

“He Is with You in the Storm”
(John 6:15-21)

I. Introduction.

A. Orientation.

Last time,

We saw one of Jesus’ most familiar miracles –

And perhaps the greatest to this point:

Jesus fed five thousand men –

Besides women and children –

With the modest lunch of a young lad –

Five barley loaves and two fish.

He did this for at least three reasons:

To provide for the needs of His people –

They had followed Him

And He had taught and healed them

Throughout the day –

He didn’t want them to leave

Without meeting this need as well –

Which reminds us that Jesus cares for our needs.

He has promised

That He will provide for us throughout life

And bring us safely to heaven.

He did this to show His disciples
That there's a reward for serving Him –
After they had served the people
They gathered up the leftover pieces
And filled twelve large baskets –
One for each of them.
The Lord will reward you
If you seek first His kingdom and righteousness
And set your heart to serve Him.

And He did this to show both His disciples and the people
Who He really was:
The Prophet Moses said would come into the world (Deu. 18:15) –
The Messiah.
Jesus likely did this miracle
During the time of the Passover
Not only to show He is the Lamb of God
Who takes away the sins of the world,
But that He is the Bread of Life,
Pictured by the Feast of Unleavened Bread.
Jesus tells you that if you eat this bread –
If you turn from your sins/disobedience –
And trust Him to save you –
He will give you eternal life.

B. Preview.

We see Jesus now

Command His disciples to get into a boat

And head to Capernaum

Which is in the land of Gennesaret.

He did this because it was there

He would follow up on this miracle

And teach the people more about their need of Him.

But He also did this because

He had a few more things to teach His disciples.

This morning, let's consider several things:

1. That Jesus protects us from temptation.
2. That the path of duty is often difficult.
3. That Jesus prays for us in our difficulties.
4. That as we grow, the trials become more intense.
5. That the Lord often sends trials after times of blessing.
6. That the Lord will come to us in our trials.
7. And that He will use our trials to bring us to the desired destination.

II. Sermon.

A. First, the Lord protects us from temptation.

We read in verse 15, "So Jesus, perceiving that they were intending to come and take Him by force to make Him king, withdrew again to the mountain by Himself alone."

Why did Jesus withdraw to the mountain?

As we'll see in a moment,

He did so to pray.

But He also did so

That the Jews wouldn't attempt to force Him to be their king,

And likely to help His disciples overcome the same temptation.

Like the rest of Israel,

The disciples had the expectation that when Messiah came

He would lead the Jews to freedom against Rome.

They still believed this at the end of His earthly ministry.

They asked Him just before He ascended

Whether it was at this time

He was restoring the kingdom to Israel (Acts 1:6).

After having seen what Jesus just did

In teaching, healing and feeding the five thousand,

Their hopes in this area would likely have been strengthened,

And so Jesus sent them away and withdrew.

Paul writes, "No temptation has overtaken you but such as is common to man; and God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will provide the way of escape also, so that you will be able to endure it" (1 Cor. 10:13).

Temptations are trials –

God allows them for our good.

But He will never allow us to be tempted

Beyond what we, by His grace, are able to endure.

He will, though, push us to the limit

That He might strengthen us.

Everything He brings into our lives

He intends for some good.

B. Second, our Lord shows us that the path of duty is often difficult.

We read in verses 16-18, “Now when evening came, His disciples went down to the sea, and after getting into a boat, they *started to* cross the sea to Capernaum. It had already become dark, and Jesus had not yet come to them. The sea *began* to be stirred up because a strong wind was blowing.”

Jesus told His disciples to get into the boat

And to cross to the other side; and they obeyed.

A powerful wind began to blow

And the sea became restless,

Making it difficult for them to make much progress.

They were doing what Jesus commanded them to do,

But it seemed as though nature was working against them.

By the time Jesus comes to them

They won't have gotten very far.

Sometimes we tend to think

That if we're doing what God wants us to do

That our way will be blessed –

That our work will be easy,

That it will be productive.
 Sometimes it is,
 But that isn't always the case.
 Very often the Lord will make the road difficult,
 He'll make everything turn against us
 As He did His disciples when they crossed the sea.
 But again, that's because He has more in mind
 Than just the fruit we might bear for Him.
 He wants to teach us the importance of perseverance/endurance.
 The athlete knows if he never challenges himself –
 If he never pushes himself to work harder –
 He'll never improve.
 In the same way,
 If we always do the same thing in the same way –
 If we never have to face any spiritual challenges –
 We'll never grow stronger,
 We'll never improve.
 That's why the Lord will often place difficulties in our path.

C. Third, He shows us that He prays for us in our difficulties.

“So Jesus, perceiving that they were intending to come and take Him by force to make Him king, withdrew again to the mountain by Himself alone” (v. 15).

I said a few moments ago

That one reason Jesus went up to the mountain

Was to pray.

Matthew writes, “After He had sent the crowds away, He went up on the mountain by Himself to pray; and when it was evening, He was there alone” (14:23).

What was He praying for?

Undoubtedly, many things:

That His Father would strengthen Him in His work,

That He would strengthen His disciples,

That He would bring His lost sheep home.

But He likely also prayed that His Father

Would stir up a strong wind,

That would make the sea turn against His disciples,

To slow their progress to the other side.

Why would He do that?

For the reasons we’ve already seen.

God is the One who brings trials –

They don’t happen by accident,

Nothing happens by accident.

Paul writes, “Also we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to His purpose *who works all things after the counsel of His will*” (Eph. 1:11).

He brings them to strengthen us.

James writes, “Consider it all joy, my brethren, when you encounter various trials, knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance. And let endurance have *its* perfect result, so that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing” (1:2-4).

But He doesn't bring trials and then leave us

To deal with them on our own:

He prays for us,

That we might have the strength we need

To endure those trials and benefit from them.

Paul writes, "Who will bring a charge against God's elect? God is the one who justifies; who is the one who condemns? Christ Jesus is He who died, yes, rather who was raised, who is at the right hand of God, *who also intercedes for us*" (Rom. 8:33-34).

D. Fourth, He shows us that as we grow, the trials become more intense.

The disciples had been on the sea earlier

When a storm rose and threatened to sink them –

But Jesus was in the boat.

This time, they're back out at sea

In the middle of a storm (Matt. 14:24) without Him –

And that by Jesus' command.

When we first start out with the Lord

It does seem as though He's closer to us.

We can sense more of His presence.

But as we grow in Him,

Sometimes He seems to withdraw –

To withhold His comfortable presence,

That sense of nearness –

To teach us something we need to learn:

To walk by faith and not by sight;

To take God at His Word;

To trust Him

Not only when it feels like He is near,

But also when it seems He is far away.

Is the Lord really ever far from any of us? No.

The Lord says through Isaiah, “Do not fear, for I am with you; do not anxiously look about you, for I am your God. I will strengthen you, surely I will help you, surely I will uphold you with My righteous right hand” (41:10).

E. When is the Lord most likely to send trials?

He most often sends them after times of blessing.

This takes place in the evening

Of the same day Jesus fed the five thousand.

They had just witnessed the greatest miracle of Jesus to date.

They had each just enjoyed a full basket of bread and fish

As their reward for their participation.

And now they find themselves stuck out at sea

Struggling to row to land.

Spurgeon told his preaching students

To prepare for “fainting fits” –

That they would most likely experience a spiritual attack

When the Lord had used them most powerfully –

To keep them humble,
 That they might humbly rely on God
 And not on their own strength.

The same is true for each one of us:
 We are never more likely to go through a trial
 That is designed by the Lord to humble us,
 Than after He has blessed us
 By using us in some mighty way.

F. Sixth, the Lord will come to us in our trials.

John writes, “Then, when they had rowed about three or four miles, they saw Jesus walking on the sea and drawing near to the boat; and they were frightened. But He said to them, ‘It is I; do not be afraid’” (vv. 19-20).

He will come to us –

He came to His disciples on the sea.

He came to John when he was banished to Patmos,

To Paul, Silas and Peter when they were in prison.

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The author to the Hebrews writes, “He Himself has said, ‘I WILL NEVER DESERT YOU, NOR WILL I EVER FORSAKE YOU,’ so that we confidently say, ‘THE LORD IS MY HELPER, I WILL NOT BE AFRAID. WHAT WILL MAN DO TO ME?’” (Heb. 13:5-6).

He will come at *just the right time*.

They had been rowing for at least eight hours –

They began at about sunset –

Which would have been around 7:00 PM –

And now it was the fourth watch of the night (Matt. 14:25) –

Which is somewhere between 3:00 and 6:00 AM.

And yet they had only gone three or four miles –

At most, a half mile an hour –

Matthew tells us that the wind was against them (14:24).

Apparently, it took that long to teach them

What Jesus wanted them to learn.

Sometimes it may take us a while to learn

What our Lord wants to teach us in our trials,

But He will come when the time is right.

And He will come in a way that *unmistakably shows it's Him* –

He came walking on the water.

Here is further evidence

That Jesus is the Prophet –

The Son of God,

The Messiah –

Who else can walk on water?

When He comes to us in our trials,

He will come in a way that shows who it is.

We may not recognize Him at first –

When the disciples saw Him,
 They were afraid:
 Matthew tells us
 They thought there were looking at a ghost.
 Maybe we won't recognize Him either.
 How often do we think the trials we face
 Are brought about by the devil,
 Rather than by God –
 Understanding that sometimes the Lord uses him.
 We haven't yet learned to recognize God's hand:
 Either in His trials or His deliverances.

 Regardless, the Lord *won't leave us* to fear:
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John concludes, "So they were willing to receive Him into the boat, and
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 The disciples were working hard to obey Jesus
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As soon as He came aboard,
The work was suddenly done.
They just needed to learn to trust Him.

If you belong to Him –
If you're trusting Him,
And turning from your sins –
Even though you will have to face many trials,
You can know that you will reach your final destination.
Jesus will make sure you do –
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He says, "My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me; and I give eternal life to them, and they will never perish; and no one will snatch them out of My hand. My Father, who has given *them* to Me, is greater than all; and no one is able to snatch *them* out of the Father's hand" (John 10:27-29).

And so whatever you're faced with now –
And we're all faced with difficulties of various kinds –
Know that the Lord has brought those trials;
He has brought them for your good;
He is praying for you while you go through them;
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To teach us something we need to learn:

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Not only when it feels like He is near,

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Is the Lord really ever far from any of us? No.

The Lord says through Isaiah, “Do not fear, for I am with you; do not anxiously look about you, for I am your God. I will strengthen you, surely I will help you, surely I will uphold you with My righteous right hand” (41:10).

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To prepare for “fainting fits” –

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The same is true for each one of us:
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John writes, “Then, when they had rowed about three or four miles, they saw Jesus walking on the sea and drawing near to the boat; and they were frightened. But He said to them, ‘It is I; do not be afraid’” (vv. 19-20).

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That Jesus is the Prophet –

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When the disciples saw Him,
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 How often do we think the trials we face
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If you belong to Him –
If you're trusting Him,
And turning from your sins –
Even though you will have to face many trials,
You can know that you will reach your final destination.
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He says, "My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me; and I give eternal life to them, and they will never perish; and no one will snatch them out of My hand. My Father, who has given *them* to Me, is greater than all; and no one is able to snatch *them* out of the Father's hand" (John 10:27-29).

And so whatever you're faced with now –
And we're all faced with difficulties of various kinds –
Know that the Lord has brought those trials;
He has brought them for your good;
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“He Is with You in the Storm”
(John 6:15-21)

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Five barley loaves and two fish.

He did this for at least three reasons:

To provide for the needs of His people –

They had followed Him

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Throughout the day –

He didn’t want them to leave

Without meeting this need as well –

Which reminds us that Jesus cares for our needs.

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That He will provide for us throughout life

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He did this to show His disciples
That there's a reward for serving Him –
After they had served the people
They gathered up the leftover pieces
And filled twelve large baskets –
One for each of them.
The Lord will reward you
If you seek first His kingdom and righteousness
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And He did this to show both His disciples and the people
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The Prophet Moses said would come into the world (Deu. 18:15) –
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Jesus likely did this miracle
During the time of the Passover
Not only to show He is the Lamb of God
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Pictured by the Feast of Unleavened Bread.
Jesus tells you that if you eat this bread –
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We see Jesus now

Command His disciples to get into a boat

And head to Capernaum

Which is in the land of Gennesaret.

He did this because it was there

He would follow up on this miracle

And teach the people more about their need of Him.

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This morning, let's consider several things:

1. That Jesus protects us from temptation.
2. That the path of duty is often difficult.
3. That Jesus prays for us in our difficulties.
4. That as we grow, the trials become more intense.
5. That the Lord often sends trials after times of blessing.
6. That the Lord will come to us in our trials.
7. And that He will use our trials to bring us to the desired destination.

II. Sermon.

A. First, the Lord protects us from temptation.

We read in verse 15, "So Jesus, perceiving that they were intending to come and take Him by force to make Him king, withdrew again to the mountain by Himself alone."

Why did Jesus withdraw to the mountain?

As we'll see in a moment,

He did so to pray.

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And likely to help His disciples overcome the same temptation.

Like the rest of Israel,

The disciples had the expectation that when Messiah came

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They still believed this at the end of His earthly ministry.

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Whether it was at this time

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Temptations are trials –

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But He will never allow us to be tempted

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We read in verses 16-18, “Now when evening came, His disciples went down to the sea, and after getting into a boat, they *started to* cross the sea to Capernaum. It had already become dark, and Jesus had not yet come to them. The sea *began* to be stirred up because a strong wind was blowing.”

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And so whatever you're faced with now –
And we're all faced with difficulties of various kinds –
Know that the Lord has brought those trials;
He has brought them for your good;
He is praying for you while you go through them;
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“He Is with You in the Storm”
(John 6:15-21)

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A. Orientation.

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We saw one of Jesus’ most familiar miracles –

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Besides women and children –

With the modest lunch of a young lad –

Five barley loaves and two fish.

He did this for at least three reasons:

To provide for the needs of His people –

They had followed Him

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Throughout the day –

He didn’t want them to leave

Without meeting this need as well –

Which reminds us that Jesus cares for our needs.

He has promised

That He will provide for us throughout life

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He did this to show His disciples
That there's a reward for serving Him –
After they had served the people
They gathered up the leftover pieces
And filled twelve large baskets –
One for each of them.
The Lord will reward you
If you seek first His kingdom and righteousness
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The Prophet Moses said would come into the world (Deu. 18:15) –
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Jesus likely did this miracle
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Pictured by the Feast of Unleavened Bread.
Jesus tells you that if you eat this bread –
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This morning, let's consider several things:

1. That Jesus protects us from temptation.
2. That the path of duty is often difficult.
3. That Jesus prays for us in our difficulties.
4. That as we grow, the trials become more intense.
5. That the Lord often sends trials after times of blessing.
6. That the Lord will come to us in our trials.
7. And that He will use our trials to bring us to the desired destination.

II. Sermon.

A. First, the Lord protects us from temptation.

We read in verse 15, "So Jesus, perceiving that they were intending to come and take Him by force to make Him king, withdrew again to the mountain by Himself alone."

Why did Jesus withdraw to the mountain?

As we'll see in a moment,

He did so to pray.

But He also did so

That the Jews wouldn't attempt to force Him to be their king,

And likely to help His disciples overcome the same temptation.

Like the rest of Israel,

The disciples had the expectation that when Messiah came

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They still believed this at the end of His earthly ministry.

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Whether it was at this time

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Temptations are trials –

God allows them for our good.

But He will never allow us to be tempted

Beyond what we, by His grace, are able to endure.

He will, though, push us to the limit

That He might strengthen us.

Everything He brings into our lives

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B. Second, our Lord shows us that the path of duty is often difficult.

We read in verses 16-18, “Now when evening came, His disciples went down to the sea, and after getting into a boat, they *started to* cross the sea to Capernaum. It had already become dark, and Jesus had not yet come to them. The sea *began* to be stirred up because a strong wind was blowing.”

Jesus told His disciples to get into the boat

And to cross to the other side; and they obeyed.

A powerful wind began to blow

And the sea became restless,

Making it difficult for them to make much progress.

They were doing what Jesus commanded them to do,

But it seemed as though nature was working against them.

By the time Jesus comes to them

They won't have gotten very far.

Sometimes we tend to think

That if we're doing what God wants us to do

That our way will be blessed –

That our work will be easy,

That it will be productive.
 Sometimes it is,
 But that isn't always the case.
 Very often the Lord will make the road difficult,
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 As He did His disciples when they crossed the sea.
 But again, that's because He has more in mind
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 He wants to teach us the importance of perseverance/endurance.
 The athlete knows if he never challenges himself –
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 That's why the Lord will often place difficulties in our path.

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God is the One who brings trials –

They don’t happen by accident,

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Paul writes, “Also we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to His purpose *who works all things after the counsel of His will*” (Eph. 1:11).

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A. Orientation.

Last time,

We saw one of Jesus’ most familiar miracles –

And perhaps the greatest to this point:

Jesus fed five thousand men –

Besides women and children –

With the modest lunch of a young lad –

Five barley loaves and two fish.

He did this for at least three reasons:

To provide for the needs of His people –

They had followed Him

And He had taught and healed them

Throughout the day –

He didn’t want them to leave

Without meeting this need as well –

Which reminds us that Jesus cares for our needs.

He has promised

That He will provide for us throughout life

And bring us safely to heaven.

He did this to show His disciples
That there's a reward for serving Him –
After they had served the people
They gathered up the leftover pieces
And filled twelve large baskets –
One for each of them.
The Lord will reward you
If you seek first His kingdom and righteousness
And set your heart to serve Him.

And He did this to show both His disciples and the people
Who He really was:
The Prophet Moses said would come into the world (Deu. 18:15) –
The Messiah.
Jesus likely did this miracle
During the time of the Passover
Not only to show He is the Lamb of God
Who takes away the sins of the world,
But that He is the Bread of Life,
Pictured by the Feast of Unleavened Bread.
Jesus tells you that if you eat this bread –
If you turn from your sins/disobedience –
And trust Him to save you –
He will give you eternal life.

B. Preview.

We see Jesus now

Command His disciples to get into a boat

And head to Capernaum

Which is in the land of Gennesaret.

He did this because it was there

He would follow up on this miracle

And teach the people more about their need of Him.

But He also did this because

He had a few more things to teach His disciples.

This morning, let's consider several things:

1. That Jesus protects us from temptation.
2. That the path of duty is often difficult.
3. That Jesus prays for us in our difficulties.
4. That as we grow, the trials become more intense.
5. That the Lord often sends trials after times of blessing.
6. That the Lord will come to us in our trials.
7. And that He will use our trials to bring us to the desired destination.

II. Sermon.

A. First, the Lord protects us from temptation.

We read in verse 15, "So Jesus, perceiving that they were intending to come and take Him by force to make Him king, withdrew again to the mountain by Himself alone."

Why did Jesus withdraw to the mountain?

As we'll see in a moment,

He did so to pray.

But He also did so

That the Jews wouldn't attempt to force Him to be their king,

And likely to help His disciples overcome the same temptation.

Like the rest of Israel,

The disciples had the expectation that when Messiah came

He would lead the Jews to freedom against Rome.

They still believed this at the end of His earthly ministry.

They asked Him just before He ascended

Whether it was at this time

He was restoring the kingdom to Israel (Acts 1:6).

After having seen what Jesus just did

In teaching, healing and feeding the five thousand,

Their hopes in this area would likely have been strengthened,

And so Jesus sent them away and withdrew.

Paul writes, "No temptation has overtaken you but such as is common to man; and God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will provide the way of escape also, so that you will be able to endure it" (1 Cor. 10:13).

Temptations are trials –

God allows them for our good.

But He will never allow us to be tempted

Beyond what we, by His grace, are able to endure.

He will, though, push us to the limit

That He might strengthen us.

Everything He brings into our lives

He intends for some good.

B. Second, our Lord shows us that the path of duty is often difficult.

We read in verses 16-18, “Now when evening came, His disciples went down to the sea, and after getting into a boat, they *started to* cross the sea to Capernaum. It had already become dark, and Jesus had not yet come to them. The sea *began* to be stirred up because a strong wind was blowing.”

Jesus told His disciples to get into the boat

And to cross to the other side; and they obeyed.

A powerful wind began to blow

And the sea became restless,

Making it difficult for them to make much progress.

They were doing what Jesus commanded them to do,

But it seemed as though nature was working against them.

By the time Jesus comes to them

They won't have gotten very far.

Sometimes we tend to think

That if we're doing what God wants us to do

That our way will be blessed –

That our work will be easy,

That it will be productive.
 Sometimes it is,
 But that isn't always the case.
 Very often the Lord will make the road difficult,
 He'll make everything turn against us
 As He did His disciples when they crossed the sea.
 But again, that's because He has more in mind
 Than just the fruit we might bear for Him.
 He wants to teach us the importance of perseverance/endurance.
 The athlete knows if he never challenges himself –
 If he never pushes himself to work harder –
 He'll never improve.
 In the same way,
 If we always do the same thing in the same way –
 If we never have to face any spiritual challenges –
 We'll never grow stronger,
 We'll never improve.
 That's why the Lord will often place difficulties in our path.

C. Third, He shows us that He prays for us in our difficulties.

“So Jesus, perceiving that they were intending to come and take Him by force to make Him king, withdrew again to the mountain by Himself alone” (v. 15).

I said a few moments ago

That one reason Jesus went up to the mountain

Was to pray.

Matthew writes, “After He had sent the crowds away, He went up on the mountain by Himself to pray; and when it was evening, He was there alone” (14:23).

What was He praying for?

Undoubtedly, many things:

That His Father would strengthen Him in His work,

That He would strengthen His disciples,

That He would bring His lost sheep home.

But He likely also prayed that His Father

Would stir up a strong wind,

That would make the sea turn against His disciples,

To slow their progress to the other side.

Why would He do that?

For the reasons we’ve already seen.

God is the One who brings trials –

They don’t happen by accident,

Nothing happens by accident.

Paul writes, “Also we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to His purpose *who works all things after the counsel of His will*” (Eph. 1:11).

He brings them to strengthen us.

James writes, “Consider it all joy, my brethren, when you encounter various trials, knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance. And let endurance have *its* perfect result, so that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing” (1:2-4).

But He doesn't bring trials and then leave us

To deal with them on our own:

He prays for us,

That we might have the strength we need

To endure those trials and benefit from them.

Paul writes, "Who will bring a charge against God's elect? God is the one who justifies; who is the one who condemns? Christ Jesus is He who died, yes, rather who was raised, who is at the right hand of God, *who also intercedes for us*" (Rom. 8:33-34).

D. Fourth, He shows us that as we grow, the trials become more intense.

The disciples had been on the sea earlier

When a storm rose and threatened to sink them –

But Jesus was in the boat.

This time, they're back out at sea

In the middle of a storm (Matt. 14:24) without Him –

And that by Jesus' command.

When we first start out with the Lord

It does seem as though He's closer to us.

We can sense more of His presence.

But as we grow in Him,

Sometimes He seems to withdraw –

To withhold His comfortable presence,

That sense of nearness –

To teach us something we need to learn:

To walk by faith and not by sight;

To take God at His Word;

To trust Him

Not only when it feels like He is near,

But also when it seems He is far away.

Is the Lord really ever far from any of us? No.

The Lord says through Isaiah, “Do not fear, for I am with you; do not anxiously look about you, for I am your God. I will strengthen you, surely I will help you, surely I will uphold you with My righteous right hand” (41:10).

E. When is the Lord most likely to send trials?

He most often sends them after times of blessing.

This takes place in the evening

Of the same day Jesus fed the five thousand.

They had just witnessed the greatest miracle of Jesus to date.

They had each just enjoyed a full basket of bread and fish

As their reward for their participation.

And now they find themselves stuck out at sea

Struggling to row to land.

Spurgeon told his preaching students

To prepare for “fainting fits” –

That they would most likely experience a spiritual attack

When the Lord had used them most powerfully –

To keep them humble,
 That they might humbly rely on God
 And not on their own strength.

The same is true for each one of us:
 We are never more likely to go through a trial
 That is designed by the Lord to humble us,
 Than after He has blessed us
 By using us in some mighty way.

F. Sixth, the Lord will come to us in our trials.

John writes, “Then, when they had rowed about three or four miles, they saw Jesus walking on the sea and drawing near to the boat; and they were frightened. But He said to them, ‘It is I; do not be afraid’” (vv. 19-20).

He will come to us –

He came to His disciples on the sea.

He came to John when he was banished to Patmos,

To Paul, Silas and Peter when they were in prison.

He will also come to us in our trials.

The author to the Hebrews writes, “He Himself has said, ‘I WILL NEVER DESERT YOU, NOR WILL I EVER FORSAKE YOU,’ so that we confidently say, ‘THE LORD IS MY HELPER, I WILL NOT BE AFRAID. WHAT WILL MAN DO TO ME?’” (Heb. 13:5-6).

He will come at *just the right time*.

They had been rowing for at least eight hours –

They began at about sunset –

Which would have been around 7:00 PM –

And now it was the fourth watch of the night (Matt. 14:25) –

Which is somewhere between 3:00 and 6:00 AM.

And yet they had only gone three or four miles –

At most, a half mile an hour –

Matthew tells us that the wind was against them (14:24).

Apparently, it took that long to teach them

What Jesus wanted them to learn.

Sometimes it may take us a while to learn

What our Lord wants to teach us in our trials,

But He will come when the time is right.

And He will come in a way that *unmistakably shows it's Him* –

He came walking on the water.

Here is further evidence

That Jesus is the Prophet –

The Son of God,

The Messiah –

Who else can walk on water?

When He comes to us in our trials,

He will come in a way that shows who it is.

We may not recognize Him at first –

When the disciples saw Him,
 They were afraid:
 Matthew tells us
 They thought there were looking at a ghost.
 Maybe we won't recognize Him either.
 How often do we think the trials we face
 Are brought about by the devil,
 Rather than by God –
 Understanding that sometimes the Lord uses him.
 We haven't yet learned to recognize God's hand:
 Either in His trials or His deliverances.

 Regardless, the Lord *won't leave us* to fear:
 He will comfort us as He did the disciples,
 "It is I; do not be afraid" (v. 20).

G. Finally, the Lord will use our trials to bring us to the desired destination.

John concludes, "So they were willing to receive Him into the boat, and
 immediately the boat was at the land to which they were going" (v. 21).
 As soon as they brought Him into the boat,
 They arrived at their destination.
 The trial was over,
 And the lesson was learned.
 The disciples were working hard to obey Jesus
 But couldn't seem to complete the task.

As soon as He came aboard,
The work was suddenly done.
They just needed to learn to trust Him.

If you belong to Him –
If you're trusting Him,
And turning from your sins –
Even though you will have to face many trials,
You can know that you will reach your final destination.
Jesus will make sure you do –
All you have to do is trust Him.

He says, "My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me; and I give eternal life to them, and they will never perish; and no one will snatch them out of My hand. My Father, who has given *them* to Me, is greater than all; and no one is able to snatch *them* out of the Father's hand" (John 10:27-29).

And so whatever you're faced with now –
And we're all faced with difficulties of various kinds –
Know that the Lord has brought those trials;
He has brought them for your good;
He is praying for you while you go through them;
And He will come to you before long
To bring them to a good conclusion. Amen.