

WEEK OF JUNE 21, 2026

**5-Day Devotional
based on Sunday's message:**



Jesus Walks on Water
FATHER'S DAY
John 6:16-21

Provided by



AKRON GRACE CHURCH
101 N. 7th Street, Akron PA
www.akrongrace.com

Listen to the full message on our YouTube channel:
www.youtube.com/@akrongracechurch6363

John 6: 16-21 (NLT)

When evening came, his disciples went down to the lake, where they got into a boat and set off across the lake for Capernaum. By now it was dark, and Jesus had not yet joined them. A strong wind was blowing and the waters grew rough. When they had rowed about three or four miles, they saw Jesus approaching the boat, walking on the water; and they were frightened. But he said to them, "It is I; don't be afraid." Then they were willing to take him into the boat, and immediately the boat reached the shore where they were heading.

Day 1: What Are You Really Chasing?

Devotional

What are you pursuing right now?

If someone were to look at your prayers, your calendar, and the thoughts that occupy your mind, what would they conclude is your greatest destination? Perhaps you're working toward retirement. Maybe you're praying for healing, hoping for restored relationships, or simply asking God to provide enough strength to get through another difficult week.

Those are all good desires. Scripture encourages us to bring every concern to our Heavenly Father. But during Sunday's message, Pastor Rob challenged us with a question that deserves more than a passing thought: **What if we've been looking at our destination backwards?**

The disciples certainly had a destination that evening. They stepped into the boat with every intention of reaching the other side of the lake. Yet before John tells us anything about their arrival, he carefully slows the story down. Darkness falls. The wind begins to blow. The water grows rough. They row. The journey becomes harder than they expected.

John could have focused on the storm, but he doesn't. Instead, he quietly prepares us to see something greater. This story isn't ultimately about a difficult crossing. It's about discovering that the greatest treasure isn't found on the other shore. It's found in the One who is about to come toward them.

That truth gently challenges our own hearts. It's possible to become so focused on reaching the next season of life that we begin treating Jesus as the One who simply helps us get there. We pray for His guidance, ask for His provision, and look to Him for strength—all good things. Yet sometimes we become more excited about the destination than we do about the Savior who walks with us along the way.

God certainly cares about the things you're praying for today. He invites you to ask, seek, and knock. But perhaps before asking Him to change your circumstances, pause long enough to thank Him for something even greater: His presence. Long before He changes our situation, He has already given us Himself.

The greatest destination of the Christian life is not ultimately a place, an achievement, or even an answered prayer. It is knowing Christ more deeply. Every season, every delay, and every step of the journey becomes another opportunity to discover that He is enough.

Bible Verse

John 6:16–19a (NLT)

That evening Jesus' disciples went down to the shore to wait for him. But as darkness fell and Jesus still hadn't come back, they got into the boat and headed across the lake toward Capernaum. Soon a gale swept down upon them, and the sea grew very rough. They had rowed three or four miles...

Reflection Questions

- 1.What destination occupies most of your thoughts and prayers right now?
- 2.If Jesus truly is your greatest destination, how might that reshape the way you think about that situation today?

Quote

“What if Jesus isn't simply the way to the destination? What if Jesus is the destination?”

Prayer

Father, thank You that Your greatest gift is not merely changing my circumstances but giving me Yourself. Forgive me for the times I become so focused on reaching the next destination that I lose sight of Your presence. Teach me to treasure Christ above every earthly goal and to find my deepest joy in walking with Him today. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Day 2: Rowing Against the Wind

Devotional

There are seasons in life when it feels like every step forward requires twice the effort. You keep showing up for work. You continue caring for your family. You keep praying for someone you love. You remain faithful in your walk with Christ. Yet despite your best efforts, progress seems painfully slow. It feels as though you're rowing against the wind.

Pastor Rob pointed out something easy to overlook in this passage. The disciples weren't running from Jesus. They weren't living in disobedience or rebelling against God. They were exactly where they were supposed to be. Yet even in obedience, they encountered a storm.

That reminds us of an important truth. Following Jesus doesn't exempt us from difficult seasons. Sometimes we assume that if we're doing God's will, life should become easier. But throughout Scripture we find faithful men and women who faced hardship while walking in obedience. The difficulty wasn't evidence that God had abandoned them. It became the very place where they learned to trust Him more deeply.

John tells us the disciples had rowed three or four miles. They weren't standing still. They weren't drifting backward. They were making progress. It simply wasn't happening as quickly as they had hoped.

Perhaps that's where you find yourself today. Maybe you've been praying for healing that hasn't come. Maybe you've been trying to restore a strained relationship. Maybe you've been faithfully serving the Lord while quietly wondering why the journey seems so exhausting.

One of the enemy's favorite lies is to convince us that slow progress means God is absent. But John paints a different picture. Even while the disciples were straining at the oars, Jesus had not lost sight of them. Before they ever recognized Him, He already knew exactly where they were. The same is true for you.

Bible Verse

John 6:18-19 (NLT)

Soon a gale swept down upon them, and the sea grew very rough. They had rowed three or four miles when suddenly they saw Jesus walking on the water toward the boat. They were terrified...

Reflection Questions

1. Where in your life does it feel like you're rowing against the wind right now?
2. How does it encourage you to know that Jesus sees your faithfulness even when progress feels slow or unseen?

Quote

"The disciples didn't find Jesus. Jesus found them. That... is grace."

Prayer

Lord Jesus, thank You that You never lose sight of Your people. When the journey feels long and progress seems slow, help me remain faithful. Remind me that You see every step of obedience and that Your timing is always perfect. Strengthen me to keep rowing with confidence, knowing that You are nearer than I can see. In Your name, Amen.

Day 3: Jesus Comes Toward Us

Devotional

One of the most beautiful truths in this passage isn't found in what the disciples did. It's found in what Jesus did.

John tells us that after hours of rowing, the disciples suddenly saw Jesus coming toward them. Those three words are easy to read past, but Pastor Rob reminded us on Sunday that they are really the heartbeat of this passage—and, in many ways, the heartbeat of the entire Gospel. Jesus came toward them.

The disciples didn't finally row far enough to reach Jesus. They didn't climb out of the boat and search for Him. They weren't rewarded because they had mastered the storm.

Jesus came to them. That has always been God's way.

When Adam and Eve sinned in the garden, God came looking for them. When Israel cried out in slavery, God came to deliver them. At Christmas, God entered our world in the person of Jesus Christ. At the cross, Christ came to rescue sinners who could never save themselves.

Grace has always moved first.

Sometimes we imagine that God is waiting for us to get our lives together before He draws near. We tell ourselves that once we've prayed enough, read enough Scripture, overcome a particular struggle, or become a "better Christian," then we'll enjoy closer fellowship with Him.

The Gospel tells a different story. Jesus moves toward weary people. Toward fearful people. Toward struggling people. Toward people who are still trying to figure things out.

That doesn't mean He leaves us where we are. His presence transforms us. But it does mean that His love for us isn't based on our ability to reach Him. It is rooted in His desire to come near to us.

Maybe today you feel like you're still somewhere in the middle of the lake. The shore seems distant. The wind is still blowing. You wonder if God has noticed your situation.

John reminds us that before the disciples ever recognized Jesus, He was already making His way toward them.

The same Savior who walked across the water still comes toward His people today. He comes through His Word. Through His Spirit. Through the encouragement of His Church. Through quiet reminders of His faithfulness.

You may not always recognize how He is working in the moment, but you can be certain of this: if you belong to Christ, He has not abandoned you. He is already coming toward you.

Bible Verse

John 6:19–20 (NLT)

They had rowed three or four miles when suddenly they saw Jesus walking on the water toward the boat. They were terrified, but he called out to them, “I am here! Don’t be afraid.”

Reflection Questions

- 1.Can you think of a time when you recognized, looking back, that Jesus had been pursuing you long before you realized it?
- 2.How might your faith grow if you believed that, even today, Christ is moving toward you rather than waiting for you to reach Him?

Quote

“Jesus came toward them. And He still comes toward His people today.”

Prayer

Father, thank You that Your grace always moves first. Thank You that You came looking for me long before I ever sought You. When I feel alone or overwhelmed, remind me that You have not forgotten me. Open my eyes to recognize Your presence and help me rest in the confidence that You are always faithful to come near to Your children. In Jesus’ name, Amen.

Day 4: I AM Here

Devotional

Fear has a way of shrinking our world.

When we're afraid, our thoughts often become consumed with the problem in front of us. We replay the diagnosis. We worry about the future. We wonder how things will work out. We become so focused on the storm that it's difficult to see anything beyond it.

The disciples knew that feeling well. Hours earlier they had stepped into the boat with confidence, but now darkness surrounded them, the wind pushed against them, and the waves threatened everything they were trying to accomplish. Then, through the darkness, they saw someone walking toward them on the water. John tells us they were terrified.

At that moment, Jesus spoke. "I am here. Don't be afraid."

Pastor Rob reminded us that John intends us to hear more than a simple introduction. Jesus isn't merely saying, "It's Me." Throughout John's Gospel, Jesus repeatedly uses the language of "I AM," echoing the name God revealed to Moses at the burning bush (Exodus 3:14). The One speaking from the water is not simply a miracle worker or wise teacher. He is the eternal Son of God—the Creator who rules over the very sea beneath His feet.

That changes everything. Notice what John emphasizes. Jesus doesn't begin by explaining the storm. He doesn't tell the disciples why the wind came or how long it will last. Instead, He first reminds them who is with them.

Isn't that often how God works in our lives?

There are seasons when He graciously changes our circumstances. There are other seasons when He allows us to continue walking through them. But in every season, He offers something greater than immediate answers. He offers His presence.

Sometimes we pray, "Lord, take away this storm." Sometimes He does. Sometimes He simply says, "I am here." And for the follower of Christ, that is enough.

The promise of Scripture has never been that believers will avoid hardship. It is that we will never face it alone. Emmanuel—God with us—is not merely a Christmas truth. It is the daily promise of every Christian. Wherever you find yourself today, the same Savior who stood on the waves still stands with His people.

When fear begins to take over, don't begin by measuring the size of your storm. Begin by remembering the greatness of your Savior. The One who says, "I AM," is still with you.

Bible Verse

John 6:20 (NLT)

But he called out to them, "I am here! Don't be afraid."

Reflection Questions

1. When fear begins to rise in your life, what are you naturally tempted to focus on first—your circumstances or the presence of Christ?
2. How would your outlook change today if you intentionally remembered that the great “I AM” is walking with you through your circumstances?

Quote

“Peace isn’t found in the absence of storms. Peace is found in the presence of Christ.”

Prayer

Lord Jesus, thank You that You are the great “I AM,” the unchanging God who is always present with Your people. Forgive me for the times I become so consumed with my circumstances that I forget who is walking beside me. When fear begins to rise, remind me that Your presence is greater than anything I face. Help me to rest in You today, knowing that You are faithful, powerful, and always near. In Your name, Amen.

Day 5: The Greatest Destination

Devotional

We spend much of our lives looking ahead. We look forward to graduation, marriage, retirement, vacations, promotions, healing, financial stability, or simply making it through another difficult season. There is always another destination on the horizon. We naturally think, “When I finally get there, life will be better.”

There’s nothing wrong with looking forward to good things. God often graciously provides them. But if we’re not careful, we can begin believing that peace is waiting for us somewhere in the future.

John ends this remarkable story by gently redirecting our attention. “Then they were eager to let him in the boat, and immediately they arrived at their destination.”

Pastor Rob pointed out the order of those events. The disciples welcomed Jesus into the boat, then they arrived. John doesn’t explain how the miracle happened. He doesn’t tell us what the disciples were thinking or describe the mechanics of their sudden arrival. Instead, he simply presents the facts and moves on.

Why? Because his attention has never been fixed on the destination. His attention has been fixed on Jesus.

Throughout John’s Gospel, people often come to Jesus because they want something from Him. Some want bread. Others want healing. Some are looking for answers or miracles. Jesus compassionately meets many of those needs, but He continually invites people to something greater than His gifts. He invites them to know Him.

That invitation still stands today. We often pray, “Lord, get me through this.” “Lord, fix this.” “Lord, answer this.”

Those are good prayers. Jesus welcomes them. But perhaps the greater question is this: If the circumstance never changed, would Jesus still be enough?

That is not an easy question. It’s one every believer wrestles with at some point. Yet the longer we walk with Christ, the more we discover something wonderful. The greatest joy of the Christian life isn’t found in finally reaching a place where everything is perfect. It is found in walking each day with the One who is perfect.

A.W. Tozer wrote, “The man who has God for his treasure has all things in One.”

That’s exactly where Pastor Rob brought us at the close of Sunday’s message. Storms will come. Plans will change. Prayers may be answered quickly, slowly, or in ways we don’t yet understand. But one thing never changes: Jesus remains.

When Christ becomes our greatest treasure, every other blessing finds its proper place. We still pray. We still hope. We still bring every burden to our Father. But our deepest confidence no longer rests in arriving at another destination.

Our confidence rests in the One who walks with us every step of the journey. Because if we have Christ...we have already reached the greatest destination we’ll ever know.

Bible Verse

John 6:21 (NLT)

Then they were eager to let him in the boat, and immediately they arrived at their destination.

Reflection Questions

- 1.What future destination or answered prayer are you most looking forward to right now?
- 2.How can you intentionally pursue a deeper relationship with Christ this week, regardless of whether your circumstances change?

Quote

“Jesus isn’t merely the way to the destination. Jesus is the destination.”

Prayer

Father, thank You that in giving me Your Son, You have already given me the greatest gift I could ever receive. Help me to treasure Christ above every earthly blessing and to find my deepest joy in walking with Him each day. Whether You answer my prayers quickly or ask me to wait, teach me to rest in Your presence and trust Your heart. Thank You for never leaving me and never forsaking me. In Jesus’ name, Amen.