

Christian Actress Priscilla Shirer Asks: 'Is Jesus in Your Boat?'

Read Time: 4 Minutes 31 Seconds

With seven of her most loved Bible verses, Christian author, speaker and film actress Priscilla Shirer encourages people to allow their lives to be like boats that are useful to the Lord.

Based on a text from Luke Chapter 5, Shirer tells a tale about the Lord Jesus, Simon Peter, fish, preaching, boats, crowds, nets and the sea.

"At the top of this story, we see Peter—a discouraged, disappointed and irritated fisherman who had given this all-night fishing expedition everything he [had]," says Shirer, a popular Christian voice and New York Times best-seller.

"Peter caught nothing so he left the boat to focus on cleaning his net.

"That empty boat is a symbolic picture of Peter's disappointment," says Shirer, who frequently shares a stage with popular speakers Tim Tebow, Willie Robertson, Nick Vujicic, The Benham Brothers and others.

Their nationwide tour is devoted to worship, wisdom, wealth and impact. (LIFE SURGE—Surge Your Life God's Way).

The Lord Jesus sees the boat in verse two—not as a disappointing reminder of Peter's failure at fishing—but rather as a tool to advance the kingdom of God.

"Sometimes He lets us go fishing, knowing up front we're not going to catch anything. Jesus knew that if Simon Peter's boat

was filled up with a bunch of flopping fish, then there would be no room from which to preach," Shirer says.

So that His voice carried to the thousands of people gathered on the shore, Jesus stepped into Peter's boat and requested that he put it out to sea.

When Jesus finishes speaking to the crowd, he tells Simon to cast his net into deep water for fish. The catch is so great it nearly breaks the net.

"I want to ask you the question that matters more than any: Is Jesus in your boat?" Shirer recently asked thousands gathered in Denver, Colorado, this past weekend.

"Whether it's salvation—you've never asked Christ to be your Savior—or you realize as a Christian you haven't integrated Him into your choices, would you raise your hands wherever you are?" Shirer asked.

Scores of people—young and old—responded to the appeals to invite Jesus into their boats.

"All the way up in the balcony I see dozens and dozens of hands indicating you want to make Jesus Lord of your life," Shirer said to a crowd gathered inside First Bank Arena.

A wife and mother first, Shirer is also a popular Christian speaker with Life Surge and Going Beyond Ministries, which she co-leads with her husband Jerry. The ministry reaches every denomination with Bible study materials, books and conferences.

Shirer, who holds a Master's Degree in Biblical Studies from Dallas Theological Seminary, enjoys movies—especially "The Karate Kid" (1984).

The main character, Daniel, is assigned routines by his karate master, Mr. Miyagi. Daniel's assignments—waxing, painting and sanding—seemed irrelevant to his desire to learn karate.

The tasks were, in fact, karate training in disguise. Daniel learned defensive maneuvers—reflexes his master, Mr. Miyagi, knew he needed for success in karate.

“I want to encourage you today that, quite possibly, you’re preparing yourself for assignments the likes of which you can’t even imagine.

“The foundational stuff you need to be able to stand in the next season God is calling you to—if you’ll be faithful now—will be worth every bit of time, energy and effort that you put into it,” says Shirer.

With more than two dozen books to her credit, Shirer loves to tell stories, too.

Watching the “Today Show” years ago, Shirer was intrigued by correspondent Campbell Brown’s reporting on world religions, especially Buddhism.

A sort of roving reporter covering religion at the time, Brown and a camera crew traveled to Hong Kong, where team members climbed 268 stairs to reach a mountaintop statue of Buddha.

A goal of many Buddhists is to kneel and pray to this statue.

“I had several problems with it,” Shirer says. “The first thing is, it is a statue. Habakkuk chapter 2 speaks of an idol with eyes that can’t see, hands that do nothing, feet that don’t walk and a head with nothing inside—built by man. They are praying to an idol that can’t do anything.

“My other problem is, if I had to save my money to fly half-way around the world to climb 269 stairs to pray, then I would never pray. So, while Buddhists climb to talk to their god—little g—the one, true, living God comes down. What kind of God is this that would come down to see about us?” asks Shirer, who plays lead-actress roles in Christian films like “War Room,” “I Can Only Imagine” and “Overcomer.”

Gatherings of Christians at events like Life Surge or in churches are important “because every now and then the fishing trips of life are disappointing.

“You need to know that there are some brothers and sisters who love you enough that they’re willing to set down with you and help you tend that net,” Shirer says. {eo}

Steve Rees is a former general assignment reporter who, with one other journalist, first wrote about the national men’s movement Promise Keepers from his home in Colorado. Rees and Promise Keepers founder Bill McCartney attended the Boulder Vineyard. Today Rees writes in his free time.

Bring *Charisma* magazine home with a subscription today!