

**The Question of the Week**

“When Jesus dismissed the crowds, he went up the mountain to pray. The disciples were already several miles out on the Sea of Galilee but were making no headway because of the wind. At the fourth watch of the night Jesus came to them walking on the water.”

Matthew 14: 22-24

The fourth watch of the night. When is that? The first watch is three hours. From 6 to 9 in the evening. The second watch is from 9 to 12 (midnight). The third is from 12 (midnight) to 3 in the morning. The fourth watch is from 3 until 6. Before sunrise. Jesus came walking on the water about four o'clock in the morning. Pitch black in the midst of storm with howling winds. A good number of the apostles were fishermen, used to life on the Sea of Galilee. They mostly fished at night. They were familiar with the vagaries of nighttime and its occasional storms. But not all the apostles were fishermen. Not all of the twelve were familiar with, or comfortable with, being on the sea especially at night. We don't even know if they all could swim.

And yet, here they are, in the storm and for some reason Jesus had insisted that they set out in the boat at the end of a very long and taxing day. Not only long and taxing but right after one of the most remarkable experiences of their lives. Jesus had fed five thousand people with a few loaves of bread. They saw it with their own eyes but could in no way explain it. And then, just when they are ready to get some rest and drift off to a well-deserved sleep Jesus tells them to get into the boat and head to the other side of the lake. Not only that but to do this without him. He was not going along. BUT? What were they supposed to do there without him with them? Why wasn't he going along? How would he get to where they were? A lot of questions. Unanswered questions. Maybe they pushed back. Maybe they told him they were tired. In any event it is now way past the middle of the night. They are all past the point of tired. Now they are frightened too. Alone. In the storm. On their own. Almost in over their heads. What were their thoughts? We don't know.

But then Jesus comes to them. Walking. On. The. Water. They all know that you can't do that. You can't feed five thousand people with five loaves of bread either. Who is this? Who can do such things? They know the answer. Only the Lord. Only God. It was God who fed the Israelites with manna in the desert. It was God who created all of nature to begin with. God is Lord of all that is. And Jesus is doing things that only God can do. Is there a realization in here somewhere? Is there a dawning going on? They know. They believe. This Jesus of Nazareth. He is a man like us. Yes. But he is way beyond that. He is the Holy One of God. The Anointed One. The Messiah. The Savior of the world. He can do all things. Is the picture beginning to get clearer? That is the question of the week.