



Christian Report

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When God Shows Up

A Devotional Reflection on the Faithfulness of God

It happened in the middle of the night, without warning, only the rhythmic hum of the sea against the shore breaking the silence. Peter stood alone on the deck, worn from a long night of fruitless labor. Salt clung to his arms, and the stars, those silent witnesses, hung dim and indifferent above the unchanging water. His hands moved through the familiar motions: cast, pull, empty; cast, pull, empty. Outwardly, he was strong. Inwardly, he had quietly run out of hope. A seasoned fisherman, yes, but that night, he was simply a man exhausted by nothing changing.



And that's when it happened.

A figure stood on the shoreline. No one heard Him arrive; no oar, no sound of sand disturbed. Just a presence: calm, steady, sovereign. Not early. Not late.

“Children, do you have any fish?”

It was a strange question, yet a holy one. Jesus doesn't ask for information; He asks to reveal Himself. Peter didn't recognize Him yet—not until the nets, once empty, groaned under the weight of the impossible. Not until lack became abundance in a single breath. That is the

moment hope cracks open the heart: when God shows up not to explain Himself, but to reveal Himself. And in that moment, everything changes.

They had done everything right. They had shown up, worked hard, endured the night, followed the motions, and kept the faith of muscle and habit. Still, nothing.

Do you know that kind of night? The kind where the nets of your effort keep coming up empty, where your prayers feel cold, and the silence of heaven sounds louder than the sound of hope? And just then, when it almost feels offensive that He would ask, Jesus calls across the water: “Do you have any fish?”

He is not mocking. He is inviting. God often begins His miracles at the precise point of our admitted emptiness—not when we are strong, not when we finally crack the code, not when we fix ourselves—but when we whisper the truth: “Lord... there's nothing in my net.”

Only then does He say what He said to them: “*Cast the net on the right side of the boat...*” (John 21:6, ESV).

A strange instruction. Same lake. Same boat. Same nets. One shift—His command. And the nets could not contain the catch. When God shows up, it is not merely to change our situation. It is always to reveal Himself, to remind

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us that He is not distant from our lack—He is Lord over it.



God is not Delayed

This is not the first time God has shown up when all seemed lost. He appeared to Abraham not at the top of the mountain with a neat explanation, but at the final second, when the blade was raised and his heart trembled between obedience and agony. *“But the angel of the Lord called to him from heaven... ‘Do not lay your hand on the boy...’”* (Genesis 22:11–12, ESV). God was not early. But He was not late.

He showed up for Moses not while escape still lay behind them, but when the Red Sea loomed in front and Egypt thundered behind. *“Fear not, stand firm, and see the salvation of the Lord...”* (Exodus 14:13). God split the sea not when they were comfortable, but when they were desperate.

He came to Elijah not in the wind, not in the fire, not in the earthquake, but in the faint whisper after the prophet had collapsed in exhaustion and confessed his despair (1 Kings 19:11–12). God did not appear to rebuke him, but to reveal Himself gently to a weary soul.

He arrived for Mary and Martha four days after Lazarus had died, when every clock in the room

said “too late.” “Lord, if you had been here...” they said (John 11:21, 32). But time is never late in the hands of the One who is the Resurrection and the Life.

Over and over, God arrives not at the edge of our comfort, but at the depth of our need—not to validate our timeline, but to display His glory and His love in a way we would have missed if He came sooner. Because when God shows up, He is not delayed. He is precise.

But Back to Us...

Maybe you’ve had a night like Peter. Maybe you’ve stood at the edge of something that once looked promising—a relationship, a prayer, a calling, a prodigal you love—and all you feel is the exhaustion of empty nets. You have done the faithful thing: shown up, prayed, hoped. And still—nothing.



The enemy loves those moments, not because he is strong, but because he knows we are tempted to draw conclusions God has not signed His name to. He whispers lies into the tired soul: “This will never change.” “You will always be stuck here.” “God has forgotten you.” “He answers other people—not you.”

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But the enemy is a liar, and our God is a Shepherd who does not abandon His own. He still walks onto the shore of weary hearts. He still speaks into night-weary obedience. He still fills empty nets with impossible outcomes, not to reward performance, but to reveal His Presence. When God shows up, He doesn't just change circumstances. He changes perspective.



Our Obedience is Key

The miracle didn't begin when the nets filled. It began when they obeyed, before they saw anything change. Faith does not wait for evidence to worship; faith worships while the nets are still empty.

That is why Paul and Silas sang in the prison at midnight, not after the chains fell, not once the walls shook, but while still bound. And heaven answered. That is why Joshua marched around the walls of Jericho while they were still unmoved; obedience preceded outcome. That is what the widow did when Elijah told her to bake bread with the last of her flour—she offered what little she had first, and the oil did not run out.

Our God is not moved by the volume of our faith, but by the direction of our trust. Praise is our declaration that God is worthy before we see how He will work, not because He needs reassurance, but because we need remembering. Worship realigns the heart to truth: God is here. God is good. God is already working, even when I cannot see how. And that is when

breakthrough is often closest, not when our situation changes, but when our vision does.

So perhaps the question today is not, "When will God show up?" but rather, "*Will I recognize Him when He already has?*"

Because sometimes He comes with power, and sometimes with whisper. Sometimes with parting seas, and sometimes with sustaining grace. Sometimes

He changes everything around us, and sometimes He begins by changing everything within us. But He always comes—never late, never indifferent, never unfaithful.

The Call

Here is the invitation: not simply to wait for God, but to worship Him now—as if He is already moving (because He is).

Lift empty nets and still throw them again at His word. Sing the song before the chains fall. Praise before the walls shake. Call Him faithful before the outcome is visible. Not because we hope He might show up, but because we trust He already has.

When God shows up, fear yields to peace, delay bows to purpose, and the ordinary becomes holy ground.

So do not wait for the Red Sea to part to praise Him. Do not wait for the fish to fill the net. Do not wait for the answer to arrive.

***Lift your voice now!
For He is here now!
And He is worthy now!***

“Let us not grow weary of doing good...” (Galatians 6:9, ESV)

November is a time to pause, reflect, and recognize the blessings that fill our lives — family, friends, community, and the opportunities we share. During **Grateful Giving Month**, we invite you to turn that gratitude into action by supporting the mission of **Christian Military Fellowship**. Your gift this month helps us continue sharing the hope of Jesus Christ with service members, veterans, and their families through discipleship, teaching, trauma healing, counseling, and prayer support. Together, we can make gratitude more than a word — we can make it a powerful expression of God’s love in action.



Photo Credit: army.mil

As the season of giving approaches, let’s start early by giving back right where it matters most. Your November contribution, no matter the size, creates immediate impact and sets the stage for a strong finish to the year. Let’s celebrate the spirit of gratitude by lifting others — because when we give out of thankfulness, we inspire hope that lasts far beyond the holidays.

Together, we can continue to encourage and equip those who have given so much in service.

Are You Called to Teach and Disciple?

Christian Military Fellowship exists to help you fulfill your calling in Christ to share the hope that is in you with those with whom you interact as part of your daily life.

Briefly, CMF Local Leaders will start, and sustain a CMF fellowship made up of members of the military community in their area. While CMF is an “all ranks” ministry, our area of focus is on enlisted personnel. Local leaders institute and lead the military community in

Bible study, prayer, and fellowship, keeping in communication with participants. They should also seek to build relationships with the chaplains and the chaplain team.

Toward that end we encourage you to study and complete the CMF briefing material:

Orientation (Brief #1) that shares an overview of the CMF ministry.

Developing a Local Ministry (Brief

#2) that shares the Biblical foundation for and delineates the logical steps in beginning your local ministry.

Pray and Plan (Brief #3) that shares the most important activity of all! Asking Jesus what He would have you to do and then being obedient to follow His leading in your local ministry. If you choose to begin this process, please reach out to us at: leader@cmfhq.org.

We’re praying for you!

CHRISTIAN MILITARY FELLOWSHIP

An Indigenous Ministry • Discipleship • Prayer • Community • Support Encouraging Men and Women in the United States Armed Forces, and their families, to love and serve the Lord Jesus Christ.

Christian Military Fellowship is a long-time recipient of Ministry Watch’s “Shining Light” Ministries. To become a MinistryWatch “Shining Light,” a ministry must have earned a 5-star rating on MinistryWatch’s 5-star financial efficiency scale. Further, those ministries on this list have a Transparency Grade of “A.” That’s MinistryWatch’s highest transparency grade. Few ministries meet these strict criteria.

Mailing Address: PO Box 449
Veradale, WA 99037-0449
(800)798-7875
(303)761-1959
<https://www.CMFHQ.ORG>
office@CMFHQ.org

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