

7-29-18
LESSON FROM PETER WALKING ON THE WATER

Matthew 14:24 But the ship was now in the midst of the sea, tossed with waves: for the wind was contrary.

Matthew 14:25 And in the fourth watch of the night Jesus went unto them, walking on the sea.

Matthew 14:26 And when the disciples saw him walking on the sea, they were troubled, saying, It is a spirit; and they cried out for fear.

Matthew 14:27 But straightway Jesus spake unto them, saying, Be of good cheer; it is I; be not afraid.

Matthew 14:28 And Peter answered him and said, Lord, if it be thou, bid me come unto thee on the water.

Matthew 14:29 And he said, Come. And when Peter was come down out of the ship, he walked on the water, to go to Jesus.

Matthew 14:30 But when he saw the wind boisterous, he was afraid; and beginning to sink, he cried, saying, Lord, save me.

Matthew 14:31 And immediately Jesus stretched forth his hand, and caught him, and said unto him, O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?

Matthew 14:32 And when they were come into the ship, the wind ceased.

Matthew 14:33 Then they that were in the ship came and worshipped him, saying, Of a truth thou art the Son of God.

We can marvel at the greatness of some men in History and look at their achievements in awe. Great statesman have inspired many, and great entrepreneurs have built tremendous industries and edifices. When I read about so many that have gone before us, I marvel at the confidence and boldness of some of these. But the truth is you can read about all the great men of History but each one in the end was humbled by the fact they were but mortal. Each one suffered the same fate and demise.

Alexander the great, with lightning speed, conquered the known world and died of some unknown disease some even think he was poisoned.

Elvis Presley was the most famous of Rock n roll entertainers and was referred to as the King. It was said that when the Beatles visited the United States for the first time, they were asked what they would like to do. They said meet Elvis. When they meet him they sat speechless until finally Elvis looked at them and said. Look guys if you are just going to sit there and stare at me I'm going to bed! Lennon latter said, nothing really affected me until I heard Elvis. If there hadn't been an Elvis there never would have been the Beatles. Yet with all this greatness in the world's eyes, August 15th 1977 Elvis got up to go to the bathroom and told his girlfriend that he could not sleep and decided to go to the bathroom to read a book. The next day they found him dead on with his face on the floor. He was only 42.

I don't care how assertive, how confident, how assured a human being is. In the end every human being will be humbled by there humanity and mortality.

Hitler committed suicide in his bunker.

John Lennon was shot dead like a common criminal.

Howard Hughes, for all his billions, died a horrible death alone. It was written of him:

His reclusiveness and possible drug use made him practically unrecognizable. His hair, beard, fingernails, and toenails were long-his tall 6 ft 4 in (193 cm) frame now weighed barely 90 pounds (41 kg), and the FBI had to use fingerprints to conclusively identify the body. Howard Hughes' alias, John T. Conover, was used when his body arrived at a morgue in Houston on the day of his death.

What amazes me is the pride, arrogance, self reliance, and confidence that so many mortal people exhibit in this life.

Yet for all this, none of these men ever walked on water like humble Peter. But the lowly uneducated poor fisherman Peter did until he got looking at the water and relied on himself.

I started to meditate on how many proud and arrogant men have done much in their lifetime, and when you look at your own accomplishments you might feel like the psalmist in Psalm 73 when he marveled at the prosperity and excesses of the proud of this world. But I want you to note when Peter looked at Jesus and got his eyes on Jesus. God let this humble fisherman do something that Alexander the great never did, Elvis never did, Howard Hughes never did, nor any of the other self made men of this world did. HE WALKED ON WATER.. UNTIL HE GOT HIS EYES OFF OF JESUS.

Now look what happened. Peter said:

Matthew 14:28 And Peter answered him and said, Lord, if it be thou, bid me come unto thee on the water.

Matthew 14:29 And he said, Come. And when Peter was come down out of the ship, he walked on the water, to go to Jesus.

Peter asked the Lord if he could walk on water like Him, and the Lord said come on; walk.

And lo and behold Peter started to walk on the water as long as his confidence and faith was in the Lord.

But then:

Matthew 14:30 But when he saw the wind boisterous, he was afraid; and beginning to sink, he cried, saying, Lord, save me.

When he got his eyes off of the Lord and looked at the waves and the water and looked to himself then he started to sink.

Now what I noticed is that so many people of this world who seem to do great things are self centered and proud. Self confident, and it seems like all is well with them as the Psalmist said in Psalm 73, but these successes are all temporary.

As I meditated on all this, I realized that a true humble Christian will never be loved by this world, nor received of the world, nor exalted by the world. The reason why is that the ways of the world are the opposite of God's way.

The world exalts the proud.

The world looks to those who exalt themselves.

The world looks to those who look to themselves. Humanism.

The world loves those who are self confident.

But think about this - as great as any of these greats are, every one of them will someday sink.. The greatest of the greats will all fall and sink.

But note, when Peter did the miraculous, like our Lord. He walked on water when his confidence was not in himself but in the Lord. When he looked to himself he started to sink. When he called out to the Lord he was rescued.

Now let me suggest to you that there is a lesson to learn from this account and it is simply this:

If we are going to have confidence, have it in the Lord. HE IS OUR CONFIDENCE.

If there be any greatness let us have it in the Lord. HE ALONE IS GREAT.

If there is boasting any pride let us be proud of and boast in the Lord. He alone is to be exalted.

So this morning let us consider the lessons we can learn from Peter walking on water like our Lord:

I. LET THE LORD BE OUR CONFIDENCE.

Look what got into Peter to think he could walk on water.

What got into him was he was excited about what the Lord was doing and he did not take it upon himself to walk on water.

He said Lord bid me to come to thee. He said, if this is my Lord's doing He can even bid me to come to Him.

Look, in myself I have no confidence. The world is looking for people with self confidence. I have none.

My wife and I were looking at a documentary of great American figures.

Huey Long was a man many Americans do not know about. He stood out during the era of the 1930's, in the days of the great depression.. when the world was looking for strong leaders like Hitler, Mussolini, etc.. Then along came an American politician in Louisiana - he called himself the Kingfish. He had such confidence he went to law school and after only one year of college he asked the school to let him take the law exam, and so confident he was, that he passed it! He skipped the rest of his schooling. He probably would have been president in place of Roosevelt if he would have lived long enough. But he was assassinated and died at age 42.

As great an orator as he was, and as great as a politician as he was, he could not walk on water, and all his self will, pride, and confidence could not save him in the end.

I do not claim to be great, nor do I have much confidence in myself.

But I say to you that like Peter, I have a great Saviour and my confidence is totally in Him and if He tells me to do something as crazy as to walk on water, as long as my confidence is in Him, I will do it.

The moment I look to myself I will sink.

Where does your confidence lie? If it lies in your abilities you will sink.

If you look to yourself, when the waves come you will sink.

Matthew 14:30 But when he saw the wind boisterous, he was afraid; and beginning to sink, he cried, saying, Lord, save me.

William Carey once said.. "Expect great things from God; attempt great things for God...." Peter looked to Jesus and saw him do great things and expected that Jesus could help him do great things!

How is it that so many find such confidence in themselves, only to sink in the end. If we have confidence, let us have confidence in the LORD!

II. LET THE LORD BE OUR GREATNESS.

Matthew 14:28 And Peter answered him and said, Lord, if it be thou, bid me come unto thee on the water.

Matthew 14:29 And he said, Come. And when Peter was come down out of the ship, he walked on the water, to go to Jesus.

I have no greatness, but I have a great God.

I am no orator. I cannot preach. I have nothing to say in and of myself. But I have a great book to talk about and teach.

What I say is totally wrapped up in our great God and Jesus Christ.

He is great.

He is marvelous.

He alone is great.

Peter sees Jesus walking on the water and says this is great.

My Lord is great, marvelous, and magnificent. In the excitement of seeing His greatness he said, Lord bid me to do some great thing and he too walked on water.

Lord if this is indeed you and this is not a dream let me walk of the water bid me come to you. AND THE AMAZING THING IS, PETER DID IT!

1. WHATEVER WE DO THAT IS GREAT SHOULD BE TO AUTHENTICATE HIS GREATNESS.

Look, the Lord is looking to get His people to authenticate His greatness.

IF THAT BE YOU.

Do you realize people do not know who the Lord is?

People do not believe that Jesus is great.

People do really think that our Lord even did the things we read about.

This little prayer "LORD BID ME COME TO THEE." is what made Peter do something that none of the greats ever did.. Hitler, Alexander the great, Elvis, Howard Hughes, Huey Long, and the list could go on and on and on. None of these great and infamous men of the world, none of them, walked on water..

Carlton Lewis once told me a story about Joseph Smith the founder of the Mormon religion. He had a piece of property between Great Bend and the town of Susquehanna just off the river. The story went like this. Joseph Smith made himself out to be a prophet and advertised that he was going to walk on water. The night before some young people saw Joseph Smith strategically placing some rocks under the water to help him accomplish the miracle. The day came and a crowd of people showed up for the spectacle but what Joseph Smith did not know was that these same young people removed the rocks in the middle of the river. So when Joseph Smith started to walk on the water in the middle of the river when he stepped where he had placed the rocks he fell in and the crowd laughed. No wonder he had to leave the area, he was not able to fool a lot of people in that area. You would think Great Bend area would be a hot bed for Mormonism? It is not. Everybody knows everything about everybody in this area. Joseph Smith was not looking to exalt Jesus, he was looking to exalt Joseph Smith.

BUT PETER WALKED ON WATER AT THE BIDDING OF JESUS.

Look, in order that the name of Jesus be exalted and not my name or any mans name, God can do great things for us, I mean it may even seem like walking on the water.

I John 5:14 And this is the confidence that we have in him, that, if we ask any thing according to his will, he heareth us:

LORD BID ME. That is what we need to pray. If it be you, bid me.

What we need is to hear from God and step out in faith, believing and looking to Him and exalting Him.

And lo and behold, God will allow us to do some great thing just like Him.

2. WHEN WE TAKE THE CREDIT FOR THE GREAT THINGS HE ALLOWS US TO DO, THEN WE WILL START TO SINK.

Matthew 14:30 But when he saw the wind boisterous, he was afraid; and beginning to sink, he cried, saying, Lord, save me.

Matthew 14:31 And immediately Jesus stretched forth his hand, and caught him, and said unto him, O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?

Oh how we see this throughout history, when America looked to a great God for deliverance, America became great.

Now America is great and no longer looks to our Lord for His greatness, and America is beginning to sink.

Oh how we see this so often; A little church grows into being a big church and when it was little it needed a great saviour who could walk on water. As soon as that group of people set out and follow the Lord it seems like they themselves can walk on water. Then they begin to sink! Now they look to their numbers, their programs, their own devices and they sink!

III. IF THERE BE ANYTHING TO BOAST ABOUT LET US BOAST IN THE LORD.

HE IS OUR PRIDE.

HE IS OUR GLORY.

Isaiah 42:8 I am the LORD: that is my name: and my glory will I not give to another, neither my praise to graven images.

Jeremiah 9:23 Thus saith the LORD, Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might, let not the rich man glory in his riches:

Jeremiah 9:24 But let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me, that I am the LORD which exercise lovingkindness, judgment, and righteousness, in the earth: for in these things I delight, saith the LORD.

In Mark 6:48 we read a detail of the incident that is missing in Matthew 14. When Jesus was walking on the water it seemed like the Lord intended to just walk on by them and meet them on the other side.

Mark 6:48 And he saw them toiling in rowing; for the wind was contrary unto them: and about the fourth watch of the night he cometh unto them, walking upon the sea, *and would have passed by them.*

Now when Peter saw Jesus as if He would have passed by them, he said "if it is thee.. bid me to come to thee.."

Matthew 14:28 And Peter answered him and said, Lord, if it be thou, bid me come unto thee on the water.

Matthew 14:29 And he said, Come. And when Peter was come down out of the ship, he walked on the water, to go to Jesus.

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Matthew 14:31 And immediately Jesus stretched forth his hand, and caught him, and said unto him, O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?

Now you and I might think, whatever got into Peter's brain to think to ask the Lord to have him walk on water too. Notice, Jesus was going to just pass by him. But Peter did not want Jesus to go on without him. Lord wait up, he said, if that is you let me go with you, let me come to you , don't leave me behind. DO YOU KNOW, IF WE WANT A BLESSING, WE NEED TO PURSUE JESUS! Seek after Him, come to Him, seek Him, go after Him.

Then, in the excitement of the moment to meet up with Jesus, he started to walk on water until he realized how dangerous it was to do what he was doing, and he looked to himself to walk on water and he started to sink. Jesus said, no man can come to me except the father draw him! I think it is a miracle when anyone comes to Jesus and gets saved. Your salvation is as much a miracle as a man walking on water!!!!

Certainly we all know that we can't walk on water, and without the Lord we could not do that, THIS WE KNOW.

So we would have to give God the glory and credit when and if we did something like that, but we really do not understand is that without the Lord we can do nothing.

Do you know the Bible says, without Him you can do nothing.

John 15:5 I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: **for without me ye can do nothing.**

It is amazing that we think that we only need Him to walk on water.
The truth is that we can do nothing without Him.

I need the Lord throughout the day in everything that I do. I can accomplish nothing without Him.

I Thessalonians 5:17 Pray without ceasing.

Philippians 4:6 Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God.

We need to bid the Lord to be with us in everything, not just to walk on water.

Now our Lord is able to do everything we ask, or request. There is nothing too hard for Him. If He can walk on water He can solve your problems. Cry out to Him!

We need Him not to just do things that seem impossible like walking on water, but we need Him in everything we do. We need Him to be with us in everything, the little things, and the big things - in everything!

We need to be in a continual state of prayer in everything.
He needs to be with us in everything.

How often do we find ourselves sinking in the daily cares and problems of the day because we did not walk by faith like we should. We find ourselves sinking in the storms of this life. To get through the problems of the day it would seem to us that we need to walk on water.

As we go through this life storms will come, and we can be assured that the Lord has not left us or forsaken us. If we get our eyes on the storm we may find ourselves sinking. When we get our eyes on the Lord He will lift us up. If we trust Him through the storm it may seem at times that He even lets us walk on water to get through the storms of this life, the problems of the day, the circumstances that seem to be there to defeat us all appear like the vehement winds of the sea. It looks like the Lord is just going to pass us by and leave our ship to sink. But when we cry out for the Lord to help us He bids us come. Then deliverance will come, we conquer the wind, the waves, the sea. We actually start rising above our problem. But then we look at them again and begin to sink. Now we cry out again and the Lord sweeps us up in His arms and brings us back safely to the ship. ALL IS WELL, when the Lord is with us.

MATT 14:32 And when they were come into the ship, the wind ceased.

Is this not the story of our Christian life and struggles. Jesus could have just gotten on the ship with them. But He wanted them to experience the storm so they could learn to trust in Him. Peter did not let the Lord walk on by. He said, Lord I want to be with you, let me come to you and walk on the water. Jesus said come on. When Peter realized what he got himself into he began to sink. Look:

I can't pastor a church it is like walking on water.
Maybe trying to be a parent it is like walking on water.
Maybe trying to have a happy marriage seems like walking on water.
Maybe you are struggling financially and it seems you need to walk on water.
Maybe you, fill in the blank **"without Him we can do nothing."**

Don't go through this storm without the Lord in your life. Cry onto Him. He will save you!

Sometimes we have to admit that we are of so little faith. We can almost hear the Lord saying to us:

Matthew 14:31 ... " O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?"