2020 08 09 Should we Jump?

Genesis 37:1-4,12-28. Psalm 105:1-6,16-22,45b.

Romans 10:5-15. Matthew 14:22-33.

Matthew 14:22-33

Our Lord Jesu had, had a huge day teaching and feeding over maybe 10000 people - men, women and children.

And even though Jesus’ spirit and trust in God was absolute – blessing of bread -healing – teaching the truth in the midst of error and evil – this human being did not ride off into the sunset – hi ho Silver – but sent his disciples away in their boat – their day had been enormous as well – distributing food, collecting the left overs – relating to people – wonder at their Lord – they would have been worn out in body and mind.

Jesus sent them onto the lake in a boat where they could be isolated and be refreshed. Jesus himself would farewell the huge crowd of people.

Jesus then isolated himself to draw strength and companionship and love and quietness and … renew His being in Gods’ Presence.

As it often happens when we set aside time and place to be still, Jesus friends found that our God has His own ways of strengthening us – the disciples had a period of gentle sailing and maybe a few hours sleep BUT then – about 3 am the gale came – it was dark and the literal translation of the verse is “they were tormented by the waves”. That lake is well known for sudden changes in wind conditions.

*? Have you ever been caught in a ferocious storm – what were your feelings, fears, thoughts?*

The song Amazing Grace came out of a fearful storm and was written by a man who lived a vile life of slave trading.

Imagine what happened next!

They were fighting the wind and waves to keep the boat from sinking and they see a figure walking on the wild waves – a ghost – the Angle of Death coming to get them?

**Then that voice – that familiar voice –**

**“take courage, it is I; do not be afraid.”**

(play song: “I hear the voice of Jesus say, come unto me oh weary one, come unto me and rest …)

The obvious application to us is that when, not ‘if’, when we are in trauma times of life and the wind is tormenting us – whatever the cause – our own emotions or our own actions or things out of our control we can hear the voice: “do not be afraid, I AM here.”

The Lord did not wait until they were calm enough to hear his voice, or for us to be still inside and then hear His voice, the Lord spoke in all the fear and terror of the night.

We can hear the Lords voice because we have Gods Presence in us – this was the unbreakable promise of Jesus for each individual believer.[[1]](#footnote-1)

We can ‘grieve’ the Holy Spirit[[2]](#footnote-2) and the quiet voice will become harder to hear or discern. In the past week I had medical problems and spent eight days and nights – consumed with watching DVDs. I like mystery, problem solving movies and even though we ejected numerous DVDS because the Lords name was used I still saw lots of the bad in life. As the days past I found that it became an effort to read the bible or to type a coherent message – things did not flow.

I needed to confess and be still and when I did, clarity started to return.

V28 Peter, the Bold, the wonderful ‘foot in the mouth’ character that is so full of life and trust and excitement that you find it easy to love or be exasperated with.

“Lord if it is You, command me to come to You on the water.”

Do we ever express the same “Lord, if it is You, is it you or my thoughts or what I want Lord ***‘Do I jump’*** *–*

“Trust in the Lord with all your heart/emotions and do not lean on your own understanding”[[3]](#footnote-3)

The enemy of our relationship with God knows that the bible can be manipulated or verses picked out of their setting or extended beyond the intention of the words. Classic example: when Jesus was being tested in the desert and Satan challenged him to prove the promise by God, that angels would protect him so that he would not even stub his toe on a stone – so throw yourself of the tower he challenged![[4]](#footnote-4)

The Lords reply was :

 “**you will not put the Lord your God to the test”[[5]](#footnote-5).**

We do need however to ‘test’ any verse that we are relying on – when was it stated, what circumstances, read the verses around it and any similar verses, was it an absolute or something for that time, or a story to teach? E.g.: The Old Testament laws permitted divorce but when Jesus was asked he said that “it was because of the hardness of your heart that God permitted you to divorce your wife BUT I SAY TO YOU …”[[6]](#footnote-6) and another:

Animal scarifies were Gods command before Jesus became the ultimate final sacrifice/substitute, so one cannot use the Old Testament sacrifice laws to justify this practice today. If they do they are a person trying to earn their own salvation rather than come to the Cross of Jesus and be clean and filled with Gods rightness.[[7]](#footnote-7)

So Peter, at Jesus invitation of ‘come’ stepped over the edge of the boat and eyes fixed on Jesus started to walk towards Him – I would say, walked confidently, absorbed with Jesus, but then he began to feel the water, driven by the wind, hitting his face and maybe the cold of the water began to be felt on his feet and he began to sink –

Peter did the only thing possible “Lord save me!”

And Jesus reached out and took his hand.

There was another possibility – to keep looking at the waves and feeling the wind – and to sink.

Well – we have the same choices in both the troubled times and the easy times. Easy times can be more dangerous than troubled times because we can ‘slide’ along and make compromises – there is a wonderful verse – “beware the little foxes that spoil the vines”. The little compromises and unconfessed ‘errors’ or whatever they nibble around the stem of the vine and eventually ringbark it and it fades and dies.[[8]](#footnote-8)

Honesty with self and God and others who have been harmed will bring the Spirits soft voice back into our hears.

One last thing with knowing Gods voice, the voice that we follow: the armour of a Christian soldier:[[9]](#footnote-9)

“Let us lay aside the deeds of darkness and put on the armour of light.”[[10]](#footnote-10)

The Full armour of God – stand straight – feet planted.

1. Truth around our waist and thighs – truth is our modesty, our security, our respectability – without it we are exposed in falseness and foolishness.
2. To cover our heart/emotions we have the breast plate, the bullet proof vest of ‘righteousness’ – who’ s righteousness – Gods – Jesus brought it for us when he became sin for us so that we might became the righteousness of God in Him.[[11]](#footnote-11) Say when uncleanness or doubt or whatever temptation comes – even the little compromises – “*I am righteous in Jesus the Saviour” and go with that feeling and knowledge in making decisions and repenting when failing.*
3. Our shoes are specially designed to never wear out and to carry us to where God wants us to spread peace. note the word ‘preparation’ we need to work at growing, learning, preparing etc. *Maybe they even walk on water?*
4. The most vulnerable part of us – our head where our brain – which governs our body – is protected by knowing that we are ‘saved’, the helmet of salvation, we have repented of self and come to Jesus death and resurrection – this fact must be our undentable helmet that protects and sanitises our thoughts. Say this to unworthy or put down thoughts: “NO I am saved and righteous in Jesus.”
5. Take up the shield of faith with which we are able to defeat the flaming arrows of the evil. Gossip, rejection, criticism, pride, looking down on others – all of these can be prevented from entering our soul and emotions by the faith that says “**I am loved** by God, **I am accepted** and **I am Gods child.**”
6. What shall we speak, “the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.” If we are diligent in reading the bible Gods Spirit will bring the appropriate words when they are needed – both for ourselves and others.
7. V18. “through all prayer and petition, praying at all times in the Spirit, aware of God no matter what we are doing, being on the alert (at all times) with all perseverance and petitions for the saints.”
8. God will weave all these things into our being.

***(Physical exercise: stand touch hip: I put on the belt …)***

**To jump or not to jump**

into faith into growing into loving – v12 tells us that our battle, our accuser, our enemy, is not the person that the words or attitude is coming out of, it is coming from the spiritual forces that work against us – the love of God showing through us will defeat them.[[12]](#footnote-12)

To be or not to be …

What is our answer - it is totally an individual thing?

Discussion: look at each of the items of armour and – have we experienced situations were these were or could have been appropriate.

1. John 14-16 [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Ephesians 4:30 [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Proverbs 3:5 [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Matthew 4:1-11 [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. “ 4:7 [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. Matthew 19:8 [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. 2 Corinthians 5:21 [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. Song of Solomon 2:15 [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. Ephesians 6:11- [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. Romans 13:12 [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. 2 Corinthians 5:21 [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. John 3:16+ [↑](#footnote-ref-12)