

**8/30/18**

**Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,**

*The boat was already a considerable distance from land, buffeted by the waves because the wind was against it. During the fourth watch of the night Jesus went out to them, walking on the lake. When the disciples saw him walking on the lake, they were terrified. “It’s a ghost,” they said, and cried out in fear. But Jesus immediately said to them: “Take courage! It is I. Don’t be afraid.” Matthew 14:24-27*

The Sea of Galilee is 700 feet below sea level. It’s the lowest freshwater lake on the planet. When winds whip through the surrounding mountains and into that watery Galilean crater, storms come quickly and out of nowhere.

That is where the disciples are—on a boat, in a windstorm, at night. Jesus is not with them. In fact, Jesus was the one who told them to cross the sea. It shows that being a disciple is not easy. You can’t assume that life will be exactly how you want it. Life is full of unexpected storms. What do you do?

The temptation is to doubt God’s Word. We hear God’s promises, but we are tempted to wonder if he is reliable. If he were, why would life be so difficult right now?

But don’t doubt God’s Word. Think about the disciples in that boat on the wind-whipped sea. What are they looking at? They’re looking at Jesus. It’s a surreal scene. Jesus goes out to them, walking on the rough water. No wonder they think they’re seeing a ghost.

Then he speaks a word of promise: “Take courage! It is I. Don’t be afraid.” There is strength for faith. It’s not a ghost. It is the Lord Jesus Christ, the true Son of God!

When we fear or worry, Jesus promises, “It is I who forgives. It is I who saves. Look at me. Focus not on the illness, not on the pain, not on the economy, not on yourself. Find strength for your faith in my promises.”

God has laid a firm foundation for your faith in his excellent Word. Believe it. God’s promises are always powerful. They brought peace to the disciples, and they bring faith to your heart and hope for your future.

***Prayer:*** *Lord, I do believe; help me overcome my unbelief. Amen.*

*(WELS E-Devotion, adapted)*

...See you in worship.

Keep looking up because the Lord is always looking down – Psalm 121

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