

“TOILING IN ROWING”

Text: Mark 6:45-52

Subject: “Rowing Secrets In The Middle Of The Night”

Introduction:

Fact: There is not a mother here who hasn’t “toiled in rowing”.

Fact: There is not a father here who hasn’t “toiled in rowing”.

Fact: There is not a grandmother, grandfather, son, daughter, teenager, single mom, single dad or anyone else single or widowed who hasn’t “toiled in rowing” in the middle of the night.

“Rowing secrets That Speak to the Heart”

Question: Why did Jesus send His disciples across the lake?

Question: Didn’t Jesus know it was about to storm?

Question: Why did Jesus take so long to arrive and reveal Himself?

Question: How do contrary winds come to us all?

Question: What’s the message from the Lord to your heart today?

The Setting Before Us

(V. 45) “And Jesus straightway constrained His disciples to get into the ship while He sent the people away.”

Question: Why did Jesus send his disciples away to cross the lake without Him?

Answer: Because Jesus knew what the disciples didn’t know.

- ◆ 5,000 people were just fed by a miracle of the loaves and the fishes.
- ◆ John recorded this same event and gives us the insight in John 6:14, 15:

“Then those men, when they had seen the miracle that Jesus did, said; this is of a truth that a prophet that should come into the world. When Jesus therefore perceived that they would come and take Him by force, to make Him king, He departed again into a mountain Himself alone.”
(John 6:14, 15)

Fact: The multitude now believes that Jesus is the Messiah. (And want to make Him king)

Fact: They think He is come to deliver the people from Herod’s authority and Roman oppression.

Fact: Thus, if the disciples remain on shore, they will be destroyed by missing the true purpose of Jesus’ coming.

So Lest The Disciples...

1. Be blinded by the frenzy of the moment (or)
2. Be swept in by popular excitement
3. And miss the cross and ultimate plan of God, **(Jesus says)**

“Get into the boat and go alone out on the water.”

(What a discovery right here)

1. That Jesus can see some things that the disciples cannot see!
2. That Jesus knows some things that the disciples do not know.
3. That Jesus is doing some things behind the scenes that the disciples will discover later on.

(This Morning)

- ◆ How many of you believe that Jesus sees some things that you cannot see?
- ◆ How many of you believe that Jesus knows some things that you do not know?
- ◆ How many of you believe that Jesus is doing some things right now (behind the scenes) that you will discover later on?

(So the stage is set for some rowing secrets)

I. The Testing Of The Disciples

Question: Who was it that told the disciples to get into the boat and go across the lake?

Answer: It was Jesus (v. 45) “And straightway He constrained His disciple’s to get into the ship and go to the other side unto Bethsaida”.

(Why was it a testing time?)

1. They would be alone (Jesus was staying on shore).
2. They would be in the dark (it was late at night).
3. They would be in trouble (contrary winds would arise).
4. They would be surprised (Jesus never told them ahead of time what they would encounter).

(V. 48 – Doesn’t hide the truth)
“The wind was contrary unto them”

Ask: Didn’t Jesus tell them to cross the lake? **Yes**

Ask: Weren’t the disciples in the perfect will of God? **Yes**

Ask: Did they experience contrary winds while obedient? **Yes**

Then, what’s the big deal?

- ◆ The big deal is; this is when the devil whispers his three lies to your heart:
 - ◆ This is when the accuser of the brethren strikes with doubts and insinuations:
1. “You must have unconfessed sin in your heart.”
 2. “You must not have mountain moving faith.”
 3. “You must be out of the will of God.”

(But it’s all a lie)

- ◆ Because this test is simply preparation for a miracle crusade that will begin when they get to shore. (V. 56)
- ◆ This test is to make the heart stronger and make the faith greater for what’s down the road.
- ◆ This test is not a sign of divine disapproval (it’s a sign of divine approval).

II. The Toiling of the Disciples

(V. 48) “And Jesus saw them toiling in rowing.”

Fact: The Greek word for “toiling” means “baffled”.

Fact: It means the disciples were tired, weary, drained and exhausted.

Fact: It means the disciples used up all their natural skills as skilled seamen.

Question: Why were the disciples “toiling in rowing”?

Answer: Because of four reasons:

1. Galilee was six miles across and the disciples were right in the middle. (Are you in the middle of contrary winds?)
2. The disciples had been rowing against a headwind for six to nine hours. (Have you been up against a headwind pressing in upon you?)
3. After 9 hours, and only half way across (in the middle) the disciples discover their strength is gone and used up. (Are you here this morning and find yourself faint and weary and tired and worn?)
4. It's now the fourth watch of the night in Roman time (which is between 3 am and 6 am) or the darkest part of the night. (Do you feel like you're in the dark and can't see the end in sight on shore?)

Ask: Do you feel like Jesus is unaware of what surrounds you?

Ask: Do you feel like Jesus isn't answering your prayers?

Ask: Do you feel like Jesus has left you without direction and purpose?

Ask: Do you feel like Jesus isn't on time or not on schedule?

Ask: Do you feel like Jesus doesn't know where you are, why you're there or how long you'll be there?

III. **The Triumph Of The Disciples**

(V. 53) “They came over to the land of Gennesaret and landed on shore.”

In (V. 46) – Jesus was praying for them.

In (V. 48) – Jesus was looking at them.

In (V. 48) – Jesus walked over to them.

In (V. 50) – Jesus talked to them.

In (V. 50) – Jesus encouraged them.

In (V. 51) – Jesus joined them in the ship.

In (V. 53) – Jesus saw that they made it to their intended destination.

(What A Discovery Here)

1. That your “**dark night**” circumstances are never too dark where Jesus can't find you.
2. The Lord takes the initiative (He is bent on revealing Himself to you).
3. The waves (or whatever frightens you) is the Lord's opportunity to walk right into your view.

Conclusion
“Rowing Secrets” That Build the Soul

Secret #1: Contrary winds do not mean that you have missed the will of God.

- ◆ The disciples were in the middle of the perfect will of God.

Secret #2: There are times when we all will toil in darkness, so that we will feel our need of Jesus all the more.

- ◆ The disciples could only look to Jesus for help.

Secret #3: No winds are bad winds if they bring your heart closer to Jesus.

- ◆ The Galilee wind led Jesus into the boat where the disciples were.

Secret #4: When your strength is exhausted and gone, then God’s strength will be sufficient to sustain you.

- ◆ The disciples toiled to exhaustion and that’s when Jesus took over.

Secret #5: When the hour is the darkest, that’s when it’s God’s opportunity to reveal Himself to you.

- ◆ The disciples met Jesus between 3 and 6 am. (The darkest time of night).

Secret #6: The calming of the Lord will always be equal to the raging of the winds.

- ◆ Jesus caused the winds to cease.

Secret #7: The delay of Christ’s appearing to you, never means that He is idle or unaware.

- ◆ Jesus was praying fervently while the disciples were pulling frantically.

Secret #8: When you can’t see Jesus, He still sees you.

- ◆ The disciples didn’t know that it was Jesus walking on the water.

Secret #9: The winds may interrupt your schedule, but they cannot keep you from God’s intended plans.

- ◆ The disciples reached the shore on the other side.

Secret #10: When you come to the end of yourself, that’s the time to reach out for the arm that is stronger than yourself.

- ◆ The Disciples invited Jesus to come aboard, and Jesus accepted their invitation.

AMEN!
Bill Kirk