

## Never Alone, Always Together

By

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We are blessed—you and I—in ways unfathomable to many. We have heard the sound of modern Pentecost as hundreds receive the baptism of the Holy Ghost, watched God in action as crippled limbs straightened, blind eyes opened, or deaf ears are unstopped. We've seen God's best; humanities worst. We've walked among spiritual giants in distant lands and observed God's transforming power in lives dwarfed by sin, poverty and disease. We've seen, heard, touched, and tasted the goodness and closeness of God. Yet, there are now haunting, doubting questions. "Why do I feel so isolated?" "How is it possible I can be in a room or world full of people, yet feel so alone?" And the biggie; "Where is Jesus now?"

A couple Bible scenes come to mind and hopefully provide a slice of support. The disciples, in the book of Mark, had already walked through four chapters of miracles, healings, and listened to a dozen or so parables. Leaving the crowd, Jesus jumped in a boat (that is the ancient equivalent to KLM or British Airways) and said, "Let us pass over to the other side!" In the midst of the journey a horrific storm arose. Water cascaded into the tiny ship. Fear rose. Faith fell. Jesus was in the ship...sleeping. The other occupants woke him shouting, "Do you not care that we are perishing?" He spoke three tiny, one syllable words, "Peace, be still." The wind ceased. The waves calmed. The water drained. Fearful, faithless followers forgot Jesus had said, "Let *us* pass over to the other side." Together, they would conquer whatever circumstances that came their way. Ironically, we sometimes get caught in a similar situation. We are overwhelmed, alone, speculating, "Doesn't anyone care? Hello, I'm about to drown here!" And Jesus speaks peace into every situation. Life's storms cease. Fears calm.

Hope hung on Calvary's dismal cross. Taken down quickly, to avoid interfering with religious festivities, it was wrapped with love, and hidden in a borrowed tomb. God robed in flesh, sent on a mission, was silenced. Life lost. Death won. Or so it seemed! The disciples—the greatest Missionary's kids—had experienced the full spectrum of the miraculous and heard the incredible. Yet, the torment of time left them discouraged, depressed, defeated, deserted, and distressed. In a word, they were *alone*. But, on the third day, all that changed. Those feelings were just that: *feelings*. They did not represent reality. Jesus rose, and marched into their state of affairs, and reversed their circumstances...*forever*.

I wish it were possible for Sister Howell and I to slide in the booth beside you at Pizza Hut, or drop into your corner of the world, and discuss what you are going *through*. The key word in that sentence is *through*. You *will* reach the other side. There *is* someone that is able. His Word declares, "He leads...He restores...Even though I walk *through* the valley..." He is with you, comforts you, and is preparing your best future for you. His goodness and mercy follow you *through* life (Psalms 23:1-6). He will not leave you. Listen. Hear His voice as he speaks, "Peace, be still! You're never alone. We're always together!"