

The Story of Jesus

Part 16: Aliens, Bigfoot, and Jesus: Navigating the Difficulty of Belief

Mark 6:45-56 - [watch online](#)

SUMMARY: Many parts of the story of Jesus seem as impossible as stories of aliens and Bigfoot. For many people, however, the most impossible part to believe is that his story can make any difference in our story. But when we grasp the identity of Jesus the impossible becomes part of our story.

MAIN IDEAS:

[01:13] The story of Jesus has always been difficult to believe.

[02:49] We find it hard to believe that the story of Jesus can make a difference in our story.

[03:56] When we grasp the identity of Jesus the impossible becomes part of our story.

[07:17] Jesus always tells us to base our confidence and trust in him.

[09:59] In and through Jesus the impossible has arrived.

[13:23] If Jesus is who he said he is then we can be and do what he said we can be and do.

[14:15] We can see Jesus make a difference in other people's lives and still not believe he can do anything with ours.

[17:35] Jesus won't make a difference in our lives, until we are willing to let him make a difference in our lives.

[20:31] Jesus makes the impossible possible in each of our lives.

INVITATION: [19:43] Every morning ask: If Jesus is who he said he is, what does that mean for me today?

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. Are there any aspects of the story of Jesus that have been or are difficult for you to believe?
2. Jon said, "When we grasp the identity of Jesus the impossible becomes part of our story." Explain what you think he meant. Have you ever seen this idea play out in your or someone else's life?
3. Read Ephesians 3 vv.14-20. What stands out to you? How do you think Paul's thoughts relate to our current discussion?
4. If Jesus is who he said he is, what does that mean for you today?
5. How can your group pray with you this week?

TRANSCRIPT

IN: For the last 2000 yrs the story of Jesus has impacted and changed millions of lives for the better...

But when we actually look at it it seems like a pretty impossible story... healing diseases, demons, calming storms w/ his words... How is that possible?

Sure it seems like a lot people get a lot out of this Story of Jesus. But can this impossible story make any difference for me?

Excellent question... So let's talk about it... together.

WE: Do you believe in aliens? Big foot? Atlantis? Loch Ness? Lizard people, Others...

Some things are difficult to believe...

For a lot of people the story of Jesus fits into the same category... The story of Jesus has always been difficult to believe.

Virtually all scholars (religious and not) agree that there was a man in 1st cent Israel named Jesus of Nazareth. That he was baptized by a guy named John the B and was crucified by the Romans.

But the rest of it?

- Healing diseases
- Casting out demons
- Calming storms
- And the kicker... Coming back from the dead?

But... we can't deny there is something about this story that has impacted millions of people.

- But, whether we say this or not, we think/feel...

That's great. Glad it worked for them.

But I'm good.

I'm a good person and I like the teachings... but life-changing my life? Come on. Let's not get too nuts about all of this.

Or maybe you're on the other side... My life is a mess. And I'm glad Jesus has worked for some people... but I need something more than nice stories to make my life any different...

Whether those scenarios described you or not m one thing is true for most of us...

We find it hard to believe that the story of Jesus can make a difference in our story.

We're in good company. Jesus' 1st followers had trouble believing it too.

Including Apostle Peter... Fisherman turned student of Jesus.

- Had a hard time believing/wrapping his mind around what Jesus was all about...

But then he experienced something that completely changed his life/story.

- D&R of Jesus

Spent rest of life telling the impossible story to whoever would listen.

30-35 years after resurrection. Peter has friend, Mark, write down his account of Jesus' life... and as we read it we realize something... Peter really really really wants us to know who Jesus is.

I think it's b/c... When we grasp the identity of Jesus the impossible becomes part of our story.

GOD: Story so far...

- Jesus teaching/healing
- Sent disciples out to do the same thing... Boys pretty excited about it...
- Big crowd gathers and have no food... Jesus tells disciples to feed them...
 - Only come up w/ 5 loaves 2 fish so
 - Jesus takes it and multiplies it feeding everyone

Then... **V. 45-46**

"I'll finish up here. You head out and get that break you were wanting. I'll catch up."

- "I just need some solitude, silence, and prayer."

Seems kind of interesting right? How's he going to catch up? What's the point of this?

But they're tired, probably still reeling from what just happened... so they go...

V. 47-48a [...wind and waves.]

Weren't making any progress... rowing for about 9-12 hrs. Going nowhere.

- Exhausted, annoyed, bickering, blaming
- "This is impossible! Why did Jesus tell us to do this?"
- "Probably knew it'd be faster to walk."

Which apparently it was... **V. 48b-50**

"Intended to go past" more like he was gaining on them so quickly (b/c they weren't going anywhere) it seemed like he was just going to pass them up.

Middle of the dark lake in the middle of the night... windy/waves... see a human form zooming across the water...

And their first thought is, "It's a ghost!" And they are terrified.

- Understandable
- We'd be freaking out too!

"But Jesus spoke to them AT ONCE..." he understood this was a new thing for the boys...took their fear seriously, but he says something interesting...

"Don't be afraid. Take Courage! I am here!"

- Whoa whoa whoa guys... calm down it's me.

Jesus always tells us to base our confidence and trust in him.

But the words he uses are more than that, the phrase is more like “Take courage the I AM is here”...

- What?! That’s not even proper English Jesus
- Ever hear the story of Moses and the burning bush? Well God says something interesting in that exchange...
- **Ex. 3:14.** I AM. God’s name for himself. The eternal uncaused first cause of reality.
 - Nothing made me. I depend on nothing for my existence... I AM.
- The Jewish people knew the significance of that phrase.
- Same phrase Jesus uses later at his trial that gets him the death penalty for blasphemy.

V. 51-52 Funny Peter left out the part where he tries to do it too and sinks.

The wind stops and they are totally amazed... we think, “Well yeah, that’s impossible, of course they are amazed.”

But Mark makes their amazement seem like a negative thing...

- “They are amazed b/c they didn’t understand the significance of the miracle with the loaves. Their hearts were too hard to take it in.”

This is like a rebuke for being amazed that Jesus can walk on water and calm the wind.

- Doesn't seem fair.
- What’s going on here?

Well think about it... Throughout this story of Jesus so far... what have the disciples experienced?

- Jesus has healed diseases (leprosy, shriveled hands)
- Cast out demons
- He calmed a storm w/ his words
- Raised a girl from the dead.
- Sent them out to do the same miracles... and they did it
- And then he fed over 5000 people with some bread and a couple of fish.

What the disciples should’ve seen by now is... In and through Jesus the impossible has arrived.

In and through Jesus, God himself, the Great I AM has arrived.

- The true King has returned to bring his kingdom to earth
- He is restoring his creation to what it was meant to be in the beginning.
- Restoring humanity’s role to be his image bearers and steward his creation for him.
- He embodies the life we were meant to have, the authority/role we were meant to have in the beginning.

- **Gen. 1:27-28**

But the disciples' hearts are too hard to believe...

- In Jewish thought the heart was the center of thinking, understanding.

It was too much for them. They couldn’t reason and think their way through what had been happening to them.

- They failed to see the simplest solution...
- Jesus actually is who he’s been saying he is.

It's like Jesus says to the guys... "You still won't let yourselves understand who I am... and therefore you don't understand what you are."

Think about it... Jesus sent them out to do what he had been doing... gave them his authority/power to heal the sick and cast out demons.

- And then they did it.

Then they have this crowd that needs food... and he tells the disciples... You feed them.

- I don't think Jesus was just being cute telling the guys to do something they couldn't do so he could swoop in and show how awesome he is.
- Jesus was giving the disciples a chance to use their imagination to exercise his authority and power. Or at least exercise their trust in him.
- "You see this need of hungry people... remember that authority/power I gave you... What are you going to do with it?"

Remember when Jesus asked them, "What do you have?" The correct answer wasn't 5 loaves and 2 fish...

- The answer was... we have you Jesus, we have your authority/power.
- If their hearts had been softer to the truth Peter, and John, and Andrew and the rest could've multiplied the food themselves.

I picture Jesus saying as he sits in the boat...

"Remember when I gave you my authority/power to do what I do?

Now, remember when I calmed that storm?

You knew I told you to go across the lake and your rowing wasn't working...

- Why didn't you trust the authority/power I've given you and just get out and push?"

But they couldn't allow themselves to accept the impossible but obvious conclusion of who Jesus was... so they couldn't accept the impossible identity Jesus was giving them.

If Jesus is who he said he is then can be and do what he said we can be and do.

But the disciples couldn't see it. So he goes back to doing the work himself... **V. 53-56**

Jesus' power was good enough to help the crowds... but the disciples didn't rely on him to help them be who he said they were.

YOU: And that's us!

We can see Jesus make a difference in other people's lives and still not believe he can do anything with ours.

We think, "That's great for them. But my situation is impossible.

- I'll never be able to get past this hurt... never be able to forgive

- I'll always have to deal with this anger/fear/ shame
- I'll never break this cycle I'm stuck in.
- That relationship is broken forever.

And Jesus says... that's what I came for.

Soften your heart... see me for who I AM.

- Don't be afraid. Take courage. I AM is here!

Trust me with your story and I will show you who you are... who you can be in me... who you were always meant to be.

OR maybe we say...

"Good teachings Jesus... but I'm good. Thanks for the reminders. But I don't think you can really do much for me."

- And we go back to our boring lives of doing what we've always done and hoping things work out for the best
- Never actually experiencing life in the KoG
- Never truly becoming who we were created to be, never seeing the power of Jesus work through us.

And Jesus says, "Soften your heart. Allow yourself to see that the impossible is here. Trust me. Trust who I am making you to be. Experience real life in me and get out and push."

What he has for us to do might not be to heal diseases, calm storms, or move mountains... but he definitely has something more difficult for us to do... Change lives.

Ours and others.

- Real miracle. Nothing is harder to move than a human heart. Trust me I've tried.

But Jesus can transform lives marked by fear, anxiety, anger, bitterness, self-destructive patterns

- To a life of love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control.

No matter how strong the storm is... Jesus still comes walking on the water. He calls out.... Don't be afraid. I AM here.

When John retold this story he added a few other details... he says "they were eager to let him in the boat"... they were willing and eager... We must be willing.

Jesus won't make a difference in our lives, until we are willing to let him make a difference in our lives.

- We can either do what we usually do... choose to keep our fear, keep rowing, going nowhere
- Or we can choose to humble ourselves and let Jesus into our boat.

And John says when Jesus got in the boat they immediately arrived at their destination.

- I know crazy... rowing all night going nowhere, exhausted, overwhelmed, hopeless... and then they let Jesus in the boat
- And the battle is over, the fear is gone, the task just became doable... the journey has come to a beautiful end!

The impossible happened right before the disciples eyes... and they couldn't see it for what it was.

Are you willing to see it and accept it?

We just have to be willing to see the impossible... Jesus is the I AM. And through him and in him we can be and do what he said we can be and do.

Let's not waste another day saying it's impossible...

If he is who he said he is... that has huge implications...

- it means we can be who he said we can be. And have the life he said we can have.

So whatever it takes... however long it takes... however impossible it might seem... find a real solid answer for yourself who is Jesus...

Whether you've found that answer for yourself or not...

This week... **Every morning ask: If Jesus is who he said he is, what does that mean for me today?** (write it down somewhere if you need)

WE: What if the impossible is true? What if he is who he said he is and we can be and do what he said we can be and do?

What does that really mean for you? What does that mean for us?

It means there's more we are meant to be and experience... it means the impossible really is possible.

It means we truly can discover, enjoy, and share the life Jesus offers... together.

Jesus makes the impossible possible in each of our lives.