

### Media and Graphics Notes

<b>Sermon Starter Video?</b>	Yes
<b>Sermon Notes?</b>	There are several scripture passages to be shown on screen throughout the sermon.
<b>Other Notes</b>	There will be new members joining at both of our worship services

## Key Questions

### **What is this sermon about?**

This sermon is about Jesus walking on the water and God's self-revelation.

### **Why is this sermon important?**

This sermon is important because God is ready to help when we cry out to God.

### **What is the context of this sermon?**

This is the third sermon in the Lent series in which we are journeying through the Gospel according to Mark. It is adapted from a sermon preached by Paul Rasmussen at Highland Park United Methodist Church on March 15, 2015. It can be found online at <http://www.hpumc.org/sermon/a-different-kind-of-storm/>

### **What are the next action steps?**

Trust that God walks with you.  
Know that God wants you to feel God's presence  
Receive God's infinite grace.

### **What is the good news (bottom line)?**

The good news is that God is always greater than the storm.



## Metadata

### Topic(s)

1. Change Lives
2. Make Disciples

3rd Sunday in Lent  
Mark - Bread and Water  
First United Methodist Church of El Dorado  
Text Online at <http://j.mp/1oqW5wX>

February 2, 2016  
Mark 6:30-56  
Preaching Target Word Count: 2,142  
Audio Online at <http://j.mp/1OG4jpP>

## Sermon Books of the Bible

1. Exodus
2. Mark
3. Romans

## Tags

sermon, worship, church, Methodist, UnitedMethodist, UnitedMethodistChurch, FirstUnitedMethodistChurch, ElDorado, Kansas, GreatPlains, AnnualConference, GreatPlainsAnnualConference, Jesus, water, crisis, storm, storms, walk, Moses, WalkOnWater

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## Mark 6:30-56, CEB

The apostles returned to Jesus and told him everything they had done and taught. Many people were coming and going, so there was no time to eat. He said to the apostles, "Come by yourselves to a secluded place and rest for a while." They departed in a boat by themselves for a deserted place.

Many people saw them leaving and recognized them, so they ran ahead from all the cities and arrived before them. When Jesus arrived and saw a large crowd, he had compassion on them because they were like sheep without a shepherd. Then he began to teach them many things.

Late in the day, his disciples came to him and said, "This is an isolated place, and it's already late in the day. Send them away so that they can go to the surrounding countryside and villages and buy something to eat for themselves."

He replied, "You give them something to eat."

But they said to him, "Should we go off and buy bread worth almost eight months' pay and give it to them to eat?"

He said to them, "How much bread do you have? Take a look."

After checking, they said, "Five loaves of bread and two fish."

He directed the disciples to seat all the people in groups as though they were having a banquet on the green grass. They sat down in groups of hundreds and fifties. He took the five loaves and the two fish, looked up to heaven, blessed them, broke the loaves into pieces, and gave them to his disciples to set before the people. He also divided the two fish among them all. Everyone ate until they were full. They filled twelve baskets with the leftover pieces of bread and fish. About five thousand had eaten.

Right then, Jesus made his disciples get into a boat and go ahead to the other side of the lake, toward Bethsaida, while he dismissed the crowd. After saying good-bye to them, Jesus went up onto a mountain to pray. Evening came and the boat was in the middle of the lake, but he was alone on the land. He saw his disciples struggling. They were trying to row forward, but the wind was blowing against them. Very early in the morning, he came to them, walking on the lake. He intended to pass by them. When they saw him walking on the lake, they thought he was a ghost and they screamed. Seeing him was terrifying to all of them. Just then he spoke to them, "Be encouraged! It's me. Don't be afraid." He got into the boat, and the wind settled down. His disciples were so baffled they were beside themselves. That's because they hadn't understood about the loaves. Their hearts had been changed so that they resisted God's ways.

When Jesus and his disciples had crossed the lake, they landed at Gennesaret, anchored the boat, and came ashore. People immediately recognized Jesus and ran around that whole region bringing sick people on their mats to wherever they heard he was. Wherever he went—villages, cities, or farming communities—they would place the sick in the marketplaces and beg him to allow them to touch even the hem of his clothing. Everyone who touched him was healed.

## Response to Scripture

One: The Word of God for the People of God.

All: Thanks be to God!

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## Introduction

### Sermon Starter Video

Play sermon starter video.

### Mark: Eyewitness to the Gospel

He spent three years with Jesus. He watched Jesus work, heard him teach and walked with him in Galilee. He was there on the night in which Jesus was taken to be crucified. Before this man died, he passed on the testimony of what he had seen and heard. The gospel of Mark is that testimony.

### Sermon Notes and Scripture Study

#### *Take Notes*

I invite you to open your bulletin to a place where you can take notes during the message today.

#### *God Speaking*

I pray that you will hear God speaking to you sometime during the service today. Listen for God's word for you – something that helps you live as a disciple of Jesus Christ. Whenever you hear it, write it down.

#### *Tool for Spiritual Growth*

Then, take this bulletin home with you so that you can grow in your faith outside of worship by reflecting on what you heard today, praying for others connected with our community and reading scripture.

### Prayer

Will you pray with me? O God, use these words to speak good news so that as individuals and as a congregation we will fear nothing but sin, desire nothing but you and live as part of your kingdom on earth as it is in heaven. Amen.

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## Shootings in Harvey County

Thursday evening I received a text message asking if I knew if a member of our congregation who works at Excel Industries was okay. Others sharing that they had been listening to the news and was there anything they could do to help.

Have you heard?

There has been a shooting.

Are you serious? Do these things really happen around here?  
Yes. They do.

## **Senseless**

It is hard to make sense of events like this. The truth is that there may not be any sense that can be made. Sometimes the actions of people are senseless. We are left staggering with the reality of broken lives and a shattered sense of peace. It is frustrating, saddening and shocking. There are moments when I feel that I just can't process what is happening.

## **Scripture**

The next morning, I was reading the passage of scripture on our reading plan, which is also the text for this morning and this phrase stood out:  
"Be encouraged! It's me. Don't be afraid."

Jesus' first words to the disciples in the storm are:  
"Be encouraged! It's me. Don't be afraid."

These are words that I need to hear.

## **Transition**

Today we take a closer look at this text.

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# **Discipleship and Storms**

## **Feeding, Parables, and Miracles**

The disciples have been with Jesus while and are getting along pretty well. They just finished feeding five thousand people, very miraculously, with a couple loaves of bread and some fish.

Jesus has revealed to them what the kingdom of God is like through a series of parables, short stories, like the parable of the soils we talked about last week.

Jesus has done a bunch of miracles so they can see God's power at work in him. He has tried his best to explain to them why he has come, what his purpose is and what God is all about. Their discipleship is coming along pretty well.

## **Room to Grow**

However there is an area where they may have room to grow—storms. Here is the question, you might write it down:

***Does the presence of a storm cause you to doubt the presence of God?***

This is what we are going to find out for the disciples in the passage for today.

## Familiar Situation

### **Storm Scene in Mark 4**

If you have been reading through the gospel of Mark, you remember the storm scene in chapter four.

Jesus is in a boat with his disciples and a big storm comes.

They are scared.

Jesus is sleeping in the back of the boat.

When they wake him up, we read this in Mark 4:39-40

He got up and gave orders to the wind, and he said to the lake, "Silence! Be still!"  
The wind settled down and there was a great calm.

Jesus asked them, "Why are you frightened? Don't you have faith yet?"

Here in chapter six, we find a similar situation.

This time, perhaps, with a question in mind:

***Does the presence of a storm cause the disciples to doubt the presence of God?***

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## Walking on Water

### **Out on the Lake**

So, we find in Mark 6:45 these words:

.....  
*"Right then, Jesus made his disciples get into a boat and go ahead to the other side of the lake, toward Bethsaida, while he dismissed the crowd."*<sup>1</sup>  
.....

The crowd is the group of people that had just been fed with a few loaves of bread and some fish.

.....  
*"After saying good-bye to them, Jesus went up onto a mountain to pray."*<sup>2</sup>  
.....

Jesus says, "You all go ahead in the boat, I am out of here."  
I find this to be one of the incredible things about Jesus — No matter how busy Jesus gets, he always finds time alone to gather himself and be thoughtful in prayer.

.....  
*"Evening came and the boat was in the middle of the lake, but he was alone on the land. He saw his disciples struggling. They were trying to row forward, but the wind was*

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<sup>1</sup> Mark 6:45, CEB.

<sup>2</sup> Mark 6:46, CEB.



*blowing against them. Very early in the morning, he came to them, walking on the lake.*<sup>3</sup>

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This is that dramatic moment when Jesus walks on water. Even people that aren't religious or no nothing about Christianity would know this story. People often talk about someone walking on water as if that is some kind of divine power.

This is that moment.

**“He intended to pass by them.”<sup>4</sup>**

Then we come to this phrase:

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*“He intended to pass by them.”<sup>5</sup>*

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We need to wrestle with this for a bit. When you are reading the gospels, you need to ask, “Why did Jesus do that?” and “Why did Mark put that snapshot in the text?”

When he saw them struggling with the wind blowing against them, Jesus walks out there.

We think he is going to help.

The scripture says something different. The scripture says:

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*“He intended to pass by them.”<sup>6</sup>*

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Maybe he had his mind on other things, I don't know.

Maybe he is concentrating on walking on water, we don't know.

The scripture tells us that he is walking out there and before he stopped to help,

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*“He intended to pass by them.”<sup>7</sup>*

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What do you make of that?

**They screamed...**

Then something happens to disrupt Jesus' Plan A:

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<sup>3</sup> Mark 6:47-48a, CEB.

<sup>4</sup> Mark 6:48b, CEB.

<sup>5</sup> Mark 6:48b, CEB.

<sup>6</sup> Mark 6:48b, CEB.

<sup>7</sup> Mark 6:48b, CEB.

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*When they saw him walking on the lake, they thought he was a ghost and they screamed. Seeing him was terrifying to all of them. Just then he spoke to them, "Be encouraged! It's me. Don't be afraid."<sup>8</sup>*

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Jesus was going to walk right by them, but they screamed.  
Other translations say, "They cried out."  
Jesus was going to walk right by them, but they cried out.

### ***They Cry out in Fear, not Faith***

Here's the crazy thing about this, they don't cry out in faith. They cry out in fear.  
They are terrified.  
They don't know what this is, who this is. It might be a ghost.  
They are not certain that this is Jesus, their savior.

They don't cry out in faith, they cry out in fear.  
They screamed...

Here's the thing...  
It is okay to cry out to God who we don't understand.  
It is okay to cry out to God who we doubt.  
It is okay to cry out to God about whom we have a lot of questions.  
Jesus hears our cries.

God hears their voice, even in their fear.

### ***Personal Reflection: Is Jesus right by you?***

I wonder,  
Is it possible that Jesus is passing right by you?  
Is it possible that God may be able to work something out in the storm that you are facing, yet is waiting for you to cry out?  
All it takes is to cry out.

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## **"Be encouraged! It's me. Don't be afraid."**

The scripture continues:

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*"Seeing him was terrifying to all of them. Just then he spoke to them, "Be encouraged! It's me. Don't be afraid."<sup>9</sup>*

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<sup>8</sup> Mark 6:49-50, CEB.

<sup>9</sup> Mark 6:50, CEB.

It's me.  
Jesus says, "It's me."

## Recognizing God in Unusual Circumstances

### *Moses and the Burning Bush*

It's helpful to know that the language that Jesus uses here is the same language that God uses with Moses at the burning bush. You remember, God calls Moses to set the people of Israel free from slavery in Egypt. This is an enormous task and Moses has some questions, from Exodus 3:13-14:

But Moses said to God, "If I now come to the Israelites and say to them, 'The God of your ancestors has sent me to you,' they are going to ask me, 'What's this God's name?' What am I supposed to say to them?"

God said to Moses, "I Am Who I Am. So say to the Israelites, 'I Am has sent me to you.'"<sup>10</sup>

Jesus says to the disciples, "It's me."  
God says to Moses, "I Am Who I Am."

### *Expectations and Recognizing God*

God doesn't always come to us in ways that we would expect.

God comes to Moses in a burning bush.  
Jesus comes to the disciples walking on the water – they think he is a ghost.

I don't know what the disciples were expecting when they were in the storm.  
What they were not expecting was to see a man walking on the water.  
Jesus came to them in a way that they did not expect and they were terrified.  
They didn't know it was God.

### *Personal Reflections: Our Expectations for God*

We risk the very same thing.  
How do you expect God to show up in your life?

We usually expect God to come in a predictable way,  
in a comfortable way,  
in a recognizable way,  
in a way that we fully understand.

Can you recognize God when God comes in a way that you don't expect?  
Jesus may pass by and we never see him because we are not expecting God to show up in this way.

Jesus reminds the disciples, and us, how close God really is.

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<sup>10</sup> Exodus 3:13-14, CEB.

## God Passes By

Which brings us back to verse 48, which just doesn't seem to make much sense:

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*"He intended to pass by them."<sup>11</sup>*

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Why would Jesus intentionally pass them by?  
It doesn't make sense, until we dig a little deeper.

### **Show me your glory**

We go back to Moses' story in Exodus.

After the burning bush, Moses does lead the people out of slavery in Egypt. They are making their way to the promised land. In the wilderness, Moses is having a meeting with God. He is bold enough to make an astonishing request – show me your glory. We read in Exodus 33:18-22:

"Moses said, "Please show me your glorious presence."

The Lord said, "I'll make all my goodness pass in front of you, and I'll proclaim before you the name, 'The Lord.' I will be kind to whomever I wish to be kind, and I will have compassion to whomever I wish to be compassionate."

But, the Lord said, "you can't see my face because no one can see me and live."

The Lord said, "Here is a place near me where you will stand beside the rock.

As my glorious presence passes by, I'll set you in a gap in the rock, and I'll cover you with my hand until I've passed by."<sup>12</sup>

### **Jesus' Intent to Pass By**

It's not that Jesus is ignoring them and wants to walk by.  
It's that he wants all of his glory revealed to them.

Jesus wants the fullness of his divinity known to them. This is why he is walking on water. I know you think this is impossible – that's the point. It's not that I'm trying to just walk by you, I am trying to pass by you to reveal all my glory to you, just as I revealed to Moses.

### **Moses' Favor and Disciples' Flaws**

However, this is what is so different about the passage in Exodus - The reason that God's glory passed by Moses was because he found favor with God. Moses was living right. Moses understood.

The beautiful message of the New Testament is that the disciples don't really get it. They are imperfect. They are flawed. They are sinners.

Yet Jesus does the very same thing.

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<sup>11</sup> Mark 6:48b, CEB.

<sup>12</sup> Exodus 33:18-22, CEB.

I want to reveal to you all that I am.  
My guess is that so many of us feel that God won't be revealed to us until we get it right; until we have cleaned up, until we become perfect.  
Yet, here Jesus says, I am willing to show you all of my glory even before you have your act together.

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## Conclusion

### Greater Grace

The scripture says this,

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*He got into the boat, and the wind settled down. His disciples were so baffled they were beside themselves. That's because they hadn't understood about the loaves. Their hearts had been changed so that they resisted God's ways.*

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The point of this story is not about great faith.  
It is not about a people that have great faith.  
It is about a God who has greater grace.

The point of this story is not to demonstrate the weakness of all of our faith.  
The point of this story is to demonstrate the greatness of our God.  
That our God is divine.  
Our God is close.  
Our God is willing to get in the boat with us when we cry out, despite our flaws, despite our shortcomings.

### **Romans 8:35-39**

This is why Paul writes "I'm convinced that nothing can separate us from God's love in Christ Jesus our Lord: not death or life, not angels or rulers, not present things or future things, not powers or height or depth, or any other thing that is created."<sup>13</sup>  
Not sin, not the past, not water,

Not even shootings in Harvey County, Kansas.

### **Evil Defeated**

As Christians, we believe that Jesus' death on the cross and resurrection three days later are the decisive moments in history. Evil is defeated and yet not completely destroyed. We are on a road that ultimately leads to peace, but it is a process, and it won't be complete until Jesus returns.

We know how the story will end, but we aren't there yet.

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<sup>13</sup> Romans 8:35-39, CEB.

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Even now, God is still God.

### **Good News**

The good news is that God is always greater than the storm.

### **Call to Action**

Trust that God walks with you.

Know that God wants you to feel God's presence

Receive God's infinite grace.

### **Invitation**

In times of peace, in terrible storms, God hears when we cry out.

God's glory is revealed to messed up sinners, like you and me.

God chooses us.

Will you cry out to God?

### **Closing Prayer**