

Connect360: Don't Be Afraid

February 24, 2025

- *Lesson 12 in the Connect360 unit "The reMARKable Journey Continues: The Gospel of Urgency" focuses on Mark 6:45-53.*

As the disciples struggled to see and believe, shortly before dawn, a dark figure appeared amidst the tumultuous waves. That sleepless night they fought against the wind and waves. Heavy eyelids and aching backs must have convinced them they were hallucinating. They were out in the middle of the lake by this time. No one could have been out there alone, without a boat.

Jesus saw his disciples in their struggle and went out to them. It seems odd that Scripture tells us, "He was about to pass by them." Why would Jesus have passed by them if he saw them struggling? Was he going out further to show them the way to shore? Was he going to calm the wind and waves ahead of them to end their struggle? Was he going to show them who he truly was, as if walking on water wasn't enough?

Scripture doesn't tell us why Jesus was going to pass by them. Only that in their struggle, Jesus saw his disciples. But they didn't see him. They believed they saw a ghost. The appearance of Jesus that early morning on the lake, terrified his followers. They didn't recognize their Teacher.

Fear can cause us to doubt certain things in our lives. Fear can be a powerfully destructive wave that causes us to struggle, even with our own faith. Seeing does not always lead us to believing. For these men, their lack of faith, their disbelief, prevented them from seeing Jesus for who he is. What they saw instead, terrified them.

When we truly see Jesus for who he is, not for what we have made him out

to be, it can be terrifying. When we see Jesus for who he is, not according to the little box that we put him in to keep our faith safe, but when we see Jesus for who he truly is, it can scare us. Because to truly see Jesus comes with a cost.

Seeing Jesus for who he truly is, calls us to respond, and this is a struggle. Responding to who Jesus is has a cost. The cost of following Jesus could be to give up certain friends or even family. The cost of following Jesus could be our lifestyle, status or job. The cost of following Jesus could be to give up our preferences or traditions. The cost of discipleship could be to give up our home to be a missionary in a different country or city. For many, proclaiming Jesus as Lord will cost their very life.

The cost of seeing Jesus as the one who has power and authority over the wind and the waves, as the Messiah, the Son of God, has a tremendous cost. If we see him, will we proclaim him as Lord of our lives? Or will we go on struggling with our faith, against the rising waves of fear and doubt?

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