON THE SEA.

JESUS uses the lake as a BRIDGE to get to his troubled disciples. Under his feet, The waterway becomes a walkway. Jesus WALKS ON THE SEA.

This is something UNEXPLAINABLE.

It is A NATURE miracle, afterall.

Jesus Christ is manipulating the natural world to SERVE HIS WILL.

It's not something to scientifically explain.

It's a wonder to behold.

THIS FRUSTRATES THE RATIONALISTS of our Day.

THERE ARE PEOPLE WHO SAY, “It CANNOT BE true unless you have a SCIENTIFIC EXPLANATION for how it works.”

- So, some people attempt to EXPLAIN How Jesus can walk on water.
 - “Jesus was walking upon a conveniently located sand bar.”

- “The disciples were delirious from their exhaustion and hallucinated.”
- “They were actually very close to the shore and Jesus was walking on rocks.”
- “This is just a myth—a convenient tale to convince people that Jesus is the messiah.”

But none of these objections fit an honest assessment of the Text.
Mark is honestly reporting an EYE WITNESS TESTIMONY

- Did you notice the eye witness details?
 - The events leading up to it: the dismissal of the crowd on the shore.
 - The boat’s intended destination: The village of Bethsaida.
 - The location of the boat: the MIDDLE OF THE SEA.
 - The occasion? A powerful storm hindering their course.
 - The time it occurred: “It was about the fourth watch of the night.”

Trying to explain how Jesus walked on the sea.

- And saying, “this is just a myth”
- These statements reveal more about the person making the objection than it does about WHAT IS IN THE TEXT.
- IT SHOWS A PRE-determination that MIRACLES ARE IMPOSSIBLE.
- If your starting point is “there is no God,” then you force yourself to explain this away.

WELL, YOU SAY, HOW DO YOU EXPLAIN WHAT HAPPENED?

The point is YOU DON’T.

Beloved, this is not a miracle to be EXPLAINED.

This is a miracle to BEHEOLD.

How do I know?

Consider the stated INTENTION of JEsus Christ.

Why did Jesus walk on the water?

48 HE MEANT TO PASS BY THEM But when they saw him walking on the sea, they thought it was a ghost, and cried out, 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.’

Jesus comes to the disciples walking on water.

And the text tells us that Jesus intended to Walk by them.

But before he could, the disciples saw him from a distance.

They couldn’t see HIS FACE.

RATHER on the moon lit see, they see a shadowy figure walking on the water.

The only **DEDUCTION** in the realm of possibility in their minds?

This is a **GHOST**. The spirit of a dead man coming to harm us!

They **PANIC**. They are **TERRIFIED**.

THEY BEGIN CRYING OUT. SHOUTING WITH SCREAMS OF PANIC AND HORROW.

But Jesus, calms them with his word.

TAKE HEART. IT IS I. DO NOT BE AFRAID.

Now this is an unusual scene.

What is going on here?

Well the **KEY** to understanding this little phrase “he meant to pass by them.”

It’s a phrase revealing the **INTENTION OF JESUS CHRIST**.

What did he intend to do?

It could mean—he meant to pass by them **UNDETECTED**, but he got caught.

- That is, at some point during his trip to the disciples, he changes his mind.
- And he decides he wants to stay hidden.
- But he is seen from afar by his disciples.

But this presents us with a Jesus who is in **DIRECT CONFLICT** with who he proves to be in this story already.

- It would present us with a **Jesus who is INDECISIVE**.
- But Mark shows us a Jesus in **TOTAL COMMAND** in the previous verses.
- Get in the boat. Go across the sea. I’ll meet you on the other side.

What is more, this interpretation would shows us a **JESUS WHO IS FAILING** in something much easier to do than walking on water.

- Can’t the man who can walk on water stay hidden from his disciples?
- Of course he can.

No, Jesus did **NOT INTEND TO HIDE HIMSELF**.

JESUS INTENDED TO REVAEL HIMSELF.

AN INTENTION revealed **BY HIS MESSAGE TO THE DISCIPLES**.

- Take Heart.
- It is I.
- Do not fear.

Or more literally translated from the Greek text:

- **Take Heart. I AM. Do not fear.**

Well, you might say--what difference does this really make?
Jesus is clearly saying “Look I’m not a ghost. I’m Jesus.”

Ah, but he says MORE than simply “I’m Jesus.”
He says, “I AM.”

JESUS SPEAKS OUT OF A NATURE MIRACLE AND SAYS I AM.
Does that ring any OT bells?

EXODUS 3- MOSES SEES A NATURE MIRACLE.
A Bush is on fire but not in any way being destroyed.
And as he approaches, **GOD SPEAKS TO HIM** out of this nature miracle.
IN TURN, MOSES asks God, “what is your name?”
God **ANSWER: I AM THE ONE WHO IS.**
Or in short, **I AM.**

Why does Jesus Christ WANT TO PASS BY HIS DISCIPLES?

- We wants to **SHOW THEM HIS GLORY AS THE I AM.**
- This is not a miracle he wants to **CONCEAL.**
- But a miracle he wants to **REVEAL.**

DISCIPLES—BEHOLD MY GLORY AS THE I AM

- The one who always was, is now, and always will be.
- The **ETERNAL ONE.**
- The Creator of the Heavens and the earth.
- The one to whom all creation must **OBEY.**
- Like **THE WATER UNDERNEATH** my **FEET.**

JESUS MEANT TO PASS BY HIM MEANS HE INTENDED TO REVEAL HIS DIVINE NATURE TO THEM.

- He intended this **GLORY** to be a source of **JOY** for his disciples.
- A source of **COMFORT AND GLADNESS.**
- But because **OF THEIR UNBELIEF**, the glory of Jesus Christ was seen as a **THREAT.**

Rather than an occasion **FOR WORSHIP**, this becomes an **OCCASION FOR CONSOLATION.**

Take HEART. I AM. DO NOT BE AFRAI.

TAKE HEART.

- That is, BE CONFIDENT in your present affliction.
- BE BOLD.
- Be courageous.
 - OR IN OTHER WORDS—ENDURE.

DON'T FEAR. Don't PANIC. Don't be filled with timidity and in your affliction.

Why? I AM THE ONE WHO IS. I AM THE ETERNAL ONE.

THEFORE, THE SOURCE OF YOUR AFFLICTION MUST OBEY MY WILL.
LOOK—THE WAVES THAT AFFLICT YOU ARE UNDER MY FEET.

Jesus well could have cited Psalm 125:1 to his fear filled disciples:

THOSE WHO TRUST IN THE LORD ARE LIKE MOUNT ZION WHICH CANNOT BE MOVED BUT ABIDES FOREVER.

IN MIDDLE OF AFFLICTION, THESE MEN ARE CALLED TO BELIEVE IN THE DIVINE NATURE JESUS CHRIST.

The promised result?

ENDURANCE IN AFFLICTION.

LIKE A MOUNTAIN THAT CANNOT BE MOVED BUT ABIDES FOREVER.

Why can Jesus Christ ensure *your endurance* when

the force of affliction erodes your willingness to CONTINUE FOLLOWING HIM?

BECAUSE, AS THE I AM, JESUS CHRIST RULES OVER EVERY AFFLICTION.

The Source of every AFFLICTION must obey HIS WILL.

- Beloved, the Corona Virus is in under THE FEET OF JESUS CHRIST.
- IT MUST OBEY HIM. IT MUST FOLLOW HIS ORDERS.
- Col. 1 tells us that IN JESUS CHRIST ALL THINGS HOLD TOGETHER.
 - ALL THINGS EXISTS BECAUSE CHRIST HOLDS THEM TOGETHER.
 - IF CHRIST LET GO, ALL THINGS WOULD DISPERSE INTO NON EXISTENCE.
 - INCLUDING a MICROSCOPIC VIRUS.
- PUT YOUR TRUST IN THE DIVINE NATURE OF JESUS CHRIST WHO RULES ALL CREATION, EVEN A VIRUS.

And that's not the only reason for their comfort, it is?

JESUS DOES MORE than talk to them.
He draws near TO THEM.

51 AND HE GOT INTO THE BOAT WITH THEM, AND THE WIND CEASED. And they were utterly astounded.

Jesus overcomes the SEPARATION that he initiated at the beginning of the story.

- He enters the boat.
- And the wind STOPS IMMEDIATELY.

The astonishment of the disciples indicates the obvious.

- THE WATER obeyed the will of Jesus Christ.
- And so does the WIND.
- 53 tells us that they finally completed the initial will of Jesus Christ.
- WITH JESUS CHRIST IN THE BOAT, THEY CROSSED OVER TO THE OTHER SIDE.

AND NOW THESE DISCIPLES HAVE EXPERIENCED DIFFERENCE JESUS CHRIST MAKES IN THEIR AFFLICTION.

THE ENTRANCE OF A POWER SOURCE EXTERNAL TO THEIR OWN.

- SEPARATED FROM JESUS CHRIST, THESE MEN WERE WORKING IN VAIN.
- They were DEJECTED, weary.
- FILLED WITH FEAR.
- FILLED WITH PANIC.
- Ready to QUIT.

BUT THEN JESUS CAME NEAR.

I AM THE ONE WHO.

GOD HIMSELF IN THE PERSON OF JESUS CHRIST CAME NEAR.

The I AM brought in a POWER beyond them.

A new power source enabling their perseverance beyond their natural abilities.

Why can Jesus Christ ensure your endurance when the force of affliction erodes your willingness to CONTINUE FOLLOWING HIM?

Because THE I AM COMES NEAR.

He BRINGS TO YOU A POWER SOURCE BEYOND YOUR ABILITY TO FOLLOW HIM.

**Isaiah pictures endurance like God CARRYING those who are too weak to even walk.
Isaiah 46:3**

4 even to your old age I am he, and to gray hairs I will carry you. I have made, and I will bear; I will carry and will save.

**ENDURANCE ultimately is not YOUR WORK FOR JESUS.
Endurance ultimately is THE WORK OF JESUS WITHIN YOU.**

IT'S LIKE HE'S CARRYING YOU.

Why can Jesus Christ ensure *your endurance*?

**JESUS CHRIST IS GOD WHO DESIGNS EVERY AFFLICTION TO BENEFIT YOU.
JESUS CHRIST IS GOD WHO RULES THE AFFLICTION THAT SURROUNDS YOU.
JESUS CHRIST IS GOD WHO COMES NEAR WITH DIVINE POWER TO ASSIST YOU.**

**BUT, BELOVED, ALL OF THIS PRESUPPOSES THAT GOD HAS OVERCOME YOU'RE
THE ULTIMATE SEPARATION.
YOUR ULTIMATE CAUSE FOR CONCERN.
A HOLY GOD WHO IS ANGRY WITH YOUR SIN.
A HOLINESS THAT BY NATURE CANNOT DRAW NEAR TO SINNERS!**

As you read this story, there is a THEOLOGICAL PROBLEM that must not go unnoticed.

**THE CENTRAL theological problem of the ENTIRE BIBLE.
HOW CAN A HOLY GOD DRAW NEAR TO SINNERS?
BECAUSE GOD IS HOLY he REFUSES TO COME NEAR TO SINFUL PEOPLE.
HE WON'T DO IT.**

In fact in Exodus 3 when Moses encounters the HOLINESS OF GOD IN the burning bush, what were the first words he says to Moses?

DO NOT COME NEAR.

**AND YET, WE SEE GOD, in Jesus Christ, DRAW NEAR TO SINNERS.
DON'T FORGET, THE DISCIPLES ARE SINNERS.
52 TELLS US THEY ARE HARDENED.**

**THAT IS, THEY DON'T BELIEVE IN JESUS, EVEN IN THE FACE OF MIRACLES.
THESE MEN OFFEND GOD TO THE UTMOST BY REFUSIGN TO EMBRACE HIS
HOLY SON.**

HOW CAN GOD TOLERSATE SUCH OFFENSE, EVEN TO THE POINT OF COMING NEAR?

Well Consider that this STORM is a microcosm of A GREATER STORM in the Book of Mark.

Jesus will send his disciples through ANOTHER AFFLICTION.
A greater affliction.

Jesus will require his disciples TO ENDURE WITH HIM EVEN UNTO DEATH.

Mark 8: "If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me."

The call? Evil men will kill me. If you follow me, they will kill you. Don't deny me because they will take your life.

No, FOLLOW ME EVEN UNTO DEATH.

BUT Jesus knows the choice they will make.

He EVEN PREDICTS it.

Mark 14:28 "You will all fall away, for it is written, 'I will strike the shepherd, and the sheep will be scattered.'

PERESCUTION WILL PROVE TO BE AN AFFILCTION that ERODES THEIR WILLINGNES TO KEEP FOLLOWING JESUS.
AND THEY WILL QUIT.

BUT IN THE SAME BREATH, JESUS MAKES HIS DISCIPLES A PROMISE.

"You will all fall away, for it is written, 'I will strike the shepherd, and the sheep will be scattered.'²⁸ But after I am raised up, I will go before you to Galilee."

It's another storm.

Another affliction.

They will TURN BACK IN THE MIDDLE OF THE SEA.

They will quit on Jesus and he will die alone.

BUT SOMEHOW JESUS ENSURE them.

When I RAISE FROM THE DEAD, I'LL MEET YOU ON THE OTHER SIDE.
IN GALILLEE.

HOW CAN JESUS MAKE THIS PROMISE? THAT THOUGH THEY FAIL HIM, HE WILL STILL DRAW NEAR TO THEM?

BECAUSE BETWEEN THEIR ACT OF SINFUL REBELLION AND THEIR REUNION WITH THE RESURRECTED CHRIST, THERE IS A CROSS.

ON THE CROSS, JESUS CHRIST PURCHASES WICKED SINNERS.

- HE PURCHASES PEOPLE TOO WEAK TO OBEY JESUS.
- TO UNCLEAN TO DRAW NEAR TO JESUS.
- TO SELFISH TO DIE FOR JESUS.

And THE CROSS IS A PAYMENT THAT SATISFIES THE HOLY WRATH OF GOD. SO THAT, THIS HOLY GOD BY HIS GRACE DRAWS NEAR TO SINNERS AND NOT HAVE HIS HOLINESS INJURED AT ALL.

EPHESIANS 2:13 But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ.

HOW DOES JESUS MAKE THE PROMISE OF REUNION WITH HIS DISCIPLES?
A DRAWING NEAR OF HOLY GOD WITH SINFUL MAN?

HE KNOWS THAT HIS BLOOD WILL DRAW THEM NEAR.

AH THERE IS MORE—

THE CROSS IS A PURCHASE THAT INCLUDES THE GIFT OF THE HOLY SPIRIT. JESUS CHRIST ASCENDS FROM HEAVEN.

AND ON THE DAY OF PENTACOST HE POURS OUT HIS SPIRIT UPON THESE MEN.

32 This Jesus God raised up, and of that we all are witnesses. 33 Being therefore exalted at the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, he has poured out this that you yourselves are seeing and hearing

They receive THE SPIRIT OF GOD.

THE PERSON WHO WILL SUPPLY THE SUPERNATURAL POWER OF JESUS CHRIST TO ENDURE EVERY AFFLICTION.

Paul calls THE SPIRIT a *Guarantee*. A down payment. A proof of the final result to come.

Why can Jesus Christ ensure *your endurance* when

the force of affliction erodes your willingness to CONTINUE FOLLOWING HIM?

BECAUSE JESUS CHRIST PURCHASES SINNERS AND GIVES THEM THE GIFT OF THE HOLY SPIRIT, WHO WILL EMPOWER THEIR ENDURANCE UNTIL THEY REACH HEAVEN.

DO YOU SEE THE POINT BELOVED?

Jesus Christ does not save those who prove themselves adequate to endure.

Jesus Christ proves himself adequate to endure those whom purchased BY HIS OWN BLOOD.

YOUR ENDURANCE IS A GIFT INCLUDED IN THE BLOOD PURCHASE OF JESUS CHRIST.

**APP
SURIVE!
NO. CONQUER!**

Sometimes Jesus Christ leads you into affliction THAT ERODES YOUR ABILITY TO CONTINUE WITH HIM.

**BUT BY THE HOLY SPIRIT, JESUS DRAWS NEAR.
HE APPLIES A FRESH SOURCE OF POWER TO CARRY YOU.**

JESUS ENSURES YOUR ENDURANCE.

Why?

JESUS CHRIST IS GOD WHO DESIGNS EVERY AFFLICTION TO BENEFIT YOUR FAITH.

**JESUS CHRIST IS GOD WHO RULES THE AFFLICTION THAT SURROUNDS YOU.
JESUS CHRIST IS GOD WHO COMES NEAR WITH DIVINE POWER TO ASSIST YOU.
ALL SECURED FOR YOU BY THE BLOOD PURCHASE OF GOD MAN JESUS CHRIST.**

**TAKE HEART.
I AM.
DO NOT FEAR.**

KEEP FOLLOWING ME TILL WE REACH THE OTHER SIDE.