

**The Gospel of John**

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**The Gospel of John**

**Lesson #56**

**The Journey**

Jim Hoffman

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**The Fishes and the Loaves**



SEA OF GALILEE

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**The Disciples Perspective in John 6**

Mark 8:17 And Jesus, aware of this, said to them, "Why are you discussing the fact that you have no bread? Do you not yet perceive or understand? Are your hearts hardened? 18 Having eyes do you not see, and having ears do you not hear? And do you not remember? 19 When I broke the five loaves for the five thousand, how many baskets full of broken pieces did you take up?" They said to him, "Twelve." 20 "And the seven for the four thousand, how many baskets full of broken pieces did you take up?" And they said to him, "Seven." 21 And he said to them, "Do you not yet understand?"

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### The Disciples Perspective in John 6

The disciples had seen water changed to wine, thousands healed, some raised from the dead, and the monstrous miracle of feeding 20,000 people with 2 fish and 5 loaves. And yet, Jesus has to ask, "Do you not yet understand?" He was of course referring to his true identity. He had even asked if they had hard hearts meaning something like, "have you become so accustomed to witnessing the power of God that you are no longer moved to stop and wonder at the work that God is doing right in front of you in plain sight everyday?"

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### The Gospel of John

**If God were to take back his Spirit and withdraw his breath, all life would cease, and humanity would turn again to dust.**  
**Job 34:14**

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### The Gospel of John

**And he is before all things, and in him all things hold together.**  
**Colossians 1:17**

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### The Gospel of John

- Chapter 6 is a long chapter, 71 verses, with a lot going on – it may have been typical of most of Jesus’ days with unbelievable demands on him.
- By the time the chapter is over we will see the crowd transformed from curiosity seekers to people who outright rejected Jesus.
- The came, they saw, and in the end, they were not as interested in the things of God as most probably claimed to be.

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### The Gospel of John

Like so many of our day, they wanted the blessings of Messiah without actually wanting him – if they could keep him as a vending machine or force him to be king, they were “in”, but a life changing God who will demand their obedience had no appeal to them.

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### The Gospel of John

- John chapter 6 points to those who were following Jesus around as false disciples just staying close to see what they could get.
- 1<sup>st</sup> John 2:19 They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would have continued with us.
- Hebrews 3:12 Take care, brothers, lest there be in any of you an evil, unbelieving heart, leading you to fall away from the living God.

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### The Gospel of John

Right in their presence was the quintessential example of a false follower, Judas Iscariot. Outwardly, he was indistinguishable from the other eleven apostles, but he had an unbelieving heart. Judas was a particular kind of unbeliever – he knew he wasn't saved but had mastered the art of blending into the community of believers. He knew the truth, knew how to talk and act the part, but was lost. Do we have such people amongst us?

Probably.

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### The Gospel of John

- Many of today's false followers are much different from Judas – many false "followers" today are misnamed because they don't even pretend to follow Jesus.
- They often have Christians in their lives who care about them, and they know if they drop their cover story the Christians in their lives will confront them.
- Evidently it is just much easier to go along pretending to be a Christian to keep their loved ones quiet, than to own up to their spiritual condition.

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### The Gospel of John

The people in our lives who tell us they know Jesus but, are no different now than they were in their past, put us in a very uncomfortable position because we feel all the urgency and dread that they should. We desperately pray for them while they continue as though they are in no danger at all.

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### The Gospel of John

• John 6:16 When evening came, his disciples went down to the sea, 17 got into a boat, and started across the sea to Capernaum. It was now dark, and Jesus had not yet come to them. 18 The sea became rough because a strong wind was blowing. 19 When they had rowed about three or four miles, they saw Jesus walking on the sea and coming near the boat, and they were frightened. 20 But he said to them, "It is I; do not be afraid." 21 Then they were glad to take him into the boat, and immediately the boat was at the land to which they were going.

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### The Gospel of John

• Matthew tells us more about this event, "**Jesus made the disciples get into the boat and go before him to the other side, while he dismissed the crowds.**"

• They are going to be caught in a storm and they could rightly say that "**Jesus made me get into this boat**" – because there are some storms we need to go through.

• He always knows what's best, and it's when we are distressed, that we really come to know God as he is.

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### The Gospel of John

• The disciples are instructed to head on back to Capernaum and on their way back a storm arises.

• Storms on the Sea of Galilee are common and can arise quickly – the Sea of Galilee is 700' below sea level.

• It sits down in what could be described as a deep bowl.

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### The Gospel of John

- How is this for a setting – they had just witnessed Jesus’ biggest miracle yet.
- They were separated from him, they are in a storm, it was dark, they were weary from rowing most of the night, and now they see what they think is a ghost walking on the water.
- A huge victory followed by a storm – maybe a vivid metaphor of the Christian life?

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### The Gospel of John

**Has it ever crossed your mind that as long as we are in this flesh there is always another storm on the horizon?**

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### The Gospel of John

- It is now dark, they’ve been rowing most of the night, and this storm comes up.
- In Matthew’s account we learn it’s the 4<sup>th</sup> watch of the night and the disciples had only traveled 3-4 miles in roughly 8 hours time when Jesus comes to them.
- From our perspective it seems like Jesus always comes in the 4<sup>th</sup> watch of the night when things seem to be darkest.

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### The Gospel of John

- In the accounts of this evening by Matthew and Mark they both make a point of saying, “the wind was against them”.
- Think about this – it’s possible the disciples are feeling pretty good that their Rabbi is finally so prominent that he is thought of as “king” material.
- After a huge victory one of the enemy’s tactics is to oppose what we are doing, and we know from the book of Job what Satan can do with wind.

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### The Gospel of John

Job 1:18 While he was yet speaking, there came another and said, “Your sons and daughters were eating and drinking wine in their oldest brother’s house, 19 and behold, a great wind came across the wilderness and struck the four corners of the house, and it fell upon the young people, and they are dead, and I alone have escaped to tell you.”

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### The Gospel of John

- So, what to do when our faith is tested? Go rehearse in your mind what the Word has to say.
- It is rather hard not to bump into one of the “fear not” passages in the Bible – so we pick up our Bible and we begin to read.
- John 14:27 Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. Not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid.

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**The Gospel of John**

**Storms do not last forever –  
neither do our trials. We will get  
home safe and sound and we will  
have learned much along the  
way.**

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**The Gospel of John**

- Matthew 14:28 And Peter answered him, "Lord, if it is you, command me to come to you on the water." 29 He said, "Come." So Peter got out of the boat and walked on the water and came to Jesus. 30 But when he saw the wind, he was afraid, and beginning to sink he cried out, "Lord, save me." 31 Jesus immediately reached out his hand and took hold of him, saying to him, "O you of little faith, why did you doubt?" 32 And when they got into the boat, the wind ceased. 33 And those in the boat worshiped him, saying, "Truly you are the Son of God."

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**The Gospel of John**

- Jesus walks right through the storm with apparent ease while 12 men struggle to advance their boat using the usual means.
- In order to walk on water, the law of gravity must be suspended or overcome in one fashion or another.
- But he doesn't suspend the law of gravity in a universal sense – instead, he did it just for him and then later Peter.

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## The Gospel of John

- But you might say, the law of gravity was only suspended for Peter while he believed so Peter must have had the power to suspend gravity too using his faith.
- Be careful you do not invent some superpowers for yourself that can be activated by your faith any time you want.
- You cannot believe things into being – our only power lies with resting in Christ. We knock, we seek, and we ask, but only he can do.

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Questions?

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