

# “It Is I – Be Not Afraid”

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John 6: 15-19: *“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. And when even was now come, his disciples went down unto the sea, and entered into a ship, and went over the sea toward Capernaum. And it was now dark, and Jesus was not come to them. And the sea arose by reason of a great wind that blew. 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.”*

I just love the disciples! But, don't get me wrong: I am glad I was not one of them, and I am very serious when I write that. Why, you ask? I think I would have been a doubter. I don't think I would have trusted Him like I should have. So when I read the Scriptures, it is easy for me not to get frustrated with Peter when he denies Jesus three times, or even here when doubts arise. I know myself pretty well, and I think I would fall into that same camp. But the chapter doesn't begin with doubting:

John 6:2. *“And a great multitude followed him, because they saw his miracles which he did on them that were diseased.”*

People were following Him, because they had seen the miracles. He was doing things that they'd never seen anyone else do. They began to wonder: Who is this miracle worker? Is He the Messiah? Is His power from God or Satan? They were so intrigued; many began to follow Him.

John 6:5-14. *“When Jesus then lifted up his eyes, and saw a great company come unto him, he saith unto Philip, Whence shall we buy bread, that these may eat? And this he said to prove him: for He himself knew what he would do. Philip answered him, Two hundred pennyworth of bread is not sufficient for them, that every one of them may take a little. One of his disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, saith unto him, There is a lad here, which hath five barley loaves, and two small fishes: but what are they among so many? And Jesus said, Make the men sit down. Now there was much grass in the place. So the men sat down, in number about five thousand. And Jesus took the loaves; and when he had given thanks, he distributed to the disciples, and the disciples to them that were set down; and likewise of the fishes as much as they would. When they were filled, he said unto his disciples, Gather up the fragments that remain, that nothing be lost. Therefore they gathered them together, and filled twelve baskets with the fragments of the five barley loaves, which remained over and above unto them that had eaten. Then those men, when they had seen the miracle that Jesus did, said, This is of a truth that prophet that should come into the world.”*

See now it gets even more interesting. The disciples just witnessed a major miracle. How did Jesus feed all those people? This could only be by the hand of God. But wait a minute. They just saw this amazing miracle and then a short time later, they are in a boat, and they are afraid. The winds and the waves are roaring. They are stuck in a mini-hurricane so to speak, and they don't like it. They are scared they might be going down with the ship. A student of mine got caught on a small boat in 30 foot waves one time in the Gulf of Mexico. He wasn't a believer, and he told me how terribly scared that he was.

But these disciples were seasoned veterans. They had been hanging out with Jesus. They knew who He was. They had seen His miracles of healing people's diseases and feeding the masses. If anyone was going to trust Jesus, it would be these men. Yet, they were afraid.

But let's think for a second: We often think we are better than the disciples in these stories, and we wouldn't be scared if a situation like that happened in our lives. But is that really true?

If a gunman broke into your house and pointed a gun at you and your kids, would you be afraid? What if you woke up one day, and our government declared a bank holiday where no banks would be open, and you couldn't take out any funds? That happens around the world and has happened in America before. What if one day, it is announced on TV that the US dollar is now worthless. You can't buy anything with it. Would you be anxious or scared then? What if ...

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