

## SERMON

### “LET THAT SINK IN”

*Preaching text: John 6:1-21*

When I was really young one of my favorite things to do on Saturday morning was to get up as early as possible ... even before the sun came up. I would sneak into the room where our TV was ... being very careful not to wake up my parents. I remember turning on the TV. At this hour of the morning most of the time it was just test patterns with their colored bars on the screen. But I would wait for that glorious moment to come when the Saturday morning cartoons would start!

One of my favorite cartoons was the Road Runner. I looked forward to watching the Road Runner burn up the roads with good ol' Wiley Coyote in hot pursuit. I loved watching Wiley come up with schemes and inventions. He'd often use dynamite, always from the ACME company. I loved watching each attempt somehow backfire. I also loved watching that coyote try to protect himself from falling anvils and large boulders with just an umbrella.

My favorite part of the chase was when Wiley would run out over some cliff into midair. I loved how he would be doing great as he ran on air ... doing great until he looked down and realized he wasn't on solid ground any longer. And as soon as that simple fact sank into his brain, he dropped like a rock. It was amazing to me how Wiley could defy gravity.

In a way, that's how the disciples must have felt in today's gospel.

Jesus had just fed the 5,000. The crowds were relentless. He was at the height of his popularity. Everyone wanted to see him, to be with him, to hear him, to ask for healing, to see a miracle. To simply be a part of the excitement. And so, Jesus needed time alone. The disciples went out in the boat to the other side of the lake.

But Jesus did not go. Instead, he went off to pray alone. There were so many demands placed on him that he just needed to get away. As he was praying, there was a big wind that came up. The lake became rough, and the waves

battered the boat, which by now was a good way out on the lake. In the middle of this storm, the disciples see a figure walking across the water. It looked like a ghost, so they were afraid. Who wouldn't be? But Jesus said to them, "Take courage. It is I. Do not be afraid."

Matthew's account of this gives us even further details of what happened that day. Peter, never at a loss for words says, "Lord it is you, command me to come to you in the water." And so, Jesus did. Peter got up out of the boat and began to walk on the water. Can you imagine what that must have been like? But it didn't last long. Matthew 14 tells us that Peter became afraid and filled with doubt. When he did, he took his eyes off of Jesus and sank like a rock.

It's kind of like those cartoon characters running in mid-air, doing great until it sinks in that they are doing something they shouldn't be able to do. That's what happened to Peter. He looks down, looks around, and it sinks in that he cannot walk on water. As soon as that sinks in, Peter gets afraid, takes his eyes off Jesus and sinks like a rock.

Don't you just love Peter? He is so human ... so much like us. Things are going along great for awhile ... then WHAM, we find ourselves in the midst of storms of chaos and we begin to doubt. We could think things like, "If God really loved me my husband wouldn't have died ... "or "If God was really taking care of me then things would go better with my kids, or my marriage, or my work." "If God really cared ... if ... if ... if ... When those words sink in ... we take our eyes off Jesus. We become afraid and filled with doubts. And we, like Peter, begin to sink.

Our Bible story reminds us of and reassures us that Jesus comes to us in the midst of the storms and chaos in our lives. He comes to us as we struggle with keeping our head above water ... as we struggle to live in a world full of storms and chaos. He comes to us, reaching out to us.

It is my hope and prayer that whatever storms you may be facing today, you do so, know that you do not have to face them alone. One of the great strengths we have as a community of faith is that we can be there for each other. The greatest strength we have is in Jesus who loves us so much he will help us through those hard times. But we have to reach out.

Notice how the Bible reading ends. The disciples were afraid, but they still reached out for Jesus' help. And Jesus led them safely to the other side. The disciples invited Jesus into the boat and he took care of the rest. Invite Jesus into your heart. It's okay if you are afraid. Let Jesus come into your life and help you with whatever you may be struggling with today!

**AMEN.**