Matthew - Commentaries by William John Hocking, Editor

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THESE words fell from the gracious lips of the Lord Jesus on three different occasions while He was on earth, and undoubtedly brought comfort to those to whom they were addressed. Many, many years have rolled away, but we hear the same voice speaking to us today. It says to you, dear reader, if you are burdened with your sins, “Be of good cheer.” Just as surely as the Saviour said to the poor, palsied man lying at His feet, “Be of good cheer; thy sins be forgiven thee” (Matt. 9:2), so He says to you, if you believe that He bore the punishment that was your due. Make this your own and you will know true joy in your soul.

If you know this joy, perhaps you may find your case depicted in Matthew 14:24-27. Here we find a little company of believers tossed on the heaving billows of a tempestuous sea. Perchance you are passing through adverse circumstances, sickness or bereavement. The waves of sorrow look threatening and you are at your wits’ end.

“Be of good cheer.” The disciples did not recognize Jesus, nor realize that He was actually walking on that which was causing them such dire distress. “Be of good cheer,” He says, “it is I; be not afraid.”

Finally, someone may be cast down at the world’s opposition to a Christlike walk. Temptation has come and you have given way to it. Well, turn to John 16:33. The disciples were cast down—and well they might be—at the prospect of losing One upon Whom they had relied. What does the Master say? “In the world ye shall have tribulation: but, be of good cheer; I have overcome the world.” Cheer up then, my brother, my sister; remember you can do all things through Christ Who strengtheneth you (Phil. 4:13). C.M.