

Seeing Jesus in the Storm

Preached by: Matthew S. Black

Text: Mark 6:45-52

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Series: Mark (Introducing Jesus)

Introduction: We are talking today about “Seeing Jesus in the Storm” in **Mark 6:45-52**. I want to see Jesus today. In the midst of all of life’s storms, I need Him. Beyond all of our trials and troubles, there is the greatest dilemma, the greatest storm in the universe. What am I here for? Where am I going? What is my eternal destiny? If you know the answer to those questions, than all the storms of life seem so much smaller. I want to ask you do you know Jesus? Do you love Him? Do you SEE Him in the storms of life?

John Newton wrote the famous words to the song “Amazing Grace”:

“Amazing grace how sweet the sound, that saved a wretch like me. I once was lost but know am found, was blind but now I see”.

We come to a place where Jesus’ followers see Jesus in probably the worst storm they’d ever been through. We are going to see today that Jesus is the perfect Savior—We need to put our unreserved trust in Him! Let’s look in **Mark 6:45-52**.

Jesus Walks on the Water

“Immediately he made his disciples get into the boat and go before him to the other side, to Bethsaida, while he dismissed the crowd. **46** And after he had taken leave of them, he went up on the mountain to pray. **47** And when evening [*second evening between 6pm and 9pm*] came, the boat was out on the sea, and he was alone on the land. **48** And he saw that they were making headway painfully, for the wind was against them. And about the fourth watch of the night [*between 3 – 6am*] 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.” **51** And he got into the boat with them, and the wind ceased. And they were utterly astounded, **52** for they did not understand about the loaves, but their hearts were hardened.”

[Prayer for Guidance]

Have you ever been in a situation where you don’t understand why you’re going through what you’re going through? What we find from God’s Word this morning is that Jesus Christ is Lord over all the storms of life.

Not one of us is exempt from the storms of life. None of us is allowed clear sailing in life. There is appointed for every one of us stormy seasons through which we must all sail. These storms are real and dangerous, and the winds and waves make us fear, sometimes for our lives. And these storms are appointed for all followers of Jesus Christ.

This passage is not teaching us about good sailing in the water. It is teaching us how to trust God in the storms of life. These storms come in various shapes and sizes. Some are financial thunderstorms. Others are family tempests. There are storms that come through our marriage, our health, our church. Certainly the greatest storm is the approach of death upon every one of us. Most people are more worried about living the good life instead of dying a good death. Do you realize that the most fearful storm awaits those who are not safe in Christ—anyone who has not placed their faith in Christ are “condemned already”, and they only await the wrath of God for every selfish thought and every evil deed. But today I want to introduce you to the God of the storm, Jesus Christ who can and will deliver us from every storm if we put our trust in Him.

Every one of us here today need a Savior.

There is only one who walks on water in your life. It is Jesus Christ. There is only one who can suspend the normal laws of nature, because He is the God of nature. He is Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ commands the storms, and can bring the raging sea to be at peace.

Christ is the perfect Savior. He is the only Savior. All other ground is sinking sand. I want to draw your attention to the fact the Jesus Christ has power and comfort far greater than any human can try to comprehend.

Today there are six features that I want you to consider. I want you to see how perfect a Savior the Lord Jesus Christ is.

I. Jesus is the Savior with Perfect **Wisdom**.

➤ He knows what He’s doing!

6:45-46, “Immediately he made his disciples get into the boat and go before him to the other side, to Bethsaida [house of many fishes], while he dismissed the crowd. 46 And after he had taken leave of them, he went up on the mountain to pray”.

“Immediately” - immediately after Jesus feeds the five thousand this occurs. What happens? Jesus “made his disciples get into the boat and go before him to the other side” (verse 45). It is a clear indication that this was not their desire. The reason He had to make them get into the boat is twofold.

1. This is at the height of the earthly popularity of Jesus in His ministry. In all of the Gospels, this is the apex. **John 6:15**, John says they wanted to make Him king after the feeding of the five thousand. Jesus has just fed the five thousand men with women and children—for a total closer to 25,000. He feeds them until they are “satisfied”, literally “gorged”. They are ready to make Jesus king and start a revolution against the Roman imperial rule. This is why they had to make them get into the boat.
2. Here people are asking Jesus to be king. I think if we had a time of meetings like this and it resulted in people wanting to make Jesus king, we would consider it a

fantastic success. This miracle is recorded in all four Gospels, but when Jesus Christ explained that His kingdom was spiritual and not physical-it was about Jesus bringing LIFE to their souls, not DEATH to Rome, they all wanted to leave Him.

Application: Jesus saves us from our own carnal wisdom and our own bad thinking. He says, “For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, declares the Lord. 9 For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts” (Isaiah 55:8-9). Are you puzzled and confused in the storms of life? You ought not trust your thoughts or the thoughts of others. **Proverbs 14:12**, “There is a way that seems right to a man, but its end is the way to death.”

Context: Jesus makes them get in a boat to sail to the other side to Bethsaida. Of course in all His wisdom, He sent them out to Bethsaida, but He knew they would never make it there. He sent a storm and sent them about 4 miles in the opposite direction of their destination. They got caught in a headwind that they were painfully trying to row against. They were agonizing.

Jesus in His wisdom wants to teach them how to trust. He tells them to LEAVE. This is outrageous. If there were Baptists there, they would have entered into a building project at this point. But he doesn't want to gain a crowd. He wants transform the disciples hearts. So He sends them out on the Sea of Galilee alone to face the STORM.

A. Jesus' **Version** of Success

Do you know Jesus' version of success is often quite different from our version of success? If we would have been there, we might have installed Jesus as king, started a building program, started a campaign against Roman oppression, and been totally squeezed into the mold of the world. So Jesus knowing they cannot handle this kind of success, He sends them to the other side of the Sea of Galilee.

B. Jesus' **Vision** of the People's Hearts

Jesus sees this massive crowd that wants to make Him king, and what does He do? He tells them to all go home! Friends, what is success in God's book? It is not necessarily numbers. Success is to have a HEART for God. If you love God you will want to please Him and to do the will of God! When the crowd reacts so enthusiastically, it is the wisdom of Jesus that sees that enthusiasm does not mean that a person's heart is in line with God. Jesus sees that their hearts are far, far away from God. He sends them away!

Conventional wisdom is seldom God's wisdom. Conventional wisdom in this circumstance said we should take these 25,000 and turn this into a political campaign to release from the Imperial oppressive Roman rule.

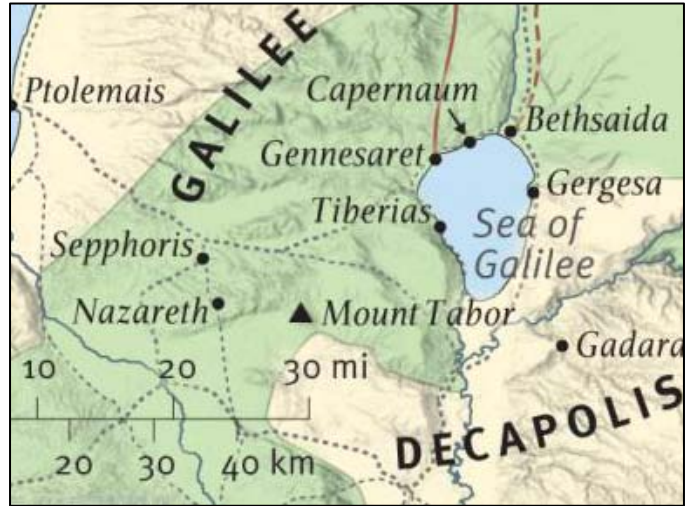
II. Jesus is the Savior with Perfect **Knowledge**.

- **Not only does He know what He's doing!**
- **He knows what YOU are going through!**

A. Jesus knows His people's **pathway!**
The disciples went way off course.

6:45-46, "Immediately he made his disciples get into the boat and go before him to the other side, to **Bethsaida** [house of many fishes], while he dismissed the crowd. **46** And after he had taken leave of them, he went up on the mountain to pray".

They didn't know where they were, but Jesus did. They were supposed to be headed to Bethsaida. From Capernaum, it would have been an easy two mile journey had they followed the shoreline. Instead, they get three or four miles off course into the middle of the Sea of Galilee. **John 6:14** says "they had rowed about three or four miles". They were lost and off course.



We read of Christ's perfect knowledge in **verse 47**, "And when evening [second evening between 6pm and 9pm] came, the boat was out on the sea, and he was alone on the land". Matthew and Luke tell us that the boat was actually in the middle of the Sea. It was a far way out. They were supposed to stay near the coast and go to the other side to Bethsaida, but they got lost on the Sea. The way they were going is only two miles wide from where they were east to Bethsaida. But the Sea of Galilee is 13 miles long, so they got swept out into the abyss as far as they were concerned.

The point is, when they are furthest away from human eyes, they are noticed by the Savior. Check it out. **Verses 47-48**, "And when evening [second evening between 6pm and 9pm] came, the boat was out on the sea, and he was alone on the land. **48** And he saw that they were making headway painfully, for the wind was against them".

The twelve are in the boat at their most vulnerable, seemingly without any help. But at this time, Jesus is doing two things.

B. Jesus **prays** for His people. **6:46**, "And after he had taken leave of them, he went up on the mountain to pray". When you feel that way, understand that Jesus is your Advocate. He has all knowledge, and He is praying for you. He wants His will accomplished in you.

C. Jesus is fully **aware** of His people's **pain** (**verse 48**), and he is seeing them. He sees that they are "making headway painfully". Jesus sees the disciples in deep darkness of the middle of the night. He sees their painful exhausting, terrifying storm. It is darker than dark. And with Jesus on the mountaintop praying in the pitch black darkness can see the disciples perfectly fine. **Verse 48**, "he saw that they were making headway painfully." This is more than physical sight. There is something divine going on here.

This is supernatural. He can see them making headway “painfully”. The word “painfully” means to be in *be in great pain* (to feel birth pangs, to, *be in anguish, afflicted, tormented, or tossed about*.¹ It means to be tortured, to experience physical pain. Vs. 48b, “for the wind was against them”. They are fighting against the inexhaustible powers of nature. They had been giving all they had from 6pm to 3am. Nine hours of painful exhaustion—not being able to get anywhere. They are far away from land and seemingly lost.

In their most difficult hour, none of this escaped Jesus’ omniscience. He sees them. Jesus sees in the dark. Jesus’ sight is not limited by time or space. He sees all, all of the time at all times. You and I are never in any situation in life that is beyond the all seeing eye of God.

And when one of God’s children is in a difficult situation, Jesus Christ is seated at the right hand of the Father, and He intercedes for you. He sees us perfectly in every storm of life.

Remember, **Proverbs 16:9**, “The heart of man plans his way, but the Lord establishes his steps.”

“Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding. 6 In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will direct your paths “ (Proverbs 3:4-5).

III. Jesus is the Savior with Perfect **Timing**. **Verse 48b**, “And about the fourth watch of the night [between 3 – 6am] he came to them, walking on the sea. He meant to pass by them.” The night is divided up into four watches. From 6pm -9pm, 9pm –Midnight, Midnight-3am, and 3am to 6am. We are led to believe it is at the beginning of the fourth watch, at 3am when the night is the darkest. After a night of exhaustion—Jesus comes to them! Jesus waited until the darkest hour to come. He waited until the storm was the fiercest.

A. The Pattern.

1. It’s just like John 11. Jesus receives word that Lazarus is at the point of death. He chose to wait until Lazarus died before He would come to comfort the family.
2. Remember the raising of Jairus’s daughter. Just outside of Jarius’s home when his daughter was still alive, Jesus chose to heal the woman with the hemorrhage of blood first.
3. The perfect timing of God is not what we would choose. God does not work according to our agenda. He does not work according to what we would choose. There are times in our lives when God intentionally delays for a greater good in our life. We want every instantaneously. But according to the perfect wisdom of God, His timing is always perfect. It is at this point now that Jesus chooses to draw near to the twelve again and enter the boat. He waited the night was the darkest, when the waves were the highest, and when the disciples were the weakest to visit them. Listen, Jesus’ timing is always perfect in our lives. There is no one who is too weak

¹Friberg, Timothy ; Friberg, Barbara ; Miller, Neva F.: *Analytical Lexicon of the Greek New Testament*. Grand Rapids, Mich. : Baker Books, 2000 (Baker’s Greek New Testament Library 4), S. 88

that He will not save you. There are only people who perceive themselves to be too strong.

Many times Jesus delays coming to us until we are finally at the end of our own strength, and that is when He comes to us walking on water, not bound by any of our limitations!

Transition: This leads fourth to another sight of Jesus!

IV. Jesus is the Savior with Perfect **Power** (verse 48). We learn from verse 48 that Jesus came to His followers “walking on the sea” (verse 48). That a rather dramatic entrance into their lives! Jesus came into their situation with a note of absolute power over all natural limitations and sovereign control over the universe. This is the omnipotent God of creation who has power over the sea and the storm. Jesus did not come swimming to them on their level. He was walking on the waves. He does not need our help. Jesus came as the one and only Savior.

Here’s the message, when the waves are about to go over your head, they are already under His feet! Here is the all powerful Christ! There is no storm that is not under His feet. There is no situation that is not under His control. This is the almighty Savior and Lord. The white capped waves that would drown us are mere stepping stones for Him.

Application: Is Jesus your Savior, or are you trusting in a sinking boat? Are you trusting in your job to get you through life? Are you hoping you won’t need a Savior, and that if you ignore it enough your sin and guilt will go away? Jesus is the all powerful Savior.

Christian, are you alone and afraid? He says to you: “Fear not, for I am with you; be not dismayed, for I am your God; I will strengthen you, I will help you, I will uphold you with my righteous right hand” (Isaiah 41:10).

- He says in **Isaiah 43:1-2**, “Fear not, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by name, you are mine. 2 When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and through the rivers, they shall not overwhelm you; when you walk through fire you shall not be burned, and the flame shall not consume you.”
- Christian, your job, your spouse, your money, your own plans and your own wisdom will never bring you comfort. You can think that if you move to this geographic location or look back to this place or that place, this pastor, these friends, this job. No, we must not rob Jesus of His glory. Jesus is the Savior. You stand or fall in Him. He says, “I will never leave you or forsake you “ (Hebrews 13:5).
- When all hope seems to be gone and you are lost and puzzled, He sees you, and He comes walking to you on water. He says in **Jeremiah 32:27**, “Behold, I am the LORD, the God of all flesh. Is anything too hard for me?” There is no barrier too great that He cannot overcome and draw near to you.

- In **Psalm 8:6**, David wrote of this coming Messiah, that all things would be subjected to Him under His feet. We read in **Psalm 8:6**, “You have given him dominion over the works of your hands; you have put all things under his feet”.

Do you realize the power of Jesus? You who want to trust in the job market to take care of you? Do you see that all things will fail, but Jesus Christ will never fail?

- **Ephesians 1:20-23** says that God “raised him [Jesus] from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly places, 21 far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and above every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the one to come. 22 And he put all things under his feet and gave him as head over all things to the church”. It is not only the angry waves that are under His feet. It is every trial and every circumstance of life and every event—they are already under His feet. Jesus Christ is harnessing all things for your good and His glory. Jesus is directing all things to bring you to the end of yourself—to bring about your unreserved trust in Him.

And though you may fear that you cannot keep your nostrils above water, and though you find yourself in the darkest watch of the night, I assure you it is all under His dominion and under His control, and if you will call out to Him, He will rescue you!

- **Philippians 2** – “Every knee will bow and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord”. There is no power greater than the power and authority of Jesus Christ.
- No storm and no circumstance and no sin or guilt is too great for Him. Jesus Christ is the God of the Exodus that split the Red Sea. He is the God of Elijah who brought fire down from heaven. Not even death itself is strong enough to hold Him! **He is Lord of Lords, King of Kings, and God of gods!** “The Lord God omnipotent reigns!” (**Revelation 19:6**).

V. Jesus is the Savior with Perfect **Peace**. Christ’s peace passes understanding. **Isaiah 26:3**, “You keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on you, because he trusts in you.”

A. Jesus’ **Way** of Peace. Jesus’ peace plan is not like this world’s. It’s all or nothing. Sometimes we are not sure if we want Jesus’ peace. Jesus has a way of testing us. Sometimes peace comes after great **testing**. At the end of **verse 48** we read: “He meant to pass by them”. What does that mean? We could say, “He meant to pass by them” *as if to test their faith*. It means Jesus was giving the appearance that He was going somewhere else, that there might be a greater desperation in their heart, and a greater realization of their need. He does this not out of cruelty, but out of pure love, because we do not realize how hard our hearts are. We do not see how much we need Him!

Our Lord with perfect wisdom and perfect knowledge, and perfect timing and perfect power knows that the disciples are not yet fully at the end of themselves. So He gives

this appearance of passing them by as if to create one last greater note of panic in their soul, so that they reach out to Him in urgency.

B. Our **wavering** and lack of peace!

Verse 49-50a, “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.”

You must understand that at this point they still do not recognize that this is their Master. This is Christ. When they saw Him, they only saw His figure—it is the middle of the night in the eye of a fierce storm. They saw Him “walking on the sea”. They supposed that he “was a ghost”. A “fantasma” – a phantom! They cry out in terror! They are terrified. They are in a state of panic, they are shaken, upset. They are shaken to their core with fear.

C. Jesus’ **Words** of Peace.

Verse 50b, “But immediately he spoke to them and said, “Take heart; it is I. Do not be afraid.” “Immediately he spoke...Do not be afraid”. Our Savior would not have us afraid for anything. Jesus says three things.

1. “Take heart” – be courageous. Live in such a way that is bold in your trust in Christ.
2. “It is I”. There is no other basis to have this courage. Christ is the foundation. My hope is built on nothing less than Jesus blood and righteousness. There is no hope and no help outside of Jesus’ presence. When it is Jesus who appears to you, you can go courageously through every storm. ***It is all under His feet, and He’s not going down!!*** And all who trust in Him can never down. All who Christ carries are safe with Him.
3. “Do not be afraid.” Stop being so fearful. Don’t be controlled by your emotions. **Isaiah 26:3**, “You keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on you, because he trusts in you.” If you allow fear to control you, then you are not trusting in Jesus. If you are a believer in Christ, there is never a reason for fear or panic. Stop and focus on Christ. Realize He is ordering your life for your good and His glory.

Proverbs 16:9, “The heart of man plans his way, but the Lord establishes his steps.” You may devise your way, but the Lord is directing your steps. You have nothing to be afraid of.

These words speak peace to our soul. This is a peace that passes understanding. It is a peace that the world cannot give. It is based upon this fact: Jesus is sovereign over the storm. Jesus says later in the Upper Room, “Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid” (John 14:27).

- VI. Finally, Jesus is the Savior with Perfect **Control**. **Verse 51**, “And he got into the boat with them, and the wind ceased. And they were utterly astounded...” There is no more secure

place to be than with Christ in the boat. The boat will never go down when Christ is in the boat. Now note what happened, “and the wind ceased”. Without Jesus having to say a Word, the Sea becomes as still as glass. But the greater miracle is the calmness of their hearts, “they were utterly astounded”. Only Mark records this—Matthew, Luke, and John do not record this. They never got to the point where they were bored with the miracles because the storms were so real and their faith was so weak.

Look at **verse 52**, “for they did not understand about the loaves, but their hearts were hardened.” It would be easy to criticize the disciples at this point. But understand that they had not come to a full understanding of Jesus sovereignty. That is something you grow into through years of testing. There were still parts of their heart that were hardened. This is not speaking of rebellion but hardened in the sense that they were spiritually dull. They were still children in the faith. Obviously, I’m not speaking of Judas. But they were coming to a fuller trust in Christ, but they weren’t there yet. They were like us—slow to grasp.

Take courage saints—we need to grow. You must go through trial after trial, and miracle after miracle, because there are portions of your heart that cannot be broken any other way.

Conclusion: What are you trusting in? You cannot trust in your emotions. You must trust in Jesus Christ as the Savior.

For the saved

If you are saved I want you to think about the little boy who saw a butterfly struggling to emerge from it's cocoon. It was straining with all it's might to get out, so the little boy thinking that he would help, took a knife, and slit the cocoon. But to his dismay, he found the butterfly came out with small and shriveled wings, and unable to fly. Within a short time, it was dead.

For the lost

You cannot save yourself. Jesus is the perfect Savior. He is “altogether lovely”, “altogether desirable” (**Song of Solomon 5:16**).

He is a Savior of:

- perfect **wisdom** – He knows what He’s doing
- perfect **knowledge** – He knows you better than you know yourself
- perfect **timing** – it’s no accident that you are here today
- perfect **power** – He can save you from death and hell
- perfect **peace** – He can make you right with God
- perfect **control** – All things are under His feet

Do you trust the God of the Storm?