



September 29, 2019

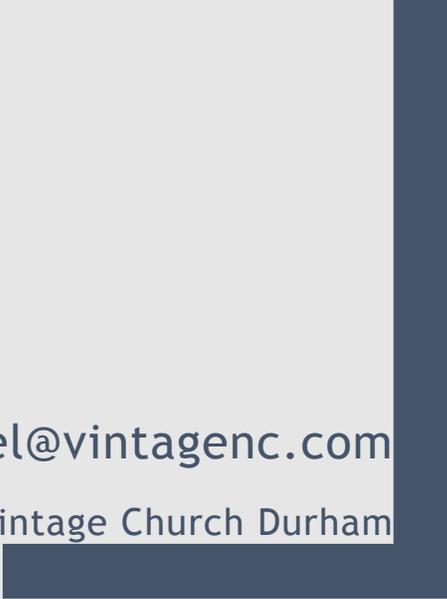
DIGGING DEEPER

John 6:16-21

The purpose of this document is to help us
take the word beyond our Sunday gathering and
to **think through the practical implications of**
the Scriptures and then to **be intentional**
about living the word out.

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The Struggle

Questions Worth Asking

Sent by the Savior (John 6:16-17; Matthew 14:22-23; Mark 6:45-47)

The disciples set out to a desolate place with Jesus to rest. Rather than finding a quiet place to rest, they found thousands of people looking to see the man who performs miracles. The disciples spent the day working with Jesus as he healed the sick, taught about the kingdom of God and then miraculously fed the crowd. This would have now been a good time to bask in the moment, celebrate what the Lord had done, and take a much needed rest. Instead, Jesus immediately sends the disciples to set out for Capernaum, a five mile boat trip from where they were. And what do you say to the person who just showed you that it isn't a good idea to question him...grab your oar boys, it's time to go. The Lord is more interested in growing our character than making us comfy and cozy. Even though we may have had a different idea, if the Savior sends us, we should gladly go.

- What is it about knowing the Lord and his faithfulness to his word that compels you to push through pain and obey his word?

Struggling out at Sea (John 6:18-19a, Matthew 14:24; Mark 6:48a)

The disciples set out for Capernaum at the command of Christ. It was dusk by the time they hit the water. And under normal conditions, they should have arrived to their destination an hour later. But their trip was anything but smooth sailing as they were met by a storm. After rowing for approximately nine hours, the disciples made it three to four miles and were still vigorously rowing around 3 to 6 AM. Being sent by the Lord oftentimes gives us an energy and focus that can't be contained. We launch out into the deep with great anticipation of amazing things to come. Yet it seems that without fail, launching out for the Lord leads us into some rather difficult predicaments. We meet them with a head of steam initially. But our vigor seems to be dependent on the intensity and/or the length of the storm. In these moments, we must remember that the same Savior who calms the waves (Mark 4:35-41) sends us out into storms. We can trust him.

- How does an awareness that you have been sent by the Savior strengthen you to endure the struggles of the storm?

Steps Worth Taking

1. **Sent by the Savior** - Sometimes our comfort seems to trump our obedience to Christ's commands. The Lord has saved us so that he might send us to serve.
 - Identify a way to serve someone this week in a way that has not been a part of your regular routine.
2. **Struggling out at Sea** - At times it seems easier to throw in our oar and walk away from the fight. It is never a good time to give up on God.
 - Reaffirm your commitment to Christ and remain faithful in the fight.
 - Stand with the Savior in the midst of the struggle.
 - i. Consider your most significant struggle at this season of your life.
 - ii. Remember how you got there.
 1. If it was the result of sin, repent right now and stop the sinful behavior.

2. If it was the result of being sent, focus on what the Lord said and not what you currently see ([Matthew 14:28-33](#)).

The Sound

Questions Worth Asking

A Sound of Terror (John 6:19b, Matthew 14:25-26; Mark 6:48b-50a)

A piercing shriek may have filled the night sky as the disciples cried out in terror thinking a ghost was walking towards them at some unseemly hour in the morning. While the disciples were likely dealing with sleep deprivation and fatigue, they weren't hallucinating. However, they were still unaware of the power and might of their Lord and Savior. So rather than being comforted that the Christ was coming, they were terrified by the "ghost" walking on water. Not being aware of who God is and how he operates puts us in a position to respond inappropriately to a move of the Spirit. Rather than being comforted by his presence, we find ourselves disturbed by the things going on around us and feel like the Lord is not near. Even though he promises to never leave us or forsake us, we cry out in terror at the situations and circumstances rather than giving praise and glory to the all-present and all-powerful God that is in our midst. We must not let the factors that are swirling around us determine how we see the Savior. Understanding who he is will be a sight for sore eyes.

- How has your understanding of who God is impacted the way you respond to the storms you are dealing with in your life?

A Soothing Sound (John 6:20-21, Matthew 14:27; Mark 6:50b-52)

The Lord didn't let the fear linger in the hearts of the disciples. He soothed their troubled souls by letting them know it was their Savior approaching. "It is I." These three simple words changed everything for the disciples. The realization that the Lord had come put them at ease. Immediately the feeling of terror was overtaken by a peace. And that peace came from knowing who was present. The sound of the Savior became a source of encouragement and strength for the disciples. They moved from a sense of terror to a feeling of exhilaration. They went from wanting to run for their lives at the sight of the "ghost" walking on water to inviting the man into the boat. When we come to know the sound of our Savior, we stop running from him and willingly invite him into our lives. We move from terror of situations to being settled in the presence of the true and living God. We must not allow the voices of others to drown out the soothing words of our Savior. He wants us to know that he is with us, and we are to draw strength from that truth and not to be afraid.

- How have the words of the Lord changed your perspective and response from one of terror to a posture of peace and joy?

Steps Worth Taking

1. **A Sound of Terror** - The shadows can be scary and F.E.A.R. (false evidence appearing real) can paralyze us. The light and truth of the word of God shines a right perspective on what is real.
 - Commit to reading & meditating on the word of God everyday this month.
 - Write down one truth each day that shines light on the shadows (lies) in your life.

2. **A Soothing Sound** - "It is I." May the truth that the Lord is with us bring us comfort always. Draw near to God and you will see how near he really is to you.
- Commit to reading & meditating on the word of God everyday this month.
 - Write down one truth each day that reminds you of the Lord's proximity to his people.