

Get in the Boat

Immediately he made his disciples get into the boat and go before him to the other side... Mark 6:45

During the years when I had the privilege of being an active elder at our church, I took what my Sunday School class must have thought was an interminably long time in teaching the book of Mark. During those studies, I bumped into this little verse, and it has become a favorite. My special interest, then and now, is drawn by the fact that our Lord made his disciples “get into the boat”. In other words, we are permitted to think that had each been left to his own individual choice and discretion, none of them would, of their own will, have gotten into it.

Their expectation for the day was that it would be one of relaxation and refreshment. In fact, it had turned out to be an interval of hard work and long hours. Had they followed their natural inclinations, at its end they would have probably much preferred to roll up in their coats and pass a long and restful night on the beach.

But there was more – much more! They would have to row their little craft all night against an opposing wind amid threatening waves in a fierce storm. There would be no rest. Their lives would be drawn into the balance! It would be a night spent fighting for survival!

Some reasonable questions arise: Did the Lord not know these men were already fatigued? Did He not know there would be danger? Did He not know that the only light in the darkness would be the lightning that menaced every moment through the dark hours?

The answer is: of course He knew! Jesus was the God man! All things were known to Him. Why then did he make these weary disciples get into the boat? He did it because He loved them! He would, at the expense of their comfort and safety, give them something infinitely more precious than a night’s rest! There was a lesson that each needed to be taught. The boat would be the classroom!

In a very short time, most of these men would leave this place and go to lands where they would be strangers. They would stand alone and preach an unpopular message. Almost all of them, tradition tells us, would soon lay down their lives for this Jesus.

In that little boat, they learned that the One whom they served had merely to speak and the winds ceased, and the waves abated. At the end of that lesson, every man, though perhaps wet and weary, was convinced that the One for whom they would someday lay down their lives was very God! That is a lesson that could only be taught to these men in *that* boat, on *that* night, in *that* storm!

About three weeks ago, my sweet wife of almost 65 years took a tumble while home alone and doing some light work in our tiered backyard. She pretty thoroughly fractured some bones. I received a call at the restaurant where I was breakfasting with some of my Berean brothers. She had been discovered by a neighbor. That sweet lady summoned an ambulance and stayed by her side - praying with her until it came.

Every Christian life will have its tribulations. Do not fear the trials. The Lord will be with you in them. Someday you will get into the boat, and it will take you home.

George Moore

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