

THE ACTIONS OF JESUS: WALKING

About the fourth watch of the night he went out to them, walking on the lake. (Mark 6:48, NIV)

I'M NOT AGAINST PLAYING GOLF ALONE. I've done it often enough. But one of the great pleasures of our game is the companionship it provides in the midst of play. This can happen when riding a cart, but isn't the iconic picture two golfers (or a golfer and her caddie) walking side by side, talking their way to the next shot?

Walking is an action, and actions—specifically Jesus' actions—are the study of our present series.

Walking has meaning in itself, we know. It says, "I have purpose in what I am doing." And whether that purpose is to reach a destination, work off some calories, take in the beauty of the landscape, or provide an open door for conversation, walking can help accomplish it.

There is one more message walking can convey: I want to be where you are.

It is this message that Jesus sent to the disciples on that stormy night on the lake, when the waves violently tossed their boat and threatened to send them to the bottom. The text tells us that though the boat was in the middle of the lake and Jesus was on the shore, he "saw the disciples straining at the oars." So he walked out to them. This was no common walk, and when the disciples saw him a new fear arose. Here was a ghost approaching them on the open water. They were terrified and cried out. But then Jesus did two things: he spoke and he acted. His words told them not to be afraid of him; his action told them they could place all their trust in him.

Here is that action: "Jesus climbed into the boat with them." What happened immediately next? "The wind died down."

We may not be able to calm the seas as Jesus can, but we can certainly engage in his ministry of presence. If the Spirit of Christ dwells in us as believers in him, we too can help others by showing up, by climbing into their desperate situation, and by bringing the peace of the Lord.

Where do you need to go? Who needs the blessing of your presence as you bring the aroma of Christ? These are questions for every day, and they should prompt our actions.

Opening questions What kinds of walks do you see people demonstrating on the golf course? • How important to you is the proximity of caring people?

READING Mark 6:45-52; Mark 9:2-10; 1 John 1:6-7 & 2 John 1:6

Prayer and ministry (Mark 6)

Do you think we can draw a connection between prayer and effective ministry? How might the one support the other, and vice versa?

Going with Jesus (Mark 9)

What was the purpose of Jesus' walk with Peter, James, and John? Has God ever "walked" you somewhere to show you or teach you things you would not have otherwise experienced?

A meaningful walk (1 John 1 & 2 John 1)

How does John's idea of walking carry both literal and metaphorical meaning as we live out our faith and engage in ministry on earth?

Written by Jeff Hopper ©2016 Links Players International.