

WHO IS JESUS?

JOHN 6:16-21

JESUS IS OUR PEACE



FIRST BYRON CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCH

DAVID MURRAY
OCTOBER 24, 2021 (AM)

INTRODUCTION

The most popular Bible verse in 2020 was Isaiah 41:10. **Fear not, for I am with you; be not dismayed, for I am your God; I will strengthen you, I will help you. I will uphold you with my righteous right hand.** In 2019 it was Philippians 4:6. **Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God.** In 2018, Isaiah 41:10 was back on the top spot. In 2017 Joshua 1:9 was the winner. **Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be frightened, and do not be dismayed, for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go.**

What does this tell us? it tells us there's a lot of fear and anxiety in the world, and that many turn to the Bible for help. Why is that? It's because, deep down, we have a sense that however big our anxiety is, God is bigger. Therefore, the more we know of God in our lives, the less we will know of anxiety in our lives. Big fear can be defeated by our bigger God. **How does God calm our inner storms?**

NB: While all anxious people need more theology, some may also need specialist counseling, medical help, and other practical remedies. Anxiety is often a multidimensional problem requiring a multidimensional approach. Physical, emotional, mental, spiritual, vocational, social, and relational factors may all contribute to anxiety.

BACKGROUND

- Jesus is the Word of God (John 1:1-2)
- Jesus is our Creator (1:3)
- Jesus is our Light and Life (1:4-9)
- Jesus is our Big Brother (1:10-13)
- Jesus is our Tabernacle (1:14-17).
- Jesus is our Preacher (1:18)
- Jesus is the Messiah (1:19-28)
- Jesus is our Sacrifice (1:29)
- Jesus is our Rabbi (1:35-46)
- Jesus is our Ladder (1:46-51)
- Jesus is our Wine (2:1-12)
- Jesus is our Temple (2:13-21)
- Jesus is our Midwife (John 3:1-8)
- Jesus is our Vaccine (John 3:9-15)
- Jesus is our Gift (John 3:16)
- Jesus is our Acquittal (John 3:17-18)
- Jesus is our Expose (John 3:19-21)
- Jesus is our Bridegroom (John 3:22-30)
- Jesus is our Witness (John 3:31-26)
- Jesus is our Water (John 4:1-45)
- Jesus is our Wonder (John 4:46-53)
- Jesus is our Doctor (John 5:1-16)
- Jesus is our Judge (John 5:17-30)
- Jesus is our Bible (John 5:31-47)
- Jesus is our Multiplier (John 6:1-15)
- Jesus is our Peace (John 6:16-21)

John 6 reveals Jesus as both our provider when we're hungry (6:1-15) and our peace when it's stormy (16-21).



What storms overwhelm us with fear?



1. LIFE IS STORMY (16-19)

When evening came, his disciples went down to the sea, got into a boat, and started across the sea to Capernaum. It was now dark, and Jesus had not yet come to them. The sea became rough because a strong wind was blowing. When they had rowed about three or four miles, they saw Jesus walking on the sea and coming near the boat, and they were frightened (16-19).

The disciples had five reasons to fear. It was dark, it was stormy, and they were in a small boat, they were in the middle of the lake, when they saw what they thought was a ghost. No wonder they were frightened. They had good reason to be.

CHANGING OUR STORIES WITH GOD'S STORY

We have many good reasons for fear because there are many storms in our world:

- **Medical storms:** We're sailing along happily when out of the blue the pop-up storm of cancer capsizes us and sends us to the bottom of the ocean. "Will I die?"
- **Financial storms:** We're full-steam ahead when the tsunami of job loss overwhelms us and we begin to sink. "Will I have enough for the month...for bills...for tuition...for retirement...?"
- **Relational storms:** Our marriage was coasting along, but unfaithfulness has torn our sail and our heart. "Will our marriage survive?"
- **Family storms:** Your daughter is cutting herself. Your son is experimenting with drugs. Your sister won't talk to you. You're sailing backwards. "Will we ever be a happy family again?"
- **Friend storms:** You've worked so hard to get friends on your boat, but they keep disappointing and hurting you, and jumping on to other boats. "Will I ever have friends?"
- **Conflict storms:** Stormy relationships with employees, colleagues, bosses, neighbors, clients, the school, the church, the doctor, the insurance company. "Will I ever see blue sky again?"
- **Church storms:** So many churches and denominations have torn up the map that tell us what to believe and how to live. "Will there be a church left for my kids?"
- **National storms:** America used to be a nation with borders and morals. Now it has no borders and no morals. "Is our ship sinking? Or has it already sunk?"
- **Global storms:** Dark clouds of terrorism, climate change, pandemics, and shortages are gathering. "Is the world coming to an end?"
- **Spiritual storms:** You've rejected God. Or, you've fallen into temptation and now addiction. Guilt and hopelessness are raining down upon you. "Can God ever shine his love on me?"
- **Eternal storms:** The horizon at the end of life looks dangerously stormy. "Am I ready for my final journey? Am I ready to die? Am I ready to face God?"

As you can see, many of these fears are legitimate and understandable. It's not a sin to be afraid. It's what we do with that fear that matters.

OUR LOGIC SAYS 'FEAR'
OUR LORD SAYS 'FAITH'



What should I do with my fear?
Take it to Jesus.



2. JESUS IS PEACE (20-21)

But he said to them, "It is I; do not be afraid." Then they were glad to take him into the boat, and immediately the boat was at the land to which they were going (20-21).

Do you find it helpful when someone says to you, "Don't be scared," or "Don't be afraid," or "Stop being anxious"? Of course not. We have good reason to be fearful. We need good reasons to not be fearful. Bare commands never work. We need to know 'Why?' Why should I not be afraid? Give me a reason to calm down.

That's what Jesus does here. He gives the disciples a reason to substitute peace for panic, the greatest reason of all. **"It is I; do not be afraid."** He doesn't try to minimize the danger they were in. He magnifies himself to minimize their fears. **"It is I"** therefore **"Do not be afraid."** Or **"Do not be afraid"** because **"It is I."**

What is it about this one letter "I" that can have such a calming effect? It's not just that it diverts our attention away from our "I" to another "I" (although that is therapy itself). It's who the "I" is that calms their fears and gives them peace. The more they knew his "I" the less they knew fear. When they were glad about who the I was, they took him into the boat, and the fear was over

CHANGING OUR STORIES WITH GOD'S STORY

Listen to who the "I" is, to listen to your fear less. Let's get to know this "I."

- **I know:** I knows you, your circumstances, storm, your world, your fear, your everything.
- **I care:** I not only know; I care. I remember how horrible fear is and empathize.
- **I rule:** I am in control. I rule over the storm, and the fear, anxiety, and worry it produces.
- **I provide:** I am Lord of all and can therefore give you enough of the all for right now.
- **I heal:** I can heal your body, your family, your friendships, your soul, your nation.
- **I love:** In a world of hate, I can bring you into a world of love. I love you!
- **I forgive:** Yes, you brought a lot of this on yourself, but I can forgive and forget all your sin.
- **I accept:** When you are rejected I accept you. When you are shut out, I welcome you in.
- **I keep:** There are many threats to you and your family, but I keep you in the palm of my hand.
- **I promise:** In the storm of lies and deception, I am the truth and I speak the truth
- **I assure:** When spiritual doubts assail you, I assure you of true faith.
- **I'm powerful:** You are up against mighty forces but I am all-powerful.
- **I'm patient:** Yes, you have long sinned against me, but I am rich in patience and mercy.
- **I'm present:** You feel alone but I am with you. I will never leave you or forsake you.

Take the "I" into the boat, and you will be in the eye of the storm. The bigger we can make his "I" the smaller he will make our fears.

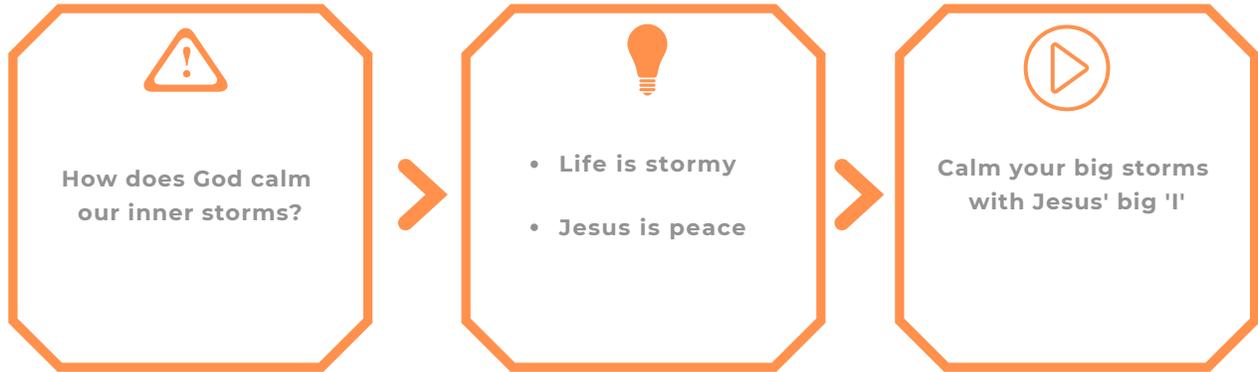
JESUS IS THE "I" OF THE STORM



Hear God's Story > Change your story > Tell the story > Change others' stories



SUMMARY



PRAYER: Peace-full Jesus, pacify my storm with who you are.
Use your 'I' to be the eye of my storm.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Why are people so afraid in our world?
2. What stirs up your fears? What are your biggest fears
3. How has God calmed your fear in the past? What verses has he used?
4. What verses can you think of that support each of Jesus' "I's" on page 4?
5. What other ways does God calm fears in the Bible?
6. Who can you bring this "I" to among your family and friends?

First Byron Christian Reformed Church
8541 Byron Center Ave SW, Byron Center, MI 49315
Phone: (616) 878-9768
www.firstbyroncrc.org

Pastor David Murray
www.HeadHeartHand.org
www.livingthebible.net