

Women's Bible Study

John 6: 16-21: Jesus Walks on the Sea

I. Introduction:

"May it be the real I who speaks. May it be the real Thou that I speak to," C.S. Lewis.

BIG IDEA: By walking on the sea, Jesus manifests his glorious divine power over the world he created. Because he is *this* powerful and *equally* loving, we can trust him and invite him into our boat (surrender our lives to him).

II. Signs

To understand a little better, I think it will help to discuss the bigger picture of what John is up to. We've got to look a few other places in John

John 20:30-31.

Prologue: John 1:1-18

"This, the first of his signs, Jesus did at Cana in Galilee, and manifested his glory. And his disciples believed in him," John 2:11

A "sign" can mean something that points to something else, or the Greek word can also mean something like "signature" or "insignia" – it's the mark of a person.

So let's look at them all to get a sense of where this falls, and I want to point to themes in these signs that are also themes in Genesis and Exodus, they are like echoes of the song of the OT.

- Changing water into wine at the wedding at Cana (Jn 2:1-11);
- Healing the royal official's son (Jn 4:46-54);
- Healing the paralyzed man at the pool of Bethesda in Jerusalem (Jn 5:1-15);
- Feeding the 5,000 (Jn 6:5-14);
- Walking on water (Jn 6:16-21);
- Healing the man born blind (Jn 9:1-7); and
- Raising Lazarus from the dead (Jn 11:1-45).

III. So how does Jesus walking on the water reveal his glory?

In the OT God alone rules over the seas, and the seas in Hebrew thought could represent chaos, evil, destruction, or untamable natural or spiritual forces.

Psalm 33

Psalm 77

Psalm 18

IV. Ignatian Reading of John 6:16-21

The psalmist says, “Once God has spoken, twice have I heard this; that power belongs to God, and to you, O Lord, belongs steadfast love.” Psalm 62:11-12

As one commentator puts it: At the moment Jesus set foot on the boat he communicated to it the force victorious over gravity and space, which had just been so strikingly displayed in his own person.¹

¹ Milne, B. (1993). *The message of John: here is your king!: with study guide* (pp. 108–109). Leicester, England; Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press.