

## Walking On The Water

Matthew 14:22-33; Mark 6:45-52; John 6:15-21

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Following the miraculous feeding of well over 5,000 people, **Jesus** constrained the **apostles** to get into a ship and cross over the **Sea of Galilee** to **Bethsaida**, while He sent the multitudes away (**Matthew 14:22; Mark 6:45**). After **Jesus** sent the multitudes away, He did not immediately go to His **disciples**, but instead went into a mountain to pray, while His **disciples** were making their way across the sea (**Matthew 14:23; Mark 6:46; John 6:15**). **Jesus** is on the mountain, and the **disciples** are below experiencing a life-threatening storm. We are told in **Mark 6:48** that *“He saw them toiling in rowing”* This is a beautiful picture of **Jesus** above on the behalf of His people! What **Matthew**, **Mark**, and **John** record here is that **JESUS IS ALL-SUFFICIENT, ALWAYS SUFFICIENT!**

### I. THE DISCIPLES IN THE STORM

Following the feeding of over 5000, and **Jesus** sending the **apostles** across the **Sea of Galilee**, the next time we read of the **apostles** they are in the midst of the sea in a storm (**Matthew 14:24; Mark 6:47**). Storms all through the Word of God are a picture of the **trials**, the **difficulties**, the **hardships**, the **struggles**, the **adversities**, the **burdens**, the **stresses**, the **setbacks**, the **afflictions**, the **battles**, and the **obstacles** of life. These storms are a part of life, they are inevitable, and can be very unpredictable! When **Jesus** *“constrained His disciples to get into a ship and go before Him to the other side”* HE KNEW THAT THERE WOULD BE A STORM, AND HE DELIBERATELY DIRECTED THEM INTO THE STORM! All the storms are in the **plans** and **purposes** of the Lord! The **apostles** went from witnessing a mighty miracle, into the eye of a storm, showing that **a change of circumstances can come very quickly!** BUT CHRIST KNEW ALL ABOUT IT, AND HAD APPOINTED IT, AND IT WOULD ALL WORK FOR THEIR GOOD!

#### ① **The Storm Was Great:**

**John** speaks of *“a great wind that blew”* (**John 6:18**). That which is *“great”* is **substantial**, **significant**, **extraordinary**, **large**, **extensive**, **broad**, **immense**, **enormous**, and **massive!** THIS STORM WAS BIGGER THAN THEM!

#### ② **All Appeared To Be Out Of Control:**

**John** records *“And the sea arose”* (**John 6:18**), and **Matthew** records that they were *“tossed (flung and hurled) with waves”* (**Matthew 14:24**). They were being **thrown about**, AND ALL WAS SEEMINGLY OUT OF CONTROL!

**3 The Storm Appeared To Be Working Against Them:**

**Matthew** and **Mark** both record that “*the wind was contrary*” (**Matthew 14:24; Mark 6:48**). THE WIND WAS OPPOSING THEM! And as a result, **Mark** says that they were “*toiling in rowing*” (**Mark 6:48**). They were **laboring**, they were **travailing**, they were **struggling** against the storm, BUT MAKING ABSOLUTELY NO HEADWAY! THEY WERE STUCK IN A STORM!

**4 There Did Not Appear To Be Any Place To Go:**

**Matthew** and **Mark** both record “*the ship was in the midst of the sea*” (**Matthew 14:24; Mark 6:47**), and **John** records that they had rowed between **three and three and a half miles** (**John 6:19**). They are on the **storm-tossed waters**, and in spite of all their efforts are making absolutely **no headway**, AND THEY HAVE NO PLACE TO TURN!

**5 There Was Darkness And Loneliness:**

**Matthew** and **Mark** both record that it was “*in the fourth watch of the night*” (**Matthew 14:25; Mark 6:48**), and **John** says “*And it was now dark, and Jesus was not come to them*” (**John 6:17**). They were in a storm **bigger than themselves**, all appeared to be **out of control**, they were **struggling** but making **no headway**, they **did not have anyplace to turn**, AND IT WAS DARK, AND THEY APPEARED TO BE ALL ALONE!

**6 They Failed To Recognize The Lord In The Midst Of The Storm:**

They could **feel** the **wind**, they could **see** and **feel** the **waves**, BUT THEY DID NOT RECOGNIZE THE LORD MOVING IN THEIR DIRECTION (**Matthew 14:25-26; Mark 6:48-49**). Their supposition that the figure moving toward them was a ghost added to their storm!

**7 There Was Trouble Of Heart:**

**Matthew** says “*they were troubled.....and they cried out for fear*” (**Matthew 14:26**). **Mark** also records that they “*were troubled*” (**Mark 6:50**), and **John** records that “*they were afraid*” (**John 6:19**). They were **confused**, **agitated**, **alarmed**, **fearful**, **anxious**, and greatly **distressed**! There was an inward **commotion**! ALL OF THIS WAS ADDED TO BY THEIR SUPPOSITION AND FAILURE TO SEE CHRIST CLEARLY!

## II. DURING THE STORM JESUS WALKED ON THE STORMY SEA

**Matthew**, **Mark**, and **John** all record some very encouraging words concerning the approach of **Christ** to the **apostles**. **Matthew** says “*Jesus went unto them*” (**Matthew 14:25**). **Mark** says “*He cometh unto them*” (**Mark 6:48**), and **John** says that **Jesus** was “*drawing nigh unto the ship*” (**John 6:19**). HOW MANY TIMES, WE WERE ABOUT TO BE PULLED UNDER, AND HE CAME TO US! We are specifically told that it was “*in the fourth watch of the night*” that “*Jesus went unto them*” **Mark** says “*And when the even was come* (first watch **6:00-9:00**), *the ship was in the midst of the*

sea" (6:47). But it was not during that first watch that "Jesus went unto them" It was not during the second watch (9:00-12:00) that "Jesus went unto them" It was not during the third watch (12:00-3:00), that "Jesus went unto them" But in the fourth watch (3:00-6:00) "Jesus went unto them" It was when every human prop was gone, and when all human hope was gone "Jesus went unto them" RIGHT ON TIME!

### ① He Came Walking On The Storm Tossed Waters:

**Matthew, Mark, and John** all record the fact that **Jesus** walked on the water (**Matthew 14:25; Mark 6:48; John 6:19**). The very thing that the **apostles** feared, the very thing that was threatening their lives WAS THE VERY THING THAT GOD USED TO COME TO THEM! The waters that were **tossing the apostles and their ship about**, the waters that were **threatening their very lives** JESUS WALKS UPON IT AS IF IT WERE DRY LAND! Those angry waves which tossed the ship of the **apostles** and threatened to break it into pieces WAS A SOLID FLOOR TO HIS FEET! The ship is being tossed, by the waves, but JESUS WALKS CALMLY AND UNFAZED UPON THOSE VERY WATERS! Those storm-risen waters that brought such **havoc** and **disruption** upon the **apostles** had no effect upon **Jesus!** Those storm-risen waters that tossed their boat about with ease could not toss **Jesus** about! Those storm-risen waters that threatened to engulf the **apostles** could not engulf **Jesus!** He was not **moved** or **bothered** by the **wind** or the **waves!** By "walking on the sea" He was not telling them that the storm was not fierce, HE WAS TELLING THEM THAT HE WAS GREATER THAN THE STORM! God's people need to recognize that **Jesus is greater than their storm!** "Jesus went unto them, walking on the sea" and by so doing He was saying "I am able, I am in control, I am what you need" The **wind** is howling, the **waves** crashing and **Jesus** came walking majestically upon the water! "Jesus went unto them, walking on the sea" in His absolute **supremacy** and **dominion!** THIS IS A MIRACLE! Those violent storm-stirred waters that were working against the **apostles** WERE IN SUBJECTION UNDER HIS FEET! Those waters that tossed their boat about WERE IN SUBJECTION UNDER HIS FEET! Those waters that could cause such devastation, and threatened the very life of the **apostles** WERE IN SUBJECTION UNDER HIS FEET! God's people need to see that **all storms are in subjection under His feet!**

### ② He Came With A Message:

**Matthew** and **Mark** both record that following the **apostle's** cry of fear, (as a result of their supposition), that **Jesus** **immediately** spoke unto them; "But straightway Jesus spake unto them" (**Matthew 14:27**), "And immediately He talked with them" (**Mark 6:50**). **Matthew, Mark, and John** all record what **Jesus** said unto them [**Matthew 14:27; Mark 6:50; John 6:20**]. These words were **thoughtful, caring, sympathetic, kind, compassionate,** and very much **needed!** HE CAME TO THEM IN THEIR TIME OF DISTRESS AND NEED WITH A MESSAGE SUITED TO THEIR CIRCUMSTANCES AND NEED!

○ A Message Of Courage:

"Be of good cheer" (**Matthew 14:27; Mark 6:50**). This was also the message to the **man sick of the palsy (Matthew 9:2)**, and to the **apostles** who were struggling with the news of the Lord's approaching departure, and the antagonism of the world, and their own weakness (**John 16:33**), and to **Paul** who was being threatened (**Acts 23:11**). This repeated message is a call to be **courageous** in the midst of trouble, perplexities, stress, anxieties, temptations, problems, difficulties, trials, infirmities, struggles, needs, and fears. In the very midst of these **Jesus** says "**Be of good cheer**" which conveys the idea of inward **strength** and **firmness!**

○ A Message Of Confidence:

"be not afraid" (**Matthew 14:27; Mark 6:50; John 6:20**). **Fear** is "a state of terror, and a state of alarm" and causes panic, distress, anxiety, dread, and worry. **Fear** is very **real** and it is **debilitating!** **Fear** will cloud the mind, making it difficult to think rationally, and will rob the individual of joy, peace, and assurance. This **fear** stems from a lack of faith (**Matthew 8:26**). **Fear** is overcome, when we get a firm grip upon the fact (or it gets a grip upon us), that **He is in control of every area of our lives**, that **He is God**, and that **He possesses all power!** Because of our proneness to **fear**, and because of the serious consequences of **fear**, the message "Fear not" and "be not afraid" is repeated to the people of God, throughout the Scripture.

○ A Message Of Power:

He said "**It is I**" (**Matthew 14:27; Mark 6:50; John 6:20**). "**It is I**" an emphatic personal pronoun, the same as when **Jesus** said "**I AM**" From those storm-tossed waters came the voice saying "**It is I**" the **infinite, eternal, omnipotent, all-knowing** One! "**It is I**" the **owner of all**, and the One who is **higher** and **greater** than all! "**I is I**" the one and only **Savior** of sinners, the **Shepherd** of the sheep, the **Refuge** in storm, the **Miracle Worker**, and the **Conqueror!** "**It is I**", in the midst of upheaval, instability, and uncertainty, these were words of relief, words of reassurance, and consolation and were spoken as a reason for them to be **courageous**, and **confident!** For the **saved, God** is the reason not to fear (**Genesis 15:1; 21:17; 26:24; 42:23; Exodus 20:20; Deuteronomy 31:6, 8; Isaiah 35:4; 41:13,14; 43:1, 5**).

○ A Message Of Invitation:

When **Peter** heard the voice of **Jesus**, he wanted to join Him on the water (**Matthew 14:28**), and **Jesus** said "**Come**" (**Matthew 14:29**). With the **winds** howling and swirling, and the **waves** crashing, **Jesus** walking on the storm-tossed waters says "**Come**" This was a call for **Peter to leave where he was, and to draw near to Christ!** **THIS WAS THE SOLUTION AND REMEDY TO THEIR FEAR!** "**Come**" this is a **gracious** and **merciful** word, a word containing great **opportunity** and **possibility!**

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When the storms are howling and the waves are crashing, and all appears to be out of control, and in jeopardy, we need to remember that **JESUS IS THE MASTER OF THE STORM**, and we need to see Him walking on our storm, realizing that **HE IS GREATER THAN THE STORM**, and in the midst of it all we need to hear and recognize His voice calling us to Himself!

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### III. THE POSSIBILITY THAT EXISTS IN THE STORM

#### ① **Peter Walks On The Stormy Sea:**

It is dark, and there is a storm on the sea, one violent wave after another, the winds are blowing, the boat is being tossed about, **Jesus** came in the darkness walking majestically upon the storm tossed waters, with a message for the **apostles** *“Be of good cheer; it is I, be not afraid”* **Peter** responded to the words of **Jesus**, and then **Jesus** invited **Peter** to come to Him. In obedience to **Christ’s** invitation, **Peter** stepped out of the boat into the raging waves, **AND WALKED ON HIS STORM TOWARD CHRIST** (**Matthew 14:29**). **Peter** began his **miraculous walk**, by **unquestioning, and unhesitating obedience to Christ’s invitation**, and **by faith, and a willingness to leave where he was, drawing near to Christ**. **Peter** continued his **miraculous walk** by **concentrating, and by focusing upon Christ!** With **Christ** as his focus, rather than the winds and the waves, **HE WAS ABLE TO WALK ON HIS STORM!** In the midst of the storm, this is a possibility! **THANK GOD FOR THE WATER WALKING TIMES!**

#### ② **Peter’s Failure:**

**Peter** is walking on the wind-stirred, turbulent waters, and his focus shifted from **Christ** to the storm, *“but when he saw the wind boisterous”* Physical sight began to dominate, and he is now focused upon the angry sea, and the white caps on the waves, and he hears the roaring of the wind, and **faith gave way to fear and panic**, and as a result **he began to sink** (**Matthew 14:30**). **HIS HUMANITY GOT IN THE WAY OF HIS FAITH!** Suddenly **A WALKING ON WATER TIME, BECAME A SINKING TIME!** Instead of conquering the storm, **HE IS CONQUERED BY THE STORM!** This is the result of **Peter’s** failure to stay focused upon **Christ**, which was due to a lack of faith, and to doubt (**Matthew 14:31**). As a result of a shift in focus, from **Christ**, to the **storm-tossed waters** there was uncertainty on **Peter’s** part.

#### ③ **The Remedy For Sinking Times:**

The remedy for such times is revealed in what happened next *“and beginning to sink, he cried, saying, Lord, save me”* (**Matthew 14:30**). As soon as **Peter** began to sink, he cried out, not to the **apostles** in the boat, but **HE REFOCUSED UPON CHRIST AND CRIED OUT TO HIM!** *“And immediately Jesus stretched forth His hand, and caught him”* (**Matthew 14:31**). It was not **Peter’s** swimming ability that got him out of trouble, but **Jesus took hold of him!** The difference between **walking on water times** and **sinking times** is a matter of faith! **REFOCUS UPON CHRIST IN SINKING TIMES, AND**

SINKING TIMES BECOME WALKING ON WATER TIMES! Whether it was a **walking on water time, or a sinking time, CHRIST WAS IN THE SAME PLACE!**

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**Jesus** came into their boat *“and the wind ceased” (Matthew 14:32)*. That wind that caused the waters to rise, *“ceased”* That wind that caused the waters to beat violently into that boat *“ceased”* That wind that caused their boat to be tossed about, that wind that was blowing against them *“ceased”* That wind that caused them such fatigue and fear *“ceased”* This led the **disciples** to worship and to further recognize-*“Of a truth thou art the Son of God” (Matthew 14:33)*. **THEY WORSHIPPED AND ACKNOWLEDGED CHRIST, AS A RESULT OF BEING IMPRESSED WITH HIS AWESOMENESS!** **Christ** is greater than the storm, and He enables His own, to walk as He walked on the storm!

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