

## JESUS WALKS ON THE WATER

Mark 6:45-56

Key Verse: 6:50b

"Immediately he spoke to them and said, 'Take courage! It is I. Don't be afraid.'"

It is interesting to remember the contents of the last passage. Jesus fed the five thousand with five loaves and two fish. Jesus and his disciples could not sleep or eat for several days and nights. When they started to the vacation spot, they met a hurricane (4:37). When they landed, it was the graveyard of Gerasa (5:1 ff.). They suffered much because of one who was a 6,000 horsepower demon-possessed man. His maniacal screaming and wild action frightened Jesus' disciples. After healing him, they barely got out of Gerasene soil by boat. They landed on the other side of the lake (5:21). So many people welcomed them so warmly, saying, "Thank you, Jesus! I love you, Jesus! Please heal us of our sicknesses." After healing them, Jesus attempted to find a resort place (6:31 ff.). As soon as they got there, 5,000 men were waiting, waving their hands. Some said, "Thank you." Some said, "I love you, Jesus!" Many of them said, "Jesus, Jesus, Jesus. Our Shepherd Jesus!" Their welcoming of Jesus was overwhelming. But Jesus and his disciples needed some rest. There were 5,000 men. If we include children and women, it must have been more than 10,000 people hoping to get help from Jesus. Jesus did not immediately give them bread or something to eat. Instead, he taught the word of God until the sun was going down in the western horizon. Then he fed them. After this event of Jesus feeding the 5,000, immediately Jesus made his disciples get into the boat and go on ahead of him to Bethsaida, while he dismissed the crowd (45). Let's see what happened next.

### I. Jesus prayed (45-46)

Let's read verse 45. "Immediately Jesus made his disciples get into the boat and go on ahead of him to Bethsaida, while he dismissed the crowd." Jesus forced his disciples to get into the boat and go on ahead of him to Bethsaida, while he dismissed the crowd. Of course, it was in the realization of their satisfaction. Jesus urged the crowd to scatter. But Jesus' real intention was to remain on land and pray to God. What did Jesus pray for? It is obvious that he thanked God for feeding the 5,000 men with five loaves and two fish. Jesus thanked God. Jesus was really tired. He was also very dizzy because he could not sleep for several nights and had worked so hard, laying his healing hand on the sick for several days. It was natural that Jesus get into the boat with the disciples and go to Bethsaida to get some rest. But he remained, to see all the people who were fed leaving, one by one, until no one was left. Jesus was sorry to look at them going away from him. After that, what did Jesus do? He went to a certain place to pray. He prayed there. As we have said, he thanked God for feeding the 5,000 with five loaves and two fish.

When we pray, we must pray for God's name be honored and his will to be fulfilled. This is the first part of [the Lord's prayer](#) (Mt 6:9,10). But when we study the Bible, especially the Psalms, we see that David and the other psalm writers thanked God in all circumstances, even when the surge of death was engulfing them. In that situation,

King David prayed to God that he is the Rock of salvation (Ps 18:1,2; 28:1; 31:2,3). When we read the Psalms very carefully, we find that "Praise God!" or "Thank God," are most repeated. Especially, King David thanked God when nothing special was in his mind. He thanked God that he is the Creator and the Sovereign Ruler; that he is the Shepherd and that God is his own Shepherd. It is amazing that the Psalmists praised and thanked God in all circumstances. This seems to be the essence of [prayer](#). Life is hard. And the world is crazy. But we, the children of God, must thank God for God's love and that God is good. We must pray to God; he wants us to do something good for him no matter what would happen in our future. Because of ideological warfare, Korea became a shrimp in between big whales. So many people were killed, even 10,000 U.S. soldiers were killed during the time of the ideological war between South and North Korea. The U.S. Government thought that Korea was a very important strategic point. So they sent the U.S. Army and defended against the communist occupation of entire Korea. At that time, Pastor Sohn was caring for men in a lepers' asylum. The pastor slept and ate together with the men with leprosy. He even wanted to be a leper so he could be an identical shepherd for the men with leprosy. The pastor had two sons, James and John. Two Communist soldiers came and shot them to death. Pastor Sohn was dedicated to God's work to take care of lepers. His joy was his two sons, James and John. But they were shot to death one afternoon. He cried many tears with his wife. The men with leprosy also cried many tears, wiping their tears with their lost fingers. The pastor buried his sons and prayed that his sons would be going into glorious God's house where multi-billion saints are waiting for them. He thanked God for his sons' entering into God's house in glory. He also prayed for the two Communist soldiers to believe in Jesus someday; that possibly, he may find them and make them his own adopted sons. Some men with leprosy shouted in anger, "That doesn't make sense." Other men with leprosy cried out-loud saying, "Thank you, Jesus, for Pastor Sohn's compassion in God. Thank you, Jesus."

After three months, the two Communist soldiers were arrested and brought to Pastor Sohn to see what he would do with them. He pleaded with the two M.P.'s to let him adopt them as his foster sons. Then the M.P.'s allowed him to do so. The two young men who killed his two sons became his foster sons and attended the church for men with leprosy. As soon as the pastor introduced them as his foster sons, the men with leprosy cried loudly, beating their chests with their lost fingers. After crying, they thanked God that they have such a godly pastor. There is a story that among them, a 60 year old unmarried leper said he wanted to get married and have two sons. And if they would be killed by Communist soldiers, he also would adopt the soldiers as his own sons. Then all the men with leprosy burst into laughter. In God there was loud crying for the loss of the pastor's sons. In God they praised God, believing that God is good. In God there is a story that Pastor Sohn thanked God for adopting the two enemies as his foster sons and releasing them from the death sentence. Since then, "Thank you, Jesus" became their greeting. A man with leprosy had diarrhea. He rushed to the restroom and made an unexpected mistake before arriving at the restroom. Then he said, "Thank you Jesus."

I cannot but tell you again about Dr. Hudson Taylor, Missionary to China. Because of pestilence his wife and one daughter passed away. His 200 coworkers passed away. But he did not complain. He knelt on the ground and thanked God that all those who passed away had the

privilege of serving God and dying.

Here we realize that we must learn how to pray. But we must learn to pray with thanksgiving, no matter what happens to us. Jesus teaches us this lesson in this passage. As we studied, he worked day and night and did not eat any food. In addition, he could not sleep. We know that if we don't sleep for several days, we cannot thank God for that. Many students stay up a little late for final examinations these days. They all look grumpy and ready to complain to others. But Jesus was different. Jesus worked so hard and could not sleep. He had no strength to pray. But he sent away his disciples first. Next, he watched over his flock until they went too far away, and he could not see them anymore. After that, he remained in a solitary place and thanked God in prayer. He prayed until his disciples reached the middle of the lake. So he probably prayed more than thirty minutes, thanking God. It is good to write many poems. Usually people write poems to express their sentimentalism or to express their fantasy. In Shakespeare's case, his works all expressed human tragedy and the sorrow of death. His expression is so exquisite and beyond comparison. But the contents are very grotesque. Even though he became the king of literature, as Beethoven was the king of music, he was unthankful and was buried in a tomb. But Jesus' prayer of thanksgiving teaches us how to be happy living in God's beautiful world, and at the same time, humanly speaking, living in a crazy world. We have to practice saying, "Thank you, Jesus." Let's say "Thank you, Jesus" 100 times a day, looking at the mirror, crying and smiling. We can be the children of God when we know how to thank God. These days in America, those who do not know how to complain lose a lot. Those who know how to complain gain a lot. But it is against God's truth. We must thank God, first of all, for the privilege of living in God's world with a specific mission. We must thank God that we are enjoying God's life in us day and night. We must thank God for the glorious mission that God has given us to pray to God that he may make America a kingdom of priests and a holy nation. If you want to be a good businessman, and one who achieves something, the first secret is to thank God. If you thank God, and do your best whatever you do, God blesses you. When we hear from others, "Thank you," we feel very good. How much more does God, when he hears, "Thank you," from his flock of sheep. Let's read verse 46 all together. "After leaving them, he went up on a mountainside to pray."

II. He is a ghost (47-50)

Look at verses 47-48. "When evening came, the boat was in the middle of the lake, and he was alone on land. He saw the disciples straining at the oars, because the wind was against them. About the fourth watch of the night he went out to them, walking on the lake. He was about to pass by them...." It was evening. The boat was gliding on glassy water. When they arrived at the middle of the lake, the disciples were straining at the oars, because the wind was against them. Many of them were fishermen in the past. But they could not overcome the wind blowing against them. So they were straining at the oars. At the moment Jesus saw them, they were at the point of collapsing. The Bible says it was about the fourth watch of the night. In contemporary words, it was around 3:00 a.m. Jesus immediately went out to them, walking on the lake. He was about to pass by them. But when they saw him walking on the lake, they thought he was a ghost. They were at the point of fainting. But when they saw a man walking on the lake, they became alert. They cried

out because they thought that the one who was walking on the lake was a ghost. They cried out because they all saw him and were terrified. They were at the point of perishing. But the one who appeared like a ghost woke them up. They gained strength to cry out. Since they were terrified, they trembled violently. They forgot where the oars were. They only thought about the ghost which was approaching them to eat them up.

Immediately he spoke to them and said, "Take courage! It is I. Don't be afraid" (50b). Then he climbed into the boat with them, and the wind died down (51). The disciples had learned through common life that Jesus is the Son of God. Through the last storm training, they learned that Jesus is the Ruler of nature. They learned that Jesus is God when they saw his compassion toward the crowding people from all over the villages and countryside. They learned of Jesus more than enough. But they only had head knowledge of Jesus. They thought he was the Son of God. They thought he was a good shepherd. They thought he had power and authority to heal the sick and cast out demons from the Gerasene Demoniac, who looked like Frankenstein. But their knowledge about Jesus was in their thought world. Jesus was not their own personal God and Savior. They knew that Jesus is the Son of God. But when they confronted the crisis, they completely forgot that Jesus is God Almighty. When they saw Jesus, they were terrified and yelled and cried loudly, beating their chests. They said, "It is a ghost! It is a ghost! What do I do? He is going to eat me up!" This might be the top disciple Peter's crying out of fear. "Wow! He is opening his mouth to eat me up! Help me! I am going to die. Oh my, what do I do with my wife and two sons and daughter?" This was Matthew's yelling. Actually, Matthew did not marry and he did not have a daughter. But out of his subconsciousness, he had. He also had a severe marriage problem. So he cried out loudly, worrying about his wife, two sons and daughter. He was very funny. The other disciples were most afraid of a ghost. There are many stories about ghosts. Without the story of ghosts, many works of literature would not have been successful. When we read "Divine Comedy" by Dante, the story of ghosts occupies his work quite a lot. Why did they see Jesus as a ghost when he approached them to save them? Let's think about this briefly.

It was because they did not accept Jesus as the Son of God from their hearts. They only accepted Jesus as the Son of God in their minds. Their knowledge of Jesus had not gone down from their heads to their hearts, and next to their souls. Therefore, Jesus was a symbolic figure to satisfy their human desires and ambition. When Jesus talked about his death and resurrection several times, Peter was so upset, and he took Jesus aside and rebuked him, "Don't die. You have to be the earthly Messianic King and save our people Israel" (8:32). Once Jesus took Peter, James and John to the transfiguration mountain to show them his original figure as God (9:2 ff.). Then Peter secretly asked Jesus, "Shall I put up three tents-one for Moses, one for Elijah and one for you?" Peter was a man who was seeking glory and he was easygoing. He wanted to be on that mountain with Moses and Elijah and Jesus. He didn't say, "Shall I build my shelter, also?" But he definitely had one kingly shelter in mind for himself.

It is important for us to believe that Jesus is the Son of God. It is important for us to believe that Jesus is the Way and the Truth and the Life (Jn 14:6). But Jesus was in only the corner of their minds as useful existence. It is the general error of all human beings. Leo Tolstoy wrote "Resurrection" and "Anna Karenina" to enhance the Christian moral

standard of Russian women, who were absolutely wayward. But when he was about to die, he was tragic because Jesus was not in his soul. Therefore, we must have a confession of Jesus Christ in our souls. Paul spoke about the confession of Christ in Romans 10:9. It says, "That if you confess with your mouth, 'Jesus is Lord,' and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved." Paul, when he was converted, made a clear confession of faith in his soul. He was happy to die anytime for the sake of Jesus. So he said in Philippians 1:21, "For to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain." When we have a confession of Christ in our souls, we can transcend our death problem and we can live with great conviction and with a sense of great victory in our souls all the time. But if we don't have Jesus in our souls, we don't find the meaning of our existence and wander endlessly. One brilliant young man came to me and said, "I have everything. I mean, I also have a girlfriend who has been hanging around me for the last seven years. I have a good job prospect." Then he shed several drops of tears and asked me, "What's the meaning of all these?" There is a base girl whose father is a lifetime gambler. She has been loved in Jesus by the care of many Christian friends. She finished a bachelor's degree in education. But she has no ability to teach grade school students. So she is staying home with her children. She studied the Bible so much. But she does not have Jesus in her soul. Now she is gradually becoming a mental patient, like her mother. She has been going around accusing the people of God and a shepherd who cared for her most. She was a good lady, even though she is not pretty. She was a candidate for a mother of prayer. But her Bible study was very superficial and in her own way. As a result, she has no direction of life. She has no meaning of life. Her handsome and gentle husband means nothing to her. On the other hand, one of our missionaries, Andrew Kim, is the Yugoslavia UBF Director. Yugoslavia was one country. But since Russia cut all the satellite countries off, Yugoslavia was divided into twelve countries. Once there was a war between Muslims and Eastern Orthodox Christians. Missionary Andrew Kim was in Belgrade with certain sheep under his care. The bombing was intense. So he was ordered to retreat to Germany. In order to obey this command, he retreated once to Köln, Germany. But he could not sleep with the thought of his sheep in disaster. So Missionary Andrew went back to Belgrade, where bombing was still going on, and prayed with his sheep several days. He left Belgrade, Yugoslavia in order to attend the UBF MSU Conference, International. He is now in Belgrade, Yugoslavia and he feeds sheep as a matter of life and death. He thanks God for the privilege of caring for Yugoslavian sheep. He is full of spirit. He is happy indeed. It is because he accepted Jesus as his personal Savior. It is because he has a vine and branch relationship with Jesus. It is very important after we hear the word of God to keep it in our hearts and let it grow. Colossians 2:6,7 says, "So then, just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord, continue to live in him, rooted and built up in him, strengthened in the faith as you were taught, and overflowing with thankfulness." Just hearing the word is not enough. We must plant the word in our hearts and by the word of God we must be strengthened in the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ. As a result, we must stand firm in Jesus Christ even in the Galilean lake.

### III. A sense of history (51-56)

Look at verses 53-54. "When they had crossed over, they landed at Gennesaret and anchored there. As soon as they got out of the boat, people recognized Jesus. They ran throughout that whole region and

carried the sick on mats to wherever they heard he was." We guess that the disciples were very unhappy looking at the crowd of people. It is because the thoughts of a ghost and their fear were still lingering in their hearts. But wherever Jesus went—into villages, towns and countryside—they placed the sick in the marketplaces. What a scene, that Jesus healed the sick in the marketplaces instead of selling something. In the midst of his busy healing ministry he was deeply mindful of his disciples. In the lake, when Jesus climbed into the boat with them, the wind died down. They were completely amazed. They were amazed when Jesus performed a miracle and fed the 5,000 with five loaves and two fish. In this case, they were the same. When Jesus made the wind die down, again they were completely amazed.

Read verse 52. "...for they had not understood about the loaves; their hearts were hardened." Jesus was telling them that they had no sense of history. They saw Jesus as a ghost and they were terrified. The disciples saw so many miracles performed by Jesus. The disciples had just seen Jesus feeding the 5,000 with five loaves and two fish. They must realize that Jesus is God who had compassion on a flock of God's sheep that was over 5,000 men. Through Jesus' ministry they should have learned Jesus is God and he is Jesus Christ who saves the world. Especially they must remember his divine compassion in feeding the 5,000 with five loaves and two fish and they should have accepted Jesus as the Son of God. They must thank God and praise God for Jesus. But their head knowledge didn't sink into their hearts and next to their souls. Their head knowledge remained in their minds and when they confronted hardship they forgot everything and were only terrified by the situation. Jesus mildly rebuked them that they did not understand because they did not remember that he fed the 5,000 with five loaves and two fish. It means that Jesus showed them that he is the God of compassion. But they thought they were they, and Jesus was Jesus. In short, they had no personal relationship with Jesus. Also, they had no sense of history. Feeding the 5,000 had happened just before. But now they completely forgot what they had seen and had been convinced of by Jesus. They became storm heads. So their hearts were hardened by fear.

Now we confess that we love America. But there is a strong impression that modern Americans have forgotten about their forefathers. Most importantly, they have forgotten God's will that he wanted to establish a city on a hill. This is the exact expression of a Bible center in Zion. All people of the world would be overjoyed and shout, "Let's go to Jerusalem to study the word of God. Let's go to America to study the word of God." "A city on a hill" is the same as "In God We Trust." America has sent one million missionaries who suffered and died. And in their retirement, most of them lived very lonely lives in apartments for retired missionaries. But they were not lonely. They were very thankful that they had the privilege of serving God all their lifetime. They say that Dr. Dietrich is writing a biography of Florence Root. Dr. Dietrich is not a writer at all. But he changed and became a man of thanks. So he is going to write a biography of Florence Root. I want to smooth what he has written before it is published.

Today we learned Jesus' prayer, and how to thank God, and to have a sense of history. When we pray, we can thank God for everything. We are happy indeed. When we have a sense of history, God gives us desire to do something good. May God help us overcome our senselessness and pray, and thank God, and have a sense of history, and do something good for

the glory of God.