



DEVOTIONAL FOR MATTHEW 14; MARK 6; LUKE 9; JOHN 6

AUTHOR: SHERRY THORN

The story of John the Baptist and Jesus – family, living all the adventures that cousins share! And in more solemn moments, they were likely told countless times the stories of their beginning. Consider this shared history when John exclaimed “Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!” (John 1:29).

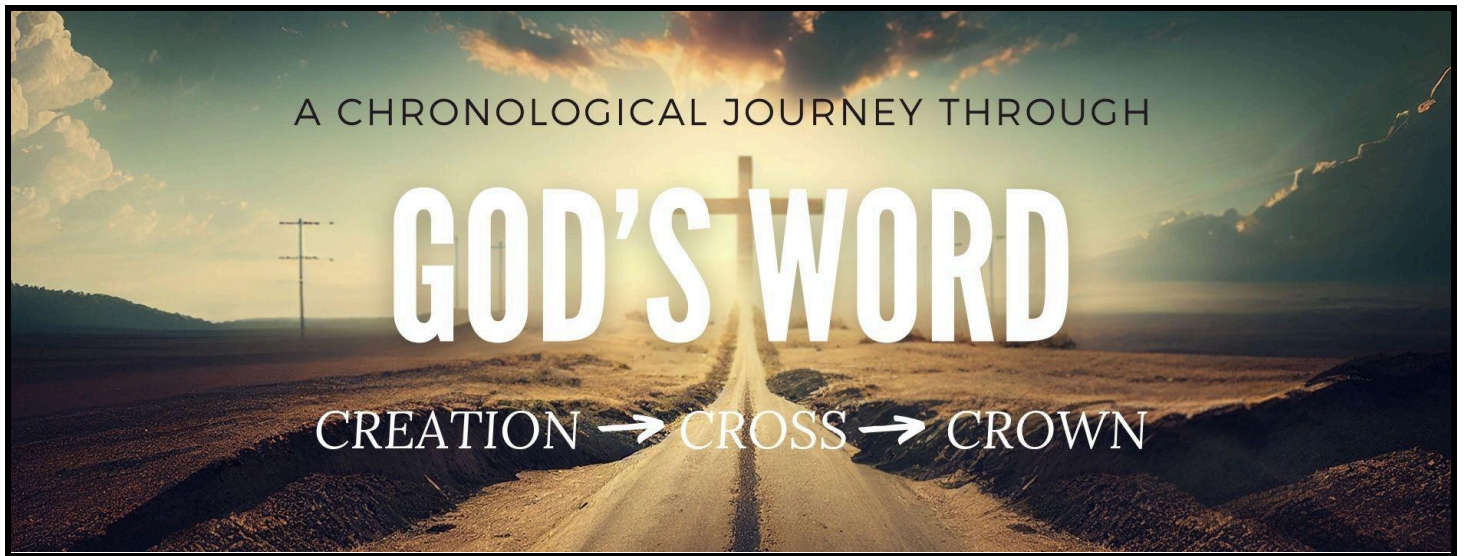
My assigned passage begins with the death of John the Baptist. Jesus’ cousin and baptizer. Imagine His sadness. “Now when Jesus heard this, He withdrew from there in a boat to a desolate place by Himself” (Matthew 14:13). But the crowds followed Him and moved by compassion he healed their sick. He healed them, he miraculously fed them, and he sent them home satisfied. “And all ate and were satisfied” (Matthew 14:20).

At twilight, He still had not had the opportunity to grieve the death of His cousin. “And after He had dismissed the crowds, He went up on the mountain by Himself to pray. When evening came, He was there alone” (Matthew 14:23).

“But the boat by this time was a long way from the land, beaten by the waves, for the wind was against them” (Matthew 14:24). While Jesus prayed, His disciples fought the storm. In the fourth watch of the night – Jesus walked towards them on the water. They didn’t recognize Him, but immediately Jesus calmed their fears by saying, “Take heart; it is I. Do not be afraid” (Matthew 14:27).

And Peter asks Jesus to command him to come to Him. Eleven disciples remain in the boat, while Peter obeys Jesus’ invitation to “Come” (Matthew 14:29). We quickly judge Peter for being afraid and taking his eyes off Jesus, but PETER STEPPED OUT OF THE BOAT AND WALKED ON WATER! This is where I want to pause and consider my own response.

Would I rather sit with the eleven in the boat? Or am I brave enough to step into the storm where Jesus is? Eleven chose the known, but Peter stepped into the unknown and grasped the hand of his Healer, his Provider, and his Savior.



"I was offered resurrection
But I settled for the grave
I had the chance to walk on water
But I chose to play it safe
I've been hiding from the Healer
I thought my wounds were out of reach
But at the end of all my runnin'
You're still runnin' after me."
(Jesus at a Distance – Casting Crowns)

Questions:

1. Do you recognize Jesus in the midst of your problems?
2. How are you playing it safe? What is your boat?
3. Are you one of the eleven, or are you Peter?