

Introduction: Today we continue our series on “The life of Jesus: Matthew edition” and we come to the unusual account of Jesus walking on water. Now up to this point we have seen Jesus’ birth and early life, His preparation for ministry with his baptism and temptation, his authority to teach and his power over the weather, and disease, and spiritual beings. Jesus has went through his solo public ministry as he was calling the disciples, and now he and his disciples are ministering together and as the word of Jesus grows and he demonstrates that he is more then a prophet, more then a teacher, but he is actually God in the flesh then the schemes and plots against him grow as well.

Before we dig into Matthew 14 and the account of Jesus walking on water lets pray.

Read the Word: Matthew 14:22

Ask the questions:

- What is going on
 - Look for clues
 - Immediately after what?
 - Death of John the Baptist Jesus tries to get alone
 - The crowd follows him Jesus taught and healed
 - Multiplies a five loaves and two fish
 - John 6 Jesus king
 - Reminiscent of the Devils temptation in Matthew 4

Paint the Picture:

- Jesus is emotionally drained
- The crowd is getting crazy
- Disciples sent away

Transition:

Lets see what happens next....

Read the Word: Matthew 14:23-24

Paint the picture:

- We get these two pictures
 - Jesus handles the crowd
 - Retires to the mountain to pray
 - Jesus' humanity
 - Jerome 398 How important it is to remember that this is the same Jesus who a few verses earlier renewed well over 5000 people. Yet when he needed to be renewed he went and found a quiet place to pray
 - Great reminder
 - There are a lot of things that allow us to “unplug” but only a few things that help us “recharge”.
- Meanwhile
 - The Disciples are out in the boat battling a storm
 - Tired
 - Wondering where Jesus is
 - Fighting a losing battle

Transition:

So you have Jesus up on the mountain being refreshed and renewed and the disciples battling to get to shore because that is where Jesus is and then something unexpected happens in the next verses.

Read the Word: Matthew 14:25-27

Paint the Picture:

- Early in the morning=the fourth watch of the night 3-6am
 - Disciples have been battling all night
 - Waiting for Jesus
 - Tired, Frustrated, Questioning
 - Similar to Matthew 8
- All of a sudden a figure comes hovering over the waters
 - Ancient people terrified of Sea
 - 1779 BCP
- Ghost
 - Cultural superstitions
 - Incompatible with OT life after death
- Jesus calls out
 - I AM

Ask the Questions:

- Why would Jesus come walking on water?
 - Already shown he has power over the storm
 - Could have just appeared
 - Jesus is again trying to show them something important about who he is
 - Genesis 1 Spirit of God hovering over the surface of the deep
 - John 1 he was with God in the beginning and through him all things were made
 - Job 9:8-11 “who alone stretched out the heavens and trampled the waves of the Sea; 9 who made the Bear and Orion, the Pleiades and the chambers of the south; who does great things beyond understanding, and marvelous things without number. Look, he passes by me, and I do not see him; he moves on, but I do not perceive him.”
 - When Jesus responds he says I AM. Ego A- Mee
 - Ex:3 Moses asks God who he should tell the people he is

Transition: Jesus comes walking to them in the midst of the storm with a declaration. Not only does he have power over the winds and the waves. He is the creator of them. He is the one Job was talking about. He was the one who hovered over the surface of the deep at the dawn of creation. This is bewildering to the disciples but to Jesus this is what he has been doing since the beginning. And when he declares I AM he is telling them that he is the one who came to Moses. He is the God of Abraham and Isaac and Jacob. Now Peter sees these signs and hears the message and does something unthinkable.

Read the Word: Matthew 14:28-29

Paint the picture/Ask the questions:

- Peter calls out to Jesus
 - What was Peter thinking
 - Not testing
 - Jesus had already commissioned the disciples to act on his behalf
 - Everything (Except remain sinless) Jesus had done he had empowered them to do
 - Matthew 14:16 “You feed them”
 - To see Jesus and join him in his work
- After Peter asks Jesus, Jesus says come
- Peter walks
 - Walking towards Jesus and his focus is on him.

Transition:

But as we will see in the next verses Peter’s walk would be pretty short lived.

Read the Word: Matthew 14:30-33

Paint the Picture:

- First he is walking towards Jesus
 - Noticed the strong wind
 - Frightened
 - “Lord save me”
- Immediately Jesus reached out
 - Cradling
 - Gentle rebuke
 - Jesus carrying Peter back
- As they step in the boat
 - The wind ceases
 - The disciples stand in awe
 - Declare the truth of who Jesus is

Ask the questions:

- Why did Peter sink?
 - He took his eyes off of Jesus
 - When he stepped out he was focused on Jesus
 - Propelled by a desire to be with him
 - Join him as he walked
 - Be empowered by the power of Jesus
 - When we noticed the strong winds
 - His desire to be with Jesus was over come with fear
 - His confidence in the power of Jesus not only to walk but to empower him to walk was replaced with doubt
 - Jerome (398)
 - “The faith of his heart was burning, but human weakness dragged him into the depths. Therefore, he is abandoned for a little while in temptation, that his faith may increase and he might understand that he has been saved not by the easiness of a request but by the Lord’s power.”
- But how did Jesus respond
 - Didn’t abandon him
 - Didn’t let him sink instead he scooped Peter up in his arms
 - Gently rebuked him
 - And carried him safely back to the boat
- Just as Jesus had found peace and refreshment in the presence of the Father in prayer
 - The disciples found peace and rest in the presence of Jesus
 - The responded by glorifying Jesus

Conclusion:

- Fascinating account
- Unusual account
- Why does it matter
- Three ways
 - Why is this important for my relationship with Jesus?
 - Why is this important for my relationship with others?
 - Why is this important for the Church?
- Why is this important for my relationship with Jesus?
 - We will fall and when we do Jesus will catch us.
 - Many chances to step out in faith
 - Jerome said it nicely “human weakness” will cause us to take our eyes off Jesus and focus on the storm
 - Jesus will be there to cradle us in his arms, gently rebuke us when we need it, and bring us back to recover
- Why is this important for my relationship with others
 - Relate with the people Jesus is interacting with but seek to imitate Jesus
 - We should catch others when they fall not abandon them to the depths
 - Just as we will fall others will too
 - Our job as the hands and feet of Jesus is to reach out and catch those who are struggling and then point them to Jesus sometimes with a gentle rebuke and sometimes with a cradle carry back to safety
- Why is this important for the Church
 - Almost every church Father made the same connection
 - The boat is the church
 - Many people were left on shore but the disciples were sent on a mission by Christ
 - Just as they earnestly waited his return we too await the return of our savior
 - Just like the disciples battling the waves we are in the fourth watch of the night
 - In the timeline of history the day has passed the night is long underway and the next big event on the horizon is the arrival of Jesus
 - When the church like Peter takes its eyes off Jesus and instead becomes enraptured in the storm of politics, cultural shifts, and worldly corruption then the church sinks into the depths and becomes one more object overcome by the waves.
 - St Catherine of Siena
 - Pope in France

- But when the church keeps its eyes fixed on Jesus and stays on the mission that Jesus has given us then we will be empowered by God to rise above the waves and point people
- The church is called to be a beacon of hope and truth in the night and we can only do that if we stay fixed on Jesus.