

The Preposition “INTO” (chapter 9)

Inviting Jesus INTO your boat

In this chapter, there are several stories that can be acted out or interacted with to get the main point across...that the Lord wants us to invite Him INTO our “stuff,” no matter what that may be.

Recently, I had the opportunity to share “the boat story” with a group of predominately elementary school age children at CHES Christian School.

Here is a transcript of my “dramatization.” Since I only had 10 minutes, I kept to the story of the Lord walking on the water in the storm. This is to give you an example of how you can approach passages of Scripture that contain a story. (Later, I shared the other 2 passages with the older group: Luke 24, on the road to Emmaus and Revelation 3:20, Jesus standing at the door and knocking. These all contain the same lesson...inviting Jesus INTO our situation.)

How many of you have ever been really scared? ...in a storm? ...in the middle of the night?

[perhaps share your own “scared time.”]

I would like to tell you about Jesus’ friends who got caught in a storm in the middle of the night, not at home with their families, but in a small boat with no motor [there weren’t motors in those days] in the middle of a big lake.

This story is found in three different places in the Bible. That’s because it’s so important. It’s important because this story teaches us who Jesus really is and what He wants us to do no matter what kinds of problems we have, no matter what is happening in our lives.

So here is the story:

One day, after a long day of teaching, Jesus needed some time alone with God His Father. So He sent His special friends (disciples) across

the lake in a boat by themselves (He would meet up with them later). After He said good-bye, He went up to the mountain to pray. Suddenly, in the middle of the night, in the middle of the sea, a huge storm arose.

The wind was blowing and howling.
[What do you think that sounded like?]

The waves were crashing against the little boat.
[What did that look like and sound like?]

And the disciples were rowing as hard and as fast as they could.
[Remember, there were no motors then. Show me how they rowed.]

Meanwhile, Jesus saw them (with His God-eyes) struggling so very hard! So He came to them in the middle of the sea, walking on top of the waves!

What do you think they thought when they saw a figure walking toward them in the middle of the storm, in the middle of the sea, on top of the waves? You're right, a GHOST!
[What do you think their faces looked like?]

But Jesus said to them, "Guys, don't be afraid! It's me...Jesus!" They must have been relieved, huh?

But do you know what is the strangest part of this story? He was going to walk right past them! WHAT? Walk right past? Why would He do that? What do you think He was waiting for?

You are right! He was waiting for them to want Him to come into their boat with them. He was, in a sense, waiting for an invitation. After all, He didn't need the boat to get to the other side. He could keep on walking and meet them there.

But the disciples did want Him, and let Him know they needed Him. What could they have said or done to let Him know? Right, they may have said, "Jesus, wait! Come with us! Help us! We need you!"

And so of course, Jesus responded to their invitation and got INTO the boat with them ... and the most amazing thing happened! The wind and the waves stopped immediately!

And so then the disciples got it. Jesus wasn't just their friend, a great teacher, a holy man. He was and is the Son of God. Now they knew it and told Him so. "Jesus, you are truly God's Son."

And then another amazing thing! When they worshiped Him this way, their boat was immediately at the shore.

*Now here is the truth:
Jesus is God, the Creator of the universe. He can do anything!*

*And here's the lesson for us:
Jesus is a gentleman. He wants to be invited into our "boat," our stuff, our life. Our boat can be a place: our classroom, our bedroom, our car, plane, boat, bicycle, scooter, etc. Our boat can be a problem or situation: our test, our move to a new neighborhood, our project we are struggling to finish. It can even be an emotion: our sadness, our loneliness for a friend, our feeling rejected by someone we thought was a friend, etc.*

Your boat can be anything that you care about. Jesus wants to be with you in your situation ... hard things and good things and everything in between.

*What is your boat right now?
[Discuss]*

So let's pray and invite Him into your boat ... He cares for you.