

## Faith Through The Storm

- *Matthew 14:22-33*

- **When I read through the scriptures throughout each day, one of the things that I enjoy is to find a passage of scripture that not only speaks to me (which is incredibly important), but I love to find a passage that I can put to work immediately. Matthew 14 is one of those chapters.**
- **As we begin reading our passage this morning, the Bible says that Jesus constrained them to get in a ship and to go across the sea.**
  - This is one of those unique times where the men find themselves in a storm, not because they were out of the will of God, but because they were in the will of God.
  - Now the storm did not take Jesus by chance or by surprise. Yet knowing this, the Lord Jesus constrained them to get in a boat and He sent them into the teeth of a storm. Why? Because He wanted them to learn a lesson.
- **You ever notice how sometimes our greatest lessons are learned in the midst of the storms of life? These men were no different.**
  - The Bible tells us first of all that they were right in the midst, or in the middle, of the sea.
    - They are some guestimates that they were about five miles across the sea. In any manner, they're a great distance from the shore.
  - And if them being in the middle of the sea wasn't bad enough, the winds were stirring heavily.
    - These men are fighting the winds and waves, but they are going nowhere.
    - I can almost picture their faces white with fear, they're scared.
    - These might have been seasoned fishermen, but they were terrified, so it must have been some incredible storm.
  - And then the Bible just simply says that Jesus came walking on the water in the fourth watch of the night.
    - It's about 3 am, they have been fighting the waves all night, they are exhausted & yet fearful for their lives, and then Jesus comes walking across the water in the darkest part of their night.
    - Picture this if you will, they think it is over. They all but concluded they are going under. Jesus had told them to go over to the other side, but in the midst of the chaos & the swirling storm, land & safety seems so far from where they are right now.
  - Now let me say this. They are some of you right now that are exactly where these disciples were.
    - It seems like every one & everything is against you right now.
    - The more you try to work your way out of this problem you're in right now, it seems like you are gaining no ground.
    - It is so dark right now in your life, you don't see any hope of safely reaching your destination.
    - Maybe it's your home that is going through great turmoil this morning.
    - Perhaps it's a financial storm that you find yourself in today.
    - Or maybe your storm today is of a physical nature, or your storm might be related to your job.

- What I am getting at is this ... we are no different than these men here in Matthew 14. We all have storms in our life; but, whatever your storm today, I believe Jesus Christ can deliver you.
  - But wait a second. Many times we get side-tracked b/c of the fact that we are in a storm & we concentrate too much on the events around us instead of the One who controls the winds and waves.
    - Jesus could have rescued them by not letting them get in the storm to begin with; but He performed this miracle that it might be a lesson to those of us who live today.
    - He allowed the storm to come to them so that their faith & our faith could be strengthened.
    - II Corinthians 4:17-18 – “For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding *and* eternal weight of glory; While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen *are* temporal; but the things which are not seen *are* eternal.”
- **Look at v. 25, when did Jesus come to them? I think this is incredibly important. Did He come when they had everything under control? Did He come when things started to go south? No, He intentionally waited until they were clear they could do nothing else, & in walks Jesus during the darkest portion of their storm.**
- **But when Jesus finally arrives, they didn't even recognize Him, they thought it was a ghost. And Jesus apparently saw their fear & in v. 27 He commands them, “It is I; be not afraid.”**
  - Now I love this, b/c this could also be translated, “I Am; be not afraid.”
  - Why is that important? Because if it had been said by anyone else, they would have every reason in the world to still be fearful for their lives. But b/c it was Jesus, they could find comfort even in the midst of the storm.
  - By that statement, Jesus was reminding them of His power. “Don't worry about this storm. I am greater than this storm. You see these waves? Even the wind and the waves must obey Me.”
  - And so Jesus showed Himself & proved Himself in the middle of one of the greatest storms in their life ... and church, He will do the same for you today.
    - The same “I Am” that delivered these weary disciples is the same “I Am” that is able to deliver you today.
    - I am glad we serve a God today that does not change, Amen?
    - If He was over the winds & waves in the NT, He is still in control of the storms today.
- **The Bible records in v.25 that in the 4<sup>th</sup> watch of the night, Jesus came on the scene.**
  - 1. Focus On Jesus (vv.27-28)**
    - Have you ever wondered why Peter wanted to get out in the water?
      - Was he just doing it to how off in front of the others? Was he looking to show them what great faith he had?
      - I know my own heart, and if I know Peter, he understood that walking out in the middle of the sea, in the dark of night, even in the midst of a torrential storm with Jesus, was better than any safety he could ever find staying in the boat.
      - This storm was about to destroy them. It was not only going to wreck their vessel, but very well would likely take their lives. But the very thing that was about to engulf them was what brought Jesus to them. The storm they thought was going to drown them was for Jesus an open door to come in & bring comfort to their weary souls.

- Let me ask you a question this morning. How do you see Jesus? Do you see Him as One who is able to deliver you from the storms in your life? Jesus came that we might have victory both in this life & in the life to come.
  - o John 16:33 – “These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world.”

## **2. Listen To Jesus (vv.28-29a)**

- Even in the midst of chaos, even though the storm was beating down on Him, He listen to Jesus before He got out of the boat.
- There are times when a storm comes in our life that we try to grab the reigns or take matters into our own hands. Peter saw the value in waiting for the Lord’s command.

## **3. Obey Jesus (v.29)**

- I don’t believe that anyone would argue this morning that Peter exercised his faith in Matthew 14. But I want us to be clear on what faith is, especially in the storms of our life.
  - o Let’s be honest, no other man had ever walked on water before. Peter had certainly never walked on water before.
  - o So was there something special about Peter that gave him the ability to walk on the water with Jesus?
  - o Not at all, Peter just simply obeyed the Lord. You see, that is what faith really is.
    - Some people see faith as some great hope that is put in the unexplained. For Peter, his faith was wrapped up in obeying the Lord when He spoke.
    - The same goes for you & I today. We exercise our faith when we simply obey the Lord when He calls, trusting that He will see us through.

### **➤ If you are here this morning and you have never accepted Jesus Christ as your personal Savior, you need to trust in Him & obey the Lord today.**

- o You may think, “I have gone too far, He could never change my life.” Would you let Him in the boat today?
- o You have been fighting the storms of life too long on your own & if you don’t know Christ, you are in a storm of sin that you will never be able to fight on your own. Let Him in the boat today. Why don’t you come & accept Christ today.

### **➤ Maybe you are a Christian this morning, but you are in the storm of your life.**

- o You are doing your best to stay afloat, but the storms are beating down upon you & you have been too busy fighting the waves to even call upon Jesus.
- o Why don’t you come today & ask for Christ to step into your boat, to step into your life & take control of your storms?

### **➤ Maybe this morning you have someone on your heart that is in the middle of a storm right now, why don’t you take time to come & pray for them this morning.**