Mark 6:45–56 (NASB95)

45Immediately Jesus made His disciples get into the boat and go ahead of Him to the other side to Bethsaida, while He Himself was sending the crowd away.
46After bidding them farewell, He left for the mountain to pray.
47When it was evening, the boat was in the middle of the sea, and He was alone on the land.
48Seeing them straining at the oars, for the wind was against them, at about the fourth watch of the night He came to them, walking on the sea; and He intended to pass by them.
49But when they saw Him walking on the sea, they supposed that it was a ghost, and cried out;
50for they all saw Him and were terrified. But immediately He spoke with them and said to them, “Take courage; it is I, do not be afraid.”
51Then He got into the boat with them, and the wind stopped; and they were utterly astonished,
52for they had not gained any insight from the incident of the loaves, but their heart was hardened.
53When they had crossed over they came to land at Gennesaret, and moored to the shore.
54When they got out of the boat, immediately the people recognized Him,
55and ran about that whole country and began to carry here and there on their pallets those who were sick, to the place they heard He was.
56Wherever He entered villages, or cities, or countryside, they were laying the sick in the market places, and imploring Him that they might just touch the fringe of His cloak; and as many as touched it were being cured.

Mark 6:45–56 (NASB95)

41Immediately Jesus made His disciples get into the boat and go ahead of Him to the other side to Bethsaida, while He Himself was sending the crowd away.

- Geographic challenges
  - Mk 6:45 “other side to Bethsaida”
    - 3 Problems – start with just one.
      - 1- From Bethsaida TO Bethsaida
        - Luke vs Mk
          - Nah, a desolate place in the region of Bethsaida. (east of it)
            - Lk 9:12 “for we are here in a desolate place”
            - Jn, Mtt and Mk agree
              - Uninhabited city? No.
        - Mark isn’t dumb.
      - ”pros” – they didn’t cross to get to Bethsaida but crossed past it.
        - According to BDAG
• toward, towards, to, after verbs
  o John 6:17 “to Capernaum” possibly “toward” (eis)
    ▪ Blomberg points out that they are both in the same
direction (northeast) from the disciples.
  o Why think Mark means “toward” or “before”
    ▪ Examples – Mk 11:4 (near/before), 4:1 (near, before),
      3:7 (toward)
    ▪ Mark 6:45 (NASB95) 45Immediately Jesus made His
disciples get into the boat and go ahead of Him to the
other side to Bethsaida, while He Himself was sending
the crowd away.
    ▪ Mark 6:53 (NASB95) 53 When they had crossed over
they came to land at Gennesaret, and moored to the
shore.
  • Did the wind change their destination?
    o It slowed them, but did it redirect?
  • Or are we getting the rest of the story?
  o So 1- near Bethsaida, crossing passed Bethsaida to Gennesaret
  o Link in description
    ▪ Biggest Bible Contradictions: time stamped.
• 2- John says they went to Capernaum, not Bethsaida
  o John 6:16-17 (NASB95) 16 Now when evening came, His disciples
    went down to the sea,17and after getting into a boat, they
    started to cross the sea to Capernaum.
  o And they landed there, not Gennesaret
    ▪ John 6:21 (NASB95) So they were willing to receive Him
      into the boat, and immediately the boat was at the
      land to which they were going.
• Some say Bethsaida may have been a stop on the way to the
  Capernaum area
  o Multiple destinations (we don’t get every detail)
    ▪ We still talk this way.
    • Error: unreal expectations.
      o Make a PB&J sandwich.
  o DA Carson, Craig Blomberg
• Others suggest “two Bethsaida’s”
  o It means “house of fish”
    ▪ Biblical Scholar, John Gill
• Gennesaret is a REGION which overlaps the area of Capernaum.
  o They aren’t as concerned with borders but areas.

• John doesn’t use the name “Gennesaret”
• Unbelievable LA

• Three articles in the video description?
  o Steve Hays https://triablogue.blogspot.com/2016/08/was-mark-confused.html

• 3– cross over?
  • But they weren’t going far at all!
  • “cross over”
    o IMAGE - SofG
  • Cognitive map vs paper map
    o On paper – you divide it east from west.
      ▪ Why?
    o Old world vs new
    o Mental map is personalized.
      ▪ “Cross-over”
  • Fisherman’s world
    o Bauckham on this (thought there were errors). https://youtu.be/F4THNI0CxbE
  • Each time they “cross over” they seem to pass the Jordan River.
    o OT “cross over”
  • Explanatory power

• “made His disciples get into the boat”
  o Forceful. Why?
    ▪ According to John – the crowd wanted to make Him king.
    • The disciples may have agreed.
    • Danger of zeal for the wrong things
      o They have this issue because we do too.
        ▪ Be a disciple… make disciples.

46After bidding them farewell, He left for the mountain to pray.
• “after bidding them farewell”
  o Who does this?
    ▪ Again –
      • Jn 6 – purposely difficult.
        o John 6:66 (NASB95) 66As a result of this many of His disciples withdrew and were not walking with Him anymore.
      • Luke 14:25–27 (NASB95) 25Now large crowds were going along with Him; and He turned and said to them, 26“If anyone comes to Me, and
does not hate his own father and mother and wife and children and brothers and sisters, yes, and even his own life, he cannot be My disciple. 27“Whoever does not carry his own cross and come after Me cannot be My disciple.

- Jesus wasn’t into numbers; He was on mission.
  - Good advice.
  - Some think numbers IS their mission
    - A modern mistake-
      - “make disciples”
        - Belief with life commitment to Jesus.
    - Important question
      - Is the crowd shaping me into their image or am I shaping them into the image of Christ?
  - Numbers sometimes CONFLICTS with our mission
    - Modern decrease in church attendance.
      - Who is to blame
        - Culture or church
          - both

- “He left for the mountain to pray”
  - For hours!
    - Necessity of a private prayer life.
  - Yet he taught us corporate prayer
    - “our Father in heaven”
      - 8 plural pronouns.
    - Don’t fail to pray in groups
  - And to be alone
    - Matthew 6:5–6 (NASB95) 5“When you pray, you are not to be like the hypocrites; for they love to stand and pray in the synagogues and on the street corners so that they may be seen by men. Truly I say to you, they have their reward in full. 6“But you, when you pray, go into your inner room, close your door and pray to your Father who is in secret, and your Father who sees what is done in secret will reward you.
    - Are you neglecting this?
      - Make time.
        - If Jesus could, you could.
          - Priorities.

- Both
  - One without the other may be a symptom of unhealthiness

47When it was evening, the boat was in the middle of the sea, and He was alone on the land.
48Seeing them straining at the oars, for the wind was against them, at about the fourth watch of the night He came to them, walking on the sea; and He intended to pass by them.

- 4th watch – 3-6AM
- Walking on the water?
o DEMYTHOLIGIZED
o James Edwards – commentary on the Gospel of Mark
  ▪ Mark 6:45–52 was the object of intense interest in post-Enlightenment lives of Jesus. Starting from the premise that the “laws of nature” are inviolable and that all things in the universe must be capable of rationalistic explanation, the most improbable and far-fetched theories were advanced to explain Jesus’ walking on the Sea of Galilee. Albert Schweitzer’s *The Quest of the Historical Jesus* (1906) documents the opinions of scores of scholars who judged this story an optical illusion caused by Jesus walking along the shore, or a deception caused by his walking on a sandbar. For solely rationalist interpreters, the story was a code to be cracked, a conundrum to be resolved.²
    • Sandwalk/mirage?
      o 1- Sea of G doesn’t have mirages.
      o 2- especially at night! (no heat, no sun)
      o 3- they’re fishermen
  • On the contrary – the laws of nature are what make miracles possible.
    o We need a normal order of things to notice when God is acting.
      ▪ Some say the Bible is teaching that people can walk on water.
        • No, it’s counting on the fact that they can’t!
  ▪ “God must prove Himself with a miracle”
  • Also, “miracles should never be believed”
  ▪ Best attested miracle of Jesus?
    • Resurrection
      o Also the most miraculous
    • Validates the rest.
  • Jesus sent them into this trial
    o Again. (mk 4)
    o What were they learning?
      ▪ Trust in trials
        o Hadn’t learned it yet…. But
          ▪ 1 Peter 4:12 (NASB95) Beloved, do not be surprised at the fiery ordeal among you, which comes upon you for your testing, as though some strange thing were happening to you;
        • Great maturity in seeing CURRENT trials as useful.
          o 1 Peter 1:6–7 (NASB95) In this you greatly rejoice, even though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been distressed by various trials, 7 so that the proof of your faith,
being more precious than gold which is perishable, even though tested by fire, may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ;

James 1:2–4 (NASB95) 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.

- What am I learning in this?!?!?
  - Endurance.
- God is more committed to your character than your comfort.
  - Enlightenment comes in trials. (in Mark)
- BUT, it’s not just character
  - God cares about your relationship with Him
  - Learning trust.

- Intended to pass by them
  - Perhaps not to miss them, but to pass near them.
    - “seeing them straining at the oars.... He came to them”
    - At any rate, he wanted them to see him.
      - The emphasis is “Jesus can walk on water!”
  - There’s more... in a moment.

49 But when they saw Him walking on the sea, they supposed that it was a ghost, and cried out;
50 for they all saw Him and were terrified. But immediately He spoke with them and said to them, “Take courage; it is I, do not be afraid.”

- A ghost?
  - As they did after the resurrection
- Jesus’ words
  - “take courage; is it I, do not be afraid”
  - Not just the feeling that Christ is with you...
    - The KNOWLEDGE that He is.
  - Hebrews 13:5 (NASB95) Make sure that your character is free from the love of money, being content with what you have; for He Himself has said, “I will never desert you, nor will I ever forsake you,”

51 Then He got into the boat with them, and the wind stopped; and they were utterly astonished,
52 for they had not gained any insight from the incident of the loaves, but their heart was hardened.

- There was a message in the loaves!
  - Not “God can provide”
    - How would that stop them being astonished at Jesus walking on water.
  - About WHO Jesus is.
    - Not only commanding storms... but walking on water.
  - The theme in Mark.
“who is Jesus” – the stories tell you.

- The one who
  - Comes to His temple in fulfilment of the promise that YHWH would come to His temple (ch1)
  - Forgives sins (ch2)
    - 2:7 “who can forgive sins but God alone”
  - The one who is Lord of the Sabbath!
    - 2:27
  - Defeats and rebukes Satan (throughout)
    - even Michael won’t because YHWH has that right
    - can even give OTHERS power over demons and illness!
      - Ch 6
  - who commands wind and sea and they obey Him
    - 4:41 as only YHWH does (OT)
  - The one who gives them bread as God did in the OT
    - Ch 6 –
      - Jn makes it clearer –
        o Not only the giver, He is the bread from heaven
          - Pre-existence and provision
- And we are only in chapter 6!

- OT on walking on water.
  - Job 9:8 (NASB95) 9Who alone stretches out the heavens And tramples down the waves of the sea;
    - God strengthens this in His rebuke to Job
      - Job 38:16 (NASB95) 16“Have you entered into the springs of the sea Or walked in the recesses of the deep?
  - But wait, there’s more!
    - Greek stuff
      - Peripaton epi thalasses (LXX Jb 9:8 and Mk 6:48)
      - And “pass by”
        - Job 9:11 (NASB95) 11“Were He to pass by me, I would not see Him; Were He to move past me, I would not perceive Him.
        - In Jesus, God is SEEN.
        - In OT, when God passes by it is to reveal Himself.
          - Ex 34
          - But that revelation is veiled.
  - But wait, there’s MORE!
    - “It is I” (6:50)
      - Ego eimi
    - Edward James’ commentary on Mark
      - *It is a divine epiphany in answer to their earlier bafflement when he calmed the storm, “Who is this?” (4:41). In this respect Mark’s Christology is no less sublime than is John’s, although John has Jesus...*
declaring that he is the Son of God (John 10:36), whereas Mark has him showing that he is the Son of God. In Mark one must, like the disciples, be in the boat with Jesus and enter into the drama in order to behold who Jesus is. The one who calmed the storm is the one who now appears in the storm, the “I Am” of God.3

- Maybe this is why Mark doesn’t include Peter walking on water (as Matt does)

- 6:52 but their heart was hardened
  - The disciples hearts!
  - – hard hearts don’t necessarily mean “outwardly and obviously resisting”, it can just mean “you just don’t get it”
  - Blindness isn’t the same as closing your eyes.
  - Pray - “God open my eyes”
  - Seeking God is important
    - The truth of Christ is a lot to take in
      - It changes everything.
      - And it should.

53 When they had crossed over they came to land at Gennesaret, and moored to the shore.
54 When they got out of the boat, immediately the people recognized Him, and ran about that whole country and began to carry here and there on their pallets those who were sick, to the place they heard He was.
56 Wherever He entered villages, or cities, or countryside, they were laying the sick in the market places, and imploring Him that they might just touch the fringe of His cloak; and as many as touched it were being cured.

- The fruit of coming to Him in faith
  - The healings are but an illustration... of forgiveness
  - Remember the paralytic.

Alternate accounts
John 6:15-21 (NASB95)
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.
16 Now when evening came, His disciples went down to the sea,
17 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.
18 The sea began to be stirred up because a strong wind was blowing.
19 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.
20 But He said to them, “It is I; do not be afraid.”
21 So they were willing to receive Him into the boat, and immediately the boat was at the land to which they were going.

Matthew 14:22-33 (NASB95)
22 Immediately He made the disciples get into the boat and go ahead of Him to the other side, while He sent the crowds away.
23 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.
24 But the boat was already a long distance from the land, battered by the waves; for the wind was contrary.
25 And in the fourth watch of the night He came to them, walking on the sea.
26 When the disciples saw Him walking on the sea, they were terrified, and said, “It is a ghost!” And they cried out in fear.
27 But immediately Jesus spoke to them, saying, “Take courage, it is I; do not be afraid.”
28 Peter said to Him, “Lord, if it is You, command me to come to You on the water.”
29 And He said, “Come!” And Peter got out of the boat, and walked on the water and came toward Jesus.
30 But when he saw the wind, he became frightened, and beginning to sink, he cried out, “Lord, save me.”
31 Immediately Jesus stretched out His hand and took hold of him, and said to him, “O man of little faith, why did you doubt?”
32 When they got into the boat, the wind stopped.
33 And those who were in the boat worshiped Him, saying, “You are certainly God’s Son!”