

# THE UNIVERSITY HEIGHTS MESSENGER

**January 17, 2010**

**“It Is I; Do Not Be Afraid”**

How would you feel if you were crossing a sea and noticed someone walking across the water toward your boat? I suppose exactly how our Lord’s disciples felt. **“When they had rowed about three of four miles, they saw Jesus walking on the sea and coming near the boat, and they were frightened”** (John 6:19). Add to this the fact that the sea was already rough with strong winds (a classic “dark and stormy night”) and it makes me think the statement “they were frightened” must be one of the greatest understatements in Scripture. However, Jesus would not have them afraid for long. Immediately after we are told they were frightened, Jesus spoke to them the words that serve as the title of this article. **“It is I; do not be afraid.”**

We want to spend some time considering our Lord’s words to His disciples but before we do I wonder if you’ve ever asked yourself why Jesus chose to walk on the water to begin with? It certainly was not to show off. All that He did during His life on this earth He did for a reason, including walking across the sea. Hebrews 1-2, 10 says, **“But in these last days He has spoken to us by His Son, whom He appointed heir of all things, through whom also He created the world. He is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of His nature, and He upholds the universe by the word of His power...And You, Lord, laid the foundation of the earth in the beginning, and the heavens are the work of your hands.”** The Son, Jesus the Messiah, created the universe and upholds it by the word of His power. His walking across the sea was specifically to show His disciples the power and authority He possessed over all things created, things He created. This would have impacted them even more as they considered Psalm 89:8-9. **“O Lord God of hosts, who is mighty as you are, O Lord, with Your faithfulness all around You? You rule the raging of the sea; when its waves rise, you still them.”** The Old Testament writers made it clear that God alone ruled over the sea and yet Jesus Christ had clearly demonstrated His authority over it.

What conclusion could they draw from this? There is only one conclusion to which an honest heart could arrive and our Lord was going to make that conclusion even easier in the words He spoke to them. **“It is I; do not be afraid.”** “It is I” comes from the Greek phrase *“ego eimi.”* That very phrase is translated “I am” in other contexts. When God spoke to Moses in Exodus 3:14, He said to him, **“I AM WHO I AM. And He said, ‘say this to the people of Israel, I AM has sent me to you.’”** Considering what we have already noted with our Lord displaying His power and authority over the sea, and considering that this entire event took place very shortly after the miraculous feeding of the five thousand, it is quite

possible that Jesus was alluding to God's self-identification from Exodus in His words to this disciples. If so, our Lord not only calmed their fears but at the same time clearly and forcefully exclaimed His own deity! He would add even more to prove His identity for John 6:21 says, **"Then they were glad to take Him into the boat, and immediately the boat was at the land to which they were going."** Take a moment to read Psalm 107:23-32 and note that John 6:21 is a a miraculous instance of what is said there. None but God can still the storm and bring those who travel the sea safely to their destination.

From John 6 through John 15 our Lord uses the "I am" designation several times to refer to Himself, either absolutely or metaphorically. Either way, I cannot help but remember those words to His disciples in their distress. **"It is I; do not be afraid."** Because our Lord is who He is, the great "I AM," of what shall we be afraid? Through His wisdom and power He created this world, of what shall we be afraid? Through His mercy and grace He will see us safely home, of what shall we be afraid? "Hallelujah! What a Savior!"

In Need of Prayers	Information
<p>Jim Edwards and Esmeralda Agustin are struggling spiritually. Let's encourage them and let them know that we are concerned.</p> <p>Rob Miller's mother is doing much better.</p> <p>Michelle Oxendine (friend of Jim Edwards) is dealing with some health problems.</p> <p>David Day and his wife have been deployed to Iraq.</p> <p>The additional moles Rachel Knollman had removed have come back clean. She will begin her treatments in February.</p> <p>Remember Ron Catchen, Chuck McDavitt, and David Blakeman.</p>	<p>Rachel Crawford's aunt, Gail Stein, has been diagnosed with breast cancer. She is going to do chemo and radiation before surgery.</p> <p>Welcome back to all the college students! We're glad to see you back safely!</p> <p>The back page of the bulletin will be undergoing some changes within the next few weeks as I look to create more space for information and the like. Any comments or suggestions would be appreciated.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>University Height Church of Christ</b>  <b>445 Columbia Avenue</b>  <b>Lexington, Ky 40508</b>  <b>859-255-6257</b>  <b>www.uheightschurch.com</b></p>