



## CELL GUIDE

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TOPIC	When You Can't See the Way Forward	SPEAKER	Senior Pastor Chua Seng Lee
THEME	Encountering Jesus: The Book of John	DATE	13 and 14 Mar 2026

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# MESSAGE SUMMARY

## INTRODUCTION

SP Chua Seng Lee exhorts the church to practice what is useful, and one important anchor in our lives is to spend time daily with God and His Word. When have we faced extreme exhaustion? How often do we feel tired? Perhaps we have tried to do what is right, yet still find ourselves in a storm, unable to see the way forward.

The Gospel of John reminds us that miracles are signs—they point to something or someone. Jesus walking on water happens right after the feeding of the 5000, a miracle recorded in all four Gospels. This miracle is not meant to be separated from the feeding of the 5000 and is recorded in three Gospels (Matthew, Mark, and John).

Though it is the same event, each Gospel offers a different perspective. Mark focuses on the disciples' hardened hearts and ends with amazement. Matthew highlights Peter walking on water and ends with worship: "Truly You are the Son of God." John assumes familiarity and focuses on the boat immediately reaching the shore when Jesus enters.

Each Gospel brings a unique emphasis, and together they give a fuller picture.

## WHEN YOU CAN'T SEE A WAY FORWARD

### 1. When We Feel Stuck and Limited

Matthew 14:22–23 records that Jesus made the disciples get into the boat and go ahead of Him while He dismissed the crowd. He then went up the mountain to pray alone, modelling the importance of connecting with the Father. Mark notes that the disciples did not understand the feeding of the 5000 because their hearts were hardened. Their understanding of Jesus was limited to a physical Messiah who met practical needs.

Jesus sent His disciples into the storm, knowing they would face strong winds and that it would be a learning moment for them. There is a limit to how much we can know God through mental understanding alone—we need spiritual revelation to see that Jesus is more than a physical provider.

### 2. The Will of the Lord

The disciples had been rowing intensely for hours across the Sea of Galilee. As experienced fishermen, they were likely exhausted, fearful, and nearing the point of giving up, fully aware of the danger they faced. It was at this moment that Jesus stepped in. He wanted to show the limits of self-effort in accomplishing God's will—when human strength is exhausted, Jesus saves. Many times, we strive in our own strength instead of depending on God.

God's timing is perfect, and Jesus is never late. He came at the fourth watch, right at the disciples' human limit. Though they had participated in distributing the food during the feeding of the 5000, the miracle was never about human effort—it was entirely the work of God. Power comes only from Him.

It is possible to feel that our efforts are pointless or fruitless and yet still be in the will of the Lord. Just as Jesus sent the disciples into the storm, God sometimes leads us into difficult places as part of His purposes. Joseph, Daniel, Paul, and even Jesus Himself all walked through suffering and hardship. Yet in their pain, they were living in obedience to God and fulfilling His will.

### **What we can learn about Jesus.**

When the disciples saw Jesus walking on water, they were frightened because it was beyond human ability. This reveals that Jesus operates beyond natural law—He is not limited by it. To the Jews, this pointed clearly to His divinity, for only God walks on water (Job 9:8; Psalm 77:19). Jesus was not merely a teacher, prophet, or physical Messiah, but the spiritual Messiah.

When Jesus said, "It is I" (*Ego Eimi* – "I AM," echoing Exodus 3:14), He was revealing His identity as God. Even when we are obeying the Lord, the journey can be stormy, progress slow, and His ways surprising or even frightening. Yet Jesus brings peace in the storm (John 16:33). His ways are higher than ours (Isaiah 55:8–9), and He often meets us at the limits of our strength (2 Corinthians 12:9).

## CONCLUSION

The moment the disciples invited Jesus into their boat, they immediately reached the shore. Previously, they were battling the storm in their own strength, but the moment Jesus stepped into their boat, they covered five kilometres in one second and arrived at their destination.

Sometimes, we enjoy being busy and rowing our boats. We mistake motion for meaningful movement; action for achievement; and effort for effectiveness. We tie our identity to our work and other things or people in this world aside from Jesus Christ. We should not wait until the fourth hour, when we may face burnout. We must invite Jesus into our boat today.

# QUESTIONS

1. When was a recent time you felt stuck, exhausted, or unable to see a way forward? What was happening in that situation? If you're in such a season now, do share that others may pray with you.

2. In your situation, where was/is Jesus and how is He inviting you to see Him beyond your own efforts or understanding? What would it look like to invite Jesus into your boat?

3. Is there anyone you know who is facing exhaustion and battling storms in their own strength? What steps can you take to encourage them to invite Jesus into their boat?