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The One Who Calms Our Fears

JOHN 6:16-21

Introduction

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1. What is it that makes people afraid?
 - a. Bugs, snakes, spiders (intense fear of some animal)
 - b. Tight spaces (claustrophobia)
 - c. Flying
 - d. The dark
 - 1) This fear isn't about the dark itself.
 - 2) It's more about the fact that something could be hiding in the shadows and we can't tell it is there.
 - e. Violent weather
 - f. Large crowds — a man who years ago struggled with coming to worship because of all the people present.

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2. What causes you the greatest fear?
 - a. Rejection by someone whose opinion you value.
 - b. Loss of control (our inability to control some situation in our life.)
 - c. Loss of health (the limitations it puts on us)
 - d. Loneliness — “It is not good for the man to be alone” (Genesis 2:18).
 - e. Death (fear of the unknown, what will happen to us)
3. If the truth be told, all of us are afraid of something, even though we dare not let it be known.

4. Some of the most reassuring words found in all of Scripture are the words, “Do not be afraid.”
5. Tonight, I want us to look at one occasion where these words were spoken and then at some other passages where they are used to comfort and strengthen those who were afraid for one reason or another.
6. All of us will need such reassurance at some point in our lives.

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I. Jesus Walks On The Water

(JOHN 6:16-21; CF. MATTHEW 14:22-33; MARK 6:45-52)

A. PREPARING THE SCENE

1. Jesus had just fed the 5,000 (John 6:9-13).
2. Believing Jesus to be the Prophet like Moses who was to come into the world (Deuteronomy 18:15-19), the crowd intended to take Him by force and make Him king (John 6:15).
3. “He made the disciples get into the boat and go ahead of Him to the other side” (Matthew 14:22; Mark 6:45).
4. He then sent the crowds away (Matthew 14:22; Mark 6:45).
5. Jesus “withdrew . . . to the mountain” to be by Himself (John 6:15). He wanted to pray (Matthew 14:23; Mark 6:46).
6. He prayed until well past midnight.

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B. THE DISCIPLES’ DILEMMA

1. It was “evening” (Matthew 14:23; Mark 6:46).
2. The disciples . . .

- a. were “a long distance from the land” (Matthew 14:24),
- b. were “in the middle of the sea” (Mark 6:47)
- c. “had rowed about three or four miles” (John 6:19).
 - 1) *Literally*, “25 or 30 stadia”
 - 2) A stadion was about 600 feet.
3. “The sea began to be stirred up because a strong wind was blowing” (John 6:18).
4. They were . . .
 - a. “Battered by the waves; for the wind was contrary” (Matthew 14:24).
 - b. “Straining at the oars, for the wind was against them” (Mark 6:48).
5. Jesus saw them (Mark 6:48). How?
 - a. Because it was near Passover, there would have been a full moon.
 - b. The light from the moon would have made it easy to see them.

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C. JESUS' APPEARANCE

1. Jesus came down from the mountain and started toward them, walking on the sea (Matthew 14:25; Mark 6:48).
2. It was “about the fourth watch of the night” (i.e., 3-6 a.m.).
3. Jesus' intention was to pass by them (Mark 6:48).
3. However, the disciples “saw Him walking on the sea” (Matthew 14:26; Mark 6:49).
4. The twelve were terrified because they thought they were seeing a ghost (Matthew 14:26; Mark 6:49-50).

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5. They “cried out in fear” (Matthew 14:26).

6. Jesus immediately spoke to them:
 - a. “Take courage, it is I; do not be afraid” (Matthew 14:27; Mark 6:50).
 - b. “It is I; do not be afraid” (John 6:20).
7. Jesus “got into the boat with them, and the wind stopped” (Mark 6:51; cf. Matthew 14:32).
8. “So they were willing to receive Him into the boat, and immediately the boat was at the land to which they were going” (John 6:21).

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II. God Reassures Us In Our Fears

A. JAIRUS FEAR OF LOSING HIS DAUGHTER (MARK 5:21-24, 35-43)

1. Jairus was a synagogue official whose twelve year old daughter was “at the point of death” (v. 23).
2. He pleaded with Jesus to come lay His hands on her so that she might “get well and live” (v. 23).
3. On His way to Jairus’ home, Jesus was delayed by a woman who needed to be healed of a blood disorder.
4. Following her healing, someone came to Jairus and informed him that his daughter had died, there was no longer any need to trouble Jesus.
5. Jesus overheard what had been said to him and said, “Do not be afraid any longer, only believe” (v. 36).
6. He then went to the home and raised Jairus’ daughter.

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B. FEAR OF THOSE WHO MAY TAKE OUR LIVES (LUKE 12:4)

1. On one occasion, Jesus told His disciples, “do not be afraid of those who kill

the body and after that have no more that they can do" (Luke 12:4).

2. He then added, "fear the One who, after He has killed, has authority to cast into hell" meaning God (Luke 12:5).
3. Hebrews 13:6 is a quotation of Psalm 118:6, in which are reminded, "The Lord is my helper, I will not be afraid. What will man do to me?"

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C. DO NOT BE AFRAID OF YOUR INABILITY TO CONTROL YOUR LIFE (LUKE 12:22-32)

1. ". . . do not worry about your life, as to what you will eat; nor for your body, as to what you will put on. For life is more than food, and the body more than clothing" (Luke 12:22-23).
2. "And which of you by worrying can add a single hour to his life's span? If you than cannot do even a very little thing, why do you worry about other matters?" (Luke 12:25-26).
3. "But if God so clothes the grass in the field, which is alive today and tomorrow is thrown into the furnace, how much more will He clothe you? You men of little faith!" (Luke 12:28).
4. "Do not be afraid, little flock, for your Father has chosen gladly to give you the kingdom" (Luke 12:32).

Conclusion

1. "Fear not," "Do not be afraid."
2. How many times does God speak these words to our hearts to reassure us that our lives are under His control.

3. How many times to we still choose fear over faith?

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4. The apostle John wrote in 1 John 4:18, "There is no fear in love; but perfect love casts out fear, because fear involves punishment, and the one who fears is not perfected in love."