Walking on the Water

John 6:16-29

Introduction:

* There was six months between John 5 and 6.
* There was just a few hours between verses.15 and 16.
* After the feeding of the 5,000 Jesus went back to the mountains where He was when the multitude arrived.

I. The Private Sign to the Disciples – 6:16-21

A. Direction – 6:16-17a

“Now when evening came, His disciples went down to the sea, got into the boat, and went over the sea toward Capernaum.”

This was the same day as the Feeding of the 5,000, verses 1-15.

The Jews had two periods called “evening,” Early–3-6, and Late 6-dark. This was the latter. According to Jesus’ directions, they were heading back to Capernaum.

B. Darkness – 6:17b

“And it was already dark, and Jesus had not come to them.”

The terrain above the lake was mountainous. They, being fishermen, had their boat and a sail.

C. Dread – 6:18-20

“Then the sea arose because a great wind was blowing.” (18)

Storms can arise very quickly on the Sea of Galilee. These were experienced sailors, but you never trust a storm, especially at night. So, haul in the sail and start rowing – nothing new!

“So when they had rowed about ﻿﻿three or four miles, they saw Jesus walking on the sea and drawing near the boat; and they were ﻿﻿afraid.” (19)

According to Mark, they thought it was a phantom or ghost, at first. Matthew records that Peter asked to come to Jesus and Jesus permitted him to come.

“But He said to them, ﻿﻿“It is I; do not be afraid.” (20)

They apparently knew His voice and were greatly relieved.

D. Distance – 6:21

“Then they willingly received Him into the boat, and immediately the boat was at the land where they were going.” (Capernaum.)

The distance was greatly decreased. There is no indication that they had any sensation of flying or any such thing. They were just there. And they did not have to keep rowing for the balance of the trip.

II. The Public Sermon to the Jews – 6:22-40

A. The Astonishment of the Multitudes – 6:22-25

Remember that they wanted to take Him to the Passover and crown Him King. They didn’t seem to know that there cannot be a kingdom without the cross. Isaiah 53 is in the O.T. as well as Zechariah 9:9.

1. The Missing Christ – 6:22-24

a. There was no boat there except the disciples’ boat – 6:22a

“On the following day, when the people who were standing on the other side (east) of the sea had seen that there was no other boat there, except ﻿﻿that one ﻿﻿which His disciples had entered,”

b. Jesus did not leave with His disciples – 6:22b

“and that Jesus had not entered the boat with His disciples, His disciples had gone away alone”

The important point is that there had been only one boat there yesterday, Jesus did not get in that boat, so He must still be there. Let’s find Him and make Him King!

c. They got into other boats – 6:23-24

“however, other boats came from Tiberias, near the place where they ate bread after the Lord had given thanks—when the people therefore saw that Jesus was not there, nor His disciples, they also got into boats and came to Capernaum, ﻿﻿seeking Jesus.”

2. The Mystified Crowd – 6:25

“And when they found Him on the other side of the sea, they said to Him, “Rabbi, when did You come here?”

Jesus ignores the question. The walking on water was a private sign for the disciples alone. But He does have a message for them.

B. The Assessment of the Master – 6:26-29

1. Their Carnal Nature – 6:26

﻿“Jesus answered them and said, “Most assuredly, I say to you, you seek Me, not because you saw the signs, but because you ate of the loaves and were filled.”

Jesus begins His answer with “ἀμὴν ἀμὴν” [See also 4 other times 26, 32, 47, 53.] It shows the importance of what comes next.

The plural, “signs” refers to all of the signs He did in Galilee, But He concentrates on the bread. They were thinking of the physical bread that fed their physical bodies. They saw wonders not signs.

Even today, many people are in church because of what they can get. (Like the Rice-Christians of China – years ago)

These people were concentrating on the illustration and not the lesson being taught. They had held the bread in their hands, eaten it with their mouths, but, they never understood it with their hearts. They were filled “χορτάζω” with it like an ox with fodder.

2. Their Crying Need – 6:27-29

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﻿﻿“Do not labor (work) for the food which perishes, but ﻿﻿(work) for the food which endures to everlasting life, which the Son of Man will give you, ﻿﻿because God the Father has set His seal on Him.” (27)

“Do not work” for food that perishes. i.e.: “do not make that your chief concern.”

He now defines the difference between the two breads, one that which perishes and that which remains,

* The one - you eat and it is gone -- It has done some good physically// none spiritually.
* The other remains for eternal life -- It produces life and salvation here and hereafter.
* By faith we eat this food and have and enjoy eternal life.

“The Son of Man will give it to you,” [just as He gave you the physical food yesterday] -- He stays away from the term Messiah. They link that name with national deliverance from – like they did yesterday. “Son of Man” links Him with the human race. He can do that because the Father has put His seal on Him. The seal is God’s stamp of approval. There is no higher stamp.

Demand that on every doctrine you are offered. No stamp, go somewhere else to someone else until you find that stamp.

﻿“Then they said to Him, “What shall we do, that we may work the works of God?” (28)

They want to do the works (pl.) of God. They see it as a series of works. They have forgotten the free gift of yesterday. That signified that He will give them free spiritual gift of eternal life.

﻿“Jesus answered and said to them, ﻿﻿“This is the work of God, that you believe in Him whom He sent.” (29)

He starts off correcting their major error. It is work, not works. That work is “believe on Him, Jesus, Whom He, the Father, has sent.”

Conclusion: