

Title: “He Is With You”

Text: Matthew 28:19-20

Proposition: Jesus is with you even in the storms of change and trouble

Purpose: Keep our eyes and our hearts knit to the heart of the Lord. Resist and reject fear of change

Event: Pinecroft Baptist Church – Senior Pastor

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*19 “Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,
20 teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age. Amen.”*

Matthew 28:19-20 NKJV

I. Introduction: Finding Your Way

Why This Sermon

I am preaching this sermon because I discerned the Lord wanted to encourage you as we are transitioning out of a tradition and religion-based church dynamic, into a presence of God and Holy Spirit directed church environment. We must allow ourselves time and space to discern the Lord and His direction. WE must learn to draw near to Him, so that we can hear Him correctly. We must be more than curious. We must be passionate pursuers of the heart of God. We don’t just need to ask Him questions in secret. We need to be at Bible Study and in prayer. We need to be submitting to the truth of God’s Word as we read it. We need to believe in and acknowledge the Holy Spirit in all of our ways.

God doesn’t want to leave anyone behind. But He will. For those who are not willing to let go of things, in order to apprehend the Maker of all things, this will be a struggle. But I promise if you stick with it and surrender to His Lordship and His sovereignty, it will all start to make more sense, because you will be prioritizing the Lord over your preferences and your sense of direction. We can no longer allow just our eyesight or natural vision or faculties to direct our path. He is the Way, the Truth, and the Life. No one comes to the Father except by Him!

We recently celebrated the resurrection of the Lord Jesus. But have you wondered what it must have been like for the disciples to see the Lord ascend into heaven? Sure, they were in awe and wonder. But what do they do now? How would they know the way? Jesus promised they knew the way:

*14 "Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in Me.
2 In My Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you.
3 And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also.
4 And where I go you know, and the way you know."
5 Thomas said to Him, "Lord, we do not know where You are going, and how can we know the way?"
6 Jesus said to him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me."*

John 14:1-6 NKJV

Elsewhere in scripture, the Lord advises us to trust in what we already know. We already have the ability to know the Way. It's in the Holy Spirit. Wherever the Holy Spirit is, there is freedom. We can trust what we hear. If we remain close to the presence of God and listen to His heartbeat:

*²⁰"But you have an anointing from the Holy One, and you know all things.
²¹I have not written to you because you do not know the truth, but because you know it, and that no lie is of the truth."*

1 John 2:20 NKJV

The apostle John says, if you have the anointing, you have everything you need. It's on you. It's inside of you. It's close to you. The anointing is the presence of the Holy Spirit with you everywhere – in your mind, your thoughts, your heart, your motives, your words, your behaviors, and the direction of your entire life. Your life is directed by your heart. And so, you need to make sure your heart is knit the heart of the Lord.

II. Change Brings Storms

I think it's important to note, that every time there was a storm in their walk with Jesus, the disciples had been told to go to another place, move, transition, or MAKE A CHANGE. The Lord

told them to leave where they were in order to go somewhere different. And each time, their departure from one place was met with a storm on their way to the next place.

The Lord Jesus had told them what to do. And He told them the Way when He said, “I am The Way.” **Jesus is The Way.** We must stay close to Jesus and cling to Him. The transitions and changes that bring the storms of life will challenge your equilibrium. You might feel disoriented or confused. Peter had just seen the resurrected Jesus and talked to Him. But Peter still was confused and dealing with the emotional outcomes of his denial of Christ. He remembered the Lord looking at Him lovingly after he denied Jesus the third time. He wept bitterly over this. Peter was in mourning even though he had seen Jesus alive. There was an issue of the heart that caused him to take a turn off course.

The cool thing about being “off-course” in the Christian life, is the fact that even your mistakes have been accounted for. If you are in the faith, you nothing to fear or worry about. The Bible says:

*“The **steps of a good man** are ordered by the Lord, **And He delights in his way.**”*
Psalms 37:23 NKJV

*“And we know that **all things work together** for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose.”*
Romans 8:28 NKJV

You can't outrun God. You can't make a mistake that ruins your life – as long as you are LOVING GOD. It's not enough just to have a calling or an assignment. You need to also have your heart on God. He needs to be your NUMBER ONE priority. He needs to be your first love. He needs to be the first one you thirst for in the morning. He needs to be your yearning. And the only way He will become your yearning, is that you first see His value as the most precious, loving, kind, and genuine friend you'll ever have. And you must decide to explore His value by spending time with Him above everything else!!!

III. The Way Through The Storm Is Heard In The Word

Jesus Calms the Storm

23 "Then he got into the boat and his disciples followed him.

24 Suddenly a furious storm came up on the lake, so that the waves swept over the boat. But Jesus was sleeping.

25 The disciples went and woke him, saying, "Lord, save us! We're going to drown!"

26 He replied, "You of little faith, why are you so afraid?" Then he got up and rebuked the winds and the waves, and it was completely calm.

27 The men were amazed and asked, "What kind of man is this? Even the winds and the waves obey him!"

Matthew 8:23-27 NIV

The issue was they didn't KNOW HIM!

Wind and Wave Obey Jesus

³⁵ On the same day, when evening had come, He said to them, "Let us cross over to the other side."

³⁶ Now when they had left the multitude, they took Him along in the boat as He was. And other little boats were also with Him.

³⁷ And a great windstorm arose, and the waves beat into the boat, so that it was already filling.

³⁸ But He was in the stern, asleep on a pillow. And they awoke Him and said to Him, "Teacher, do You not care that we are perishing?"

³⁹ Then He arose and rebuked the wind, and said to the sea, "Peace, be still!" And the wind ceased and there was a great calm.

⁴⁰ But He said to them, "Why are you so fearful? How is it that you have no faith?"

⁴¹ And they feared exceedingly, and said to one another, "Who can this be, that even the wind and the sea obey Him!"

Mark 4:35-41 NKJV

The Lord had spoken. He said, "We are going to the other side." He didn't say, "Let's try to get there." He commanded them to go. **Therefore, they were going to reach their destination,**

unless the disciples didn't believe what Jesus said!

We can be disoriented by the storms of life. Things that we expect or don't expect can overwhelm us. In those cases, the Word says we should seek the Rock that is higher!

*"From the end of the earth I will cry to You, When my heart is overwhelmed; Lead me to the rock that is **higher than I.**"*

Psalms 61:2 NKJV

When we are disoriented, it basically means the elements or environment around us has taken us off-balance. We are out of alignment. We are off-center. We are being misdirected and we are mistaken. We are incapable of seeing rightly or walking in the truth.

This is nothing to feel bad about. Our nature is opposed to the ways of God. Our flesh is contrary to the Holy Spirit. Yet we are encouraged, *“Do not quench the Spirit.”* **1 Thessalonians 5:19 NKJV**

Equilibrium Is In The Inner Ear

There is a fascinating part of your body that has a strong influence on your sense of balance, and equilibrium. You are oriented by this part of your body. It keeps you upright and upstanding. This part of your body has control over taking you in the direction you intend to go.

The system that controls your balance and determines you're standing in the right position, is housed in the inner ear. We've talked before about how we "hear God." We hear God by discernment. We pick up His presence and His heart by being attentive to His "voice." His voice speaks into our "inner man." The soul and spirit of a man are both listening. The key to walking with the Lord is allowing the Holy Spirit to minister and speak to your soul and spirit. The Holy Spirit speaks to your spirit, this is called "spirit to spirit," or "deep calling to deep," as it's found in Psalm 42:7.

We must draw near to God in order to hear Him. He passionately desires for you to walk with Him!

⁸“Peter said to Him, “You shall never wash my feet!” Jesus answered him, “If I do not wash you, you have no part with Me.” ⁹Simon Peter said to Him, “Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and my head!” ¹⁰Jesus said to him, “He who is bathed needs only to wash his feet, but is completely clean; and you are clean, but not all of you.”

John 13:8-10 NKJV

The world wants to direct your path. But if you're cleansed by the blood of Jesus, you're only responsible for walking in Christ... everything else takes care of itself!

Be A Christ Follower

Follow His Heart!

Which Means, Follow His Voice!

Jesus Speaks His Heart! His Heart Is Found In His Words!

*Brood of vipers! How can you, being evil, speak good things? **For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks.***

Matthew 12:34 NKJV

²² *"Immediately Jesus made His disciples get into the boat and go before Him to the other side, while He sent the multitudes away.*

²³ *And when He had sent the multitudes away, He went up on the mountain by Himself to pray. Now when evening came, He was alone there.*

²⁴ *But the boat was now in the middle of the sea, tossed by the waves, for the wind was contrary.*

²⁵ *Now in the fourth watch of the night Jesus went to them, walking on the sea.*

²⁶ *And when the disciples saw Him walking on the sea, they were troubled, saying, "It is a ghost!" And they cried out for fear.*

²⁷ *But immediately Jesus spoke to them, saying, "Be of good cheer! It is I; do not be afraid."*

²⁸ *And Peter answered Him and said, "Lord, if it is You, command me to come to You on the water."*

²⁹ *So He said, "Come." And when Peter had come down out of the boat, he walked on the water to go to Jesus.*

³⁰ *But when he saw ^[a]that the wind was boisterous, he was afraid; and beginning to sink he cried out, saying, "Lord, save me!"*

³¹ *And immediately Jesus stretched out His hand and caught him, and said to him, "O you of little faith, why did you doubt?"*

³² *And when they got into the boat, the wind ceased."*

Matthew 14:22-32 NKJV

Jesus had just said, "It's me. Don't be afraid." He knew that fear was on the horizon because the disciples were not yet acquainted with His Lordship over everything that could possibly affect their lives. He revealed Himself as the Lord over even the water molecules in the sea. Yet, Peter was distracted and afraid by what was happening around him. It wasn't the fact he was walking on water. **Walking on water was easier than ignoring the ways of the world!**

It wasn't just the Lord was near to them. **NEARNESS IS NOT ENOUGH!** Those who were close had to be careful to be attentive to His voice. We must pay careful attention to each Word the Lord says!

IV. The Way Is In Your Head & Your Heart

*"Your ears shall hear a word behind you, saying, **"This is the way, walk in it,"** Whenever you turn to **the** right hand Or whenever you turn to **the** left."*

Isaiah 30:21 NKJV

So, what happens when we hear the voice of the Lord? There is a process that is triggered when we hear something. What we have internalized in our ear organ, then is translated. The vibrations are translated into an audible sound with resonance, tone, volume, pitch, and a myriad of other attributes. And all those attributes produce a unique result in our brain. It's translated into language and the language is meant to be understood. Understanding the language then makes what was spoken useful. And it produces an opportunity for us to make choices, decisions, and corrections.

When spiritual direction comes into our inner man, into our heart, through our spirit, which is in communion with the Holy Spirit, **the Lord seeks to TRANSFORM and RENEW your mind.**

He wants you to take on the mind of Christ:

17 This I say, therefore, and testify in the Lord, that you should no longer walk as the rest of the Gentiles walk, in the futility of their mind,

18 having their understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God, because of the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart;

19 who, being past feeling, have given themselves over to lewdness, to work all uncleanness with greediness.

20 But you have not so learned Christ,

21 if indeed you have heard Him and have been taught by Him, as the truth is in Jesus:

22 that you put off, concerning your former conduct, the old man which grows corrupt according to the deceitful lusts,

23 and be renewed in the spirit of your mind,

24 and that you put on the new man which was created according to God, in true righteousness and holiness.

Ephesians 4:17-24 NKJV

12 "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service.

2 And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.

*3 For I say, through the grace given to me, to everyone who is among you, **not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think**, but to think soberly, as God has dealt to each one a measure of faith.*

Romans 12:1-3 NKJV

When we think as He thinks, we see as He sees, and we live as He lives. We walk by faith. The storms of life aren't as scary as disorienting. We must allow the Word of God, spoken into our spirit by the Holy Spirit, to change our hearts and draw them closer to the Lord's heart, so we may be as He is.

7 'For as he thinks in his heart, so is he...'

Proverbs 23:7 NKJV

V. Conclusion: Who Do You Go To? What Are They Saying?

3 'There was a man of the Pharisees named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews.

2 This man came to Jesus by night and said to Him, 'Rabbi, we know that You are a teacher come from God; for no one can do these signs that You do unless God is with him.'

3 Jesus answered and said to him, 'Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born [a]gain, he cannot see the kingdom of God.'

4 Nicodemus said to Him, 'How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter a second time into his mother's womb and be born?'

5 Jesus answered, 'Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God.'

6 That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.

7 Do not marvel that I said to you, 'You must be born again.'

8 The wind blows where it wishes, and you hear the sound of it, but cannot tell where it comes from and where it goes. So is everyone who is born of the Spirit.'

John 3:1-8 NKJV

Nicodemus knew Jesus had to come from God. But He couldn't understand what Jesus was saying, because Nicodemus was steeped in tradition and religion. He was a leader of morals and customs. He was not familiar with the ways of the Lord. He was not open to the move and counsel of the Holy Spirit.

What the Holy Spirit says to people is foolishness, if they don't interpret what the Spirit is saying by also allowing the Holy Spirit to translate the meaning!

You can believe in the Holy Spirit and be unacquainted with Him and His voice. You can believe in the voice of God and not know it when He is speaking to you. **THE KEY IS**

PROXIMITY.

⁸ "Draw near to God and He will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners; and purify your hearts, you double-minded."

James 4:8 NKJV

When you are feeling confused or disoriented, or even doubtful, we are encouraged to SEEK THE LORD! What does this mean? It means to pursue Him as your only treasure. To pursue His heart by any means necessary. It means to go after God and chase down His heart.

Why do we pursue? Because our hearts are naturally far from Him. Our hearts are desperately wicked. That means our default position is to do things our way. So, it requires effort for you to find God. He's close. But that doesn't mean your heart belongs to Him. He's speaking, but that doesn't always mean you hear Him.

WHO'S WILLING TO SURRENDER THEIR OPINION, THEIR EXPERIENCE, THEIR PREFERENCE, THEIR TRADITIONS TO THE LORD IN ORDER TO HEAR HIM AND KNOW HIM AND FOLLOW HIM!

THIS IS YOUR DAY!