

BIG IDEA: Even though we may lose focus, God does not.**PRAY****1) INTRO**• Vikings-Packers game

- Lost focus...in the midst of pressure

2) vv22-27 – JESUS WALKS ON WATER

- After feeding the 5,000 (15,000), JC wants to withdraw to pray
- He sends the disciples away to get in the boat and go to the other side of the lake
- Feeding of 5,000 was near Bethsaida (Luke 9) – N side of Sea
- Jesus sends the disciples away while he dismisses the crowds, who wanted to make him king (John 6)
 - But, JC didn't come just to be king – he came to die on the cross for our sins and then sit on his throne as king
 - So, he sought to get away for uninterrupted prayer w/ Father
 - If Jesus did, how much more should we
 - We're busy & distracted
 - Recent message on prayer...how are we doing in that?
 - To sit before God in worship and prayer and time in his Word is needed if we're going to grow in our walk
 - When its not been priority to me, I can tell
- So, by the time evening came Jesus saw his disciples out in the Sea
 - Sea of Gal is noon for extremely sudden & violent storms
 - They were a long way from shore...3-4 mi, 5 km (John 6)
 - And, in the 4th watch of the night, JC came to them (3-6am)
 - The math shows it took about 9 hrs to go 3-4 m, 5 km
 - Boundary Waters trips – 10 mi/16 km – 4 hrs vs 5 ½ hrs
 - So, disciples worked very hard for 9 hrs fighting the storm
 - Disciples deserve credit for their persistence to obey
- As they're fighting the storm, worn out and tired after 9 hrs, JC walks to them

- And they were terrified when they saw him walking on the waves

- So much so that they said he was a ghost
- Many Jews believed that after a person died, the person's spirit appeared in nearby areas
 - In their fear, this is the only explanation the disciples can give

- But JC says, "Take heart, it is I. Do not be afraid."
 - Akin to "it's me" ...familiar voice when you knock on a door
 - And, even more forceful in that this is a theophany...it's a revelation of God's divinity in Christ
 - The GRK "ego eimi" translated directly to English is "I am"
 - Does that sound familiar?
 - Have we heard that in the Bible before? (Ex 3:13-14)
 - Jesus is making it clear that he's here – God is here
 - And, he's here to help in the midst of the storm
- Yes, it's true that Jesus helps us in the storms of life
 - Jesus came to the disciples to speak to them, deliver them, & give peace

3) vv28-32 – JESUS SAVES PETER & CALMS STORM

- This is only recorded in Matthew
- Peter's initial request here is bold
 - Shows great faith here...it's still stormy right now
 - Jesus didn't reprimand him for this...only for doubting
 - Bible doesn't condemn believers for risking great things for God
- Peter walked on water...until he paid attention to the storm again
 - He took his eyes off Jesus
 - Saw/heard/felt the wind & waves...became fearful
 - Then he started to sink
 - Cried out most important words we can say, "Lord, save me"
 - And, JC immediately reaches out and saves him
- When we take our eyes off Jesus & lose our focus, who's there to save?
 - Lesson here isn't "Don't take your eyes off of Jesus"/"Look at Peter"/"Don't be like Peter"

- Point is that Jesus doesn't take his eyes off of us
- When we're sinking in our sin – distracted away from JC – he reaches out & takes hold of us
- Of course we strive to keep our eyes on JC
 - HS helps us to keep our eyes on JC when we ask him
 - But, we struggle in that...but, JC doesn't
- When we lose our focus and we're God's children/on his team, we're not kicked off/thrown aside
 - He reaches down to save us, rescue us, hold us
 - This is the story of the Bible – all of Scripture
 - That God reached down in love to save us
 - Came to earth to save us from sin, death, punishment
 - Came to save us Peters...we're just like him
 - Jesus was patient & kind w/ Peter – he is/will be with us too
 - Praise the Lord & the God who saves!

4) v33 – DISCIPLES WORSHIP JESUS AS SON OF GOD

- Disciples just heard Jesus' teachings, they've been spending time with him
 - Seen him heal the sick, raise the dead, multiply food...but, this is the first time seen him walk on water
 - As the God of all, he walks on the stormy sea...and he stops the storm – like he did in Matt 8
 - And, the disciples respond in worship
- Acknowledge him as “the Son of God”
 - First time they've said this of him
 - This phrase acknowledges that he's a man, but also that he's God
 - We need him as both
 - As man, he could die in our place
 - As God, he was sinless & defeated death by rising from the grave
 - They worshiped him as the Messiah/Savior of God's people
 - How much more should we too this side of the cross?
 - Do we?

5) VV34-36 – AFTER STORM, JESUS HEALS AT GENNESARET

- Landed at Gennesaret – NW side of Sea
- There's no record of JC being in Gennesaret before this, yet the people recognize him
 - They've heard of him/aware of him
- Imagine going to dr, getting prescription, just touching the bottle
 - That's what happens here
 - Their faith is so strong, they just wanted to touch fringe
- When we cry out to God to heal our sin-sick souls, he'll heal us
 - He will
 - He's done that for us in JC – given us new hearts & his HS

6) CONCL

- Felt a storm myself a bit lately – not that I've sought it out in prep for this sermon – must be in God's sov
 - Encouraging to know that Jesus doesn't take his eyes off us
 - Doesn't kick us off the team/find replacement when we lose focus...when we falter or fear or become distracted
 - Is that encouraging to you?
- Cry out to JC in faith, he'll save you...every day
 - If you haven't before, maybe today will be the first day