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# ***STORMS***

An Expository study on  
Matthew 14:22-32

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# **Matthew 14:22**

## **“AND IMMEDIATELY HE MADE THE DISCIPLES GET INTO THE BOAT, AND GO AHEAD OF HIM TO THE OTHER SIDE,”**

To begin please pray and ask the Holy Spirit to speak clearly to your heart through this study. May He strengthen, encourage and comfort you through this vital area of Scripture. Now divide this verse into the seven parts.

- 1. “AND IMMEDIATELY”**
- 2. “HE MADE THE DISCIPLES”**
- 3. “HE” “DISCIPLES”**
- 4. “DISCIPLES” “BOAT,”**
- 5. “GET INTO THE BOAT,”**
- 6. “AND GO AHEAD OF HIM”**
- 7. “TO THE OTHER SIDE,”**

### **1. “AND IMMEDIATELY”**

With the Lord’s help let us begin studying number one in the following seven parts.

1) We begin with the word “AND.” From Matthew 14:19-21 Jesus had the disciples involved with feeding about five thousand men. It was evening and likely the twelve disciples were tired, considering there were about five thousand men to feed. That calculates to 416 people for each disciple to feed. Imagine each disciple having to feed 416 people. Imagine how tired the disciples would be. At first they would have had some energy, but after feeding, the first 100 people weariness would start to set in.

They would find out that in their own strength they could not do it. They would find out they needed God’s supernatural grace. It is interesting that the Bible does not record any of the people thanking the disciples for feeding them. Imagine how the disciples were feeling. Imagine how you would feel if you had to feed 416 people and no one thanked you. Imagine dormant anger in your heart coming to the surface.

Before ending this line of thought of the disciples being weary from feeding so many, the Holy Spirit reminds us of Judges 8:4, "WEARY YET PURSUING."

The disciples were weary yet kept pursuing the will of their Lord Jesus.

Are you weary from trials in life? Keep pursuing Jesus. But the story does not end there. It continues with "AND." This teaches us that whatever we have done for the Lord in the past is the past, and there is much more to do. We are never to become complacent. In Joshua 13:1 it says, "YOU ARE OLD AND ADVANCED IN YEARS, AND VERY MUCH OF THE LAND REMAINS TO BE POSSESSED." God reminded Joshua that he was old and still much of the land was yet to be conquered.

2) The word "AND" is a conjunction, which joins two parts of verse 14.

This observation concerning the word "AND" reflects the role of the Lord Jesus as described in 1 Timothy 2:5, "FOR THERE IS ONE GOD, AND ONE MEDIATOR ALSO BETWEEN GOD AND MEN, THE MAN CHRIST JESUS."

3) The word "AND" seems insignificant, but God chose it to be part of Scripture. In 2 Timothy 3:16 it says, "ALL SCRIPTURE IS INSPIRED BY GOD AND PROFITABLE FOR TEACHING, FOR REPROOF, FOR CORRECTION, FOR TRAINING IN RIGHTEOUSNESS."

4) The word "AND" almost seems weak, insignificant, and unimportant but it was chosen by God. As we study it, we may be tempted to think why bother with such an unimportant word. But this seemingly weak and unimportant word "AND" reflects 1 Corinthians 1:27, "BUT GOD CHOSE THE FOOLISH THINGS OF THE WORLD TO SHAME THE WISE. GOD CHOSE THE WEAK THINGS OF THE WORLD TO SHAME THE STRONG."

5) The word "AND" is the type of word we might be tempted to want to hastily skip over in the hope of finding something juicier in the following words.

This point points out that we are never to be hasty when reading the Bible. We are to take our time and meditate on the beauty of God's word.

6) The word "AND" which seems less important provides an important lesson. Have you ever stopped and analyzed the thoughts that enter your mind as you begin to read the Bible? One thought goes something like this, "There is nothing to get from what you are reading, you might just as well read something else or not even bother." Such thoughts cause us to skip over parts of the Bible because we believe a lie that suggests there is nothing to get from that part of the Bible, and only read certain favourite parts. If you are having trouble getting light from the Bible then stop, and pray. Ask the Lord to speak to you through His word. Any thoughts that come almost as an audible voice in the mind that suggest there is nothing to get out of reading the Bible is a lie. If we can read stories on the internet without a problem for hours but not read the Bible for ten minutes, then we have a severe problem.

7) The word "AND" caught our immediate attention, now we focus on the word "IMMEDIATELY." The disciples "IMMEDIATELY" obeyed what the Lord wanted them to do. They did not argue, complain, or question Him.

The word "IMMEDIATELY" shows there was no hesitation or delay. They did not say they would obey later. The word "IMMEDIATELY" conveys instant obedience. Delayed obedience is polite disobedience. Putting off obedience is off putting. The disciples did not waste time, they obeyed the Lord.

Wasting time is a waste of time.

## **2. "HE MADE THE DISCIPLES"**

In the second part of this verse let us examine the following seven points.

1) For a person to be "MADE" a disciple of Jesus Christ it requires the person to first be born again. If a person is not born again then they cannot be made a disciple of Jesus. They might be members of a church, sing in the choir, do all sorts of religious duties, but if they are not born again they are not disciples. In Acts 2:47 it says, "AND THE LORD WAS ADDING TO THEIR NUMBER DAY BY DAY THOSE WHO WERE BEING SAVED." If the Lord is not the one doing the adding then people are not saved. For a person to be "MADE" a disciple requires being born again. In John 3:3 it says, "TRULY, TRULY, I SAY TO YOU, UNLESS ONE IS BORN AGAIN, HE CANNOT SEE THE KINGDOM OF GOD." To be born again means a person has repented of their sins and surrendered their life to the Lord Jesus Christ.

2) For something to be "MADE" requires prayer and an idea. For something to be "MADE" requires a focus and a vision. For something to be "MADE" requires hard work and a lot of effort. For something to be "MADE" requires not listening to negative people. In Job 8:7 it says, "THOUGH YOUR BEGINNING WAS INSIGNIFICANT, YET YOUR END WILL INCREASE GREATLY."

3) For something of high quality to be "MADE" requires using very expensive materials. If cheap materials are used, or corners are cut in making something, it will show up in the final product. Poor quality products are made in less time compared to higher quality products. In the Old Testament, Saul and David serve as an example. There is no mention of Saul ever having gone through any storms prior to being "MADE" king in 1 Samuel 10:17-27. But David endured years of storms prior to when God "MADE" him king in 2 Samuel 5:4. Hastiness makes an inferior product. In the New Testament, the house built on the rock and the house built on sand serve as an example. The two houses may have looked very similar. In Matthew 7:24-27 storms hit both houses. The house "MADE" on the rock required much more time than a house "MADE" on sand. Hastiness produces an inferior product. An insipid gospel makes insipid saints.

4) For something to be "MADE" requires a change taking place. As you read this, realize that the paper these words are printed on was "MADE."

Paper is "MADE" from trees.

Paper is made soft from something hard.

Paper comes in a variety of shapes and colours.

Paper lays flat rather than standing as a tree does.

Paper goes through a change to be soft and pliable.

Paper being "MADE" depicts regeneration as described in Ezekiel 11:19, "I WILL REMOVE FROM THEM THEIR HEART OF STONE AND GIVE THEM A HEART OF FLESH."

5) For a person to be "MADE" a disciple means that person was not born a disciple of Jesus Christ.

No one is physically born a Christian.

No one is a Christian because of infant baptism.

No one is a Christian because their parents were.

No one is a Christian because of their good works.

No one is a Christian because they signed a paper stating they are a member of a particular church.

A person can be made a member of a church but it is only the Lord Jesus who can make a person a member of the body of Christ.

In Titus 3:5 it says, "HE SAVED US, NOT ON THE BASIS OF DEEDS WHICH WE HAVE DONE IN RIGHTEOUSNESS, BUT ACCORDING TO HIS MERCY, BY THE WASHING OF REGENERATION AND RENEWING BY THE HOLY SPIRIT."

6) For something to be "MADE" simply means it was not left half done.

Jesus said in John 19:30, "IT IS FINISHED." Jesus accomplished on the cross the task given Him by His Father. To have "MADE" something means not giving up or getting distracted or sidetracked when discouragement from people and circumstances come into your life. It is always too soon to quit. In Judges 8:4 it says, "WEARY YET PURSUING." One tactic the enemy tries to use against us is ridiculing thoughts in our minds. Behind ridiculing condemning thoughts is Satan. In 2 Corinthians 10:5 it says, "WE ARE TAKING EVERY THOUGHT CAPTIVE TO THE OBEDIENCE OF CHRIST."

Please note the word "TAKING" is present continuous.

The book of Nehemiah chapters 4,5 and 6 provide valuable insights on this theme.

7) We now conclude our first point by examining all the words "HE MADE THE DISCIPLES." It does not say they hoped they were disciples. It does not say they were trying to be disciples. It does not say people thought they were disciples. If you are not sure you are a disciple then it sounds like you are not a disciple. The words "HE MADE THE DISCIPLES" tell us a certain event took place at some point in the past.

In 1 Peter 1:23 it says, "FOR YOU HAVE BEEN BORN AGAIN NOT OF SEED WHICH IS PERISHABLE BUT IMPERISHABLE, THAT IS, THROUGH THE LIVING AND ABIDING WORD OF GOD." To be a disciple of Jesus Christ means repenting of sins and making Jesus Lord and Saviour.

In Acts 20:21 it says, "SOLEMNLY TESTIFYING TO BOTH JEWS AND GREEKS OF REPENTANCE TOWARDS GOD AND FAITH IN OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST."

### **3. "HE" "DISCIPLES"**

For the third part of this verse we shall study it in seven parts.

1) We begin with the word "HE." The word "HE" is composed of three vertical lines and four horizontal lines. The total number of lines is seven. The number seven expresses completeness. In Colossians 2:10 it says, "AND IN HIM YOU HAVE BEEN MADE COMPLETE, AND HE IS THE HEAD OVER ALL RULE AND AUTHORITY."

2) Let us consider a second thought about the word "HE" when this word is capitalized it is made of vertical and horizontal lines. What is formed when a vertical line and a horizontal line are joined? When the two cross they form a cross. In Romans 1:18 it says, "FOR THE WRATH OF GOD IS REVEALED FROM HEAVEN AGAINST ALL UNGODLINESS AND UNRIGHTEOUSNESS OF MEN WHO SUPPRESS THE TRUTH IN UNRIGHTEOUSNESS," In this verse a picture of the cross is revealed. "UNGODLINESS," vertical sin against God. "UNRIGHTEOUSNESS," horizontal sin against people. Sinful, rebellious human nature is quick to justify itself with words like "I have never hurt anybody." An excuse like that is horizontal. Vertical is sin against God.



In Exodus 20:3 it says, "YOU SHALL HAVE NO OTHER GODS BEFORE ME." The cross is seen in the Ten Commandments. The first four commandments are vertical. The last six commandments are horizontal. Do you feel cross when you remember what people did to you in the past? If you do, then remember what Jesus did for you on the cross. Do you think about what people did to you or about what Jesus did for you? Do you think about what people are doing to you or about what Jesus is doing for you? In Psalms 119:51 it says, "THE ARROGANT UTTERLY DERIDE ME, YET I DO NOT TURN ASIDE FROM THY LAW." In this verse David mentions the wrong that people were doing to him but he quickly turns his focus towards the Lord. In Galatians 6:14 it says, "MAY I NEVER BOAST EXCEPT IN THE CROSS OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST THROUGH WHICH THE WORLD HAS BEEN CRUCIFIED TO ME, AND I TO THE WORLD."

3) In this verse the word "HE" comes before the word "DISCIPLES." When God saved us and we were born again and began reading the Bible, the word "HE" came before the word "DISCIPLES" in this verse. As the years pass and we continue to daily read the Bible, the word "HE" comes before the word "DISCIPLES" in this verse. No matter what day or what hour or minute of the day we open the Bible and read this verse, the word "HE" comes before "DISCIPLES" in this verse. Another way of saying this is Jesus comes first.

Now let us honestly ask ourselves, does Jesus come first in our lives? Most likely we would say "HE" does. Some might even reply in an angry, self-defensive tone of voice "Of course "HE" comes first in my life."

If there is such a response, it reveals "HE" does not come first in your life.

If we indignantly answer "Of course," it reveals we are off course.

A coarse heart is off course.

Some say Jesus comes first in their lives, not because "HE" does come first in their lives but because that is the sort of response a professing believer is supposed to say. Does what the Scriptures say have the final say? Does what "HE" says come before what "DISCIPLES" say? Does what "HE" wants us to do come before what "DISCIPLES" want us to do? Does what "DISCIPLES" with strong personalities say make us waver and not pray? If we waver and do not pray, we stray. Let us use an example, for Bible exposition always needs to be practical. Imagine what "HE" says in Ephesians 5:25, "HUSBANDS, LOVE YOUR WIVES, JUST AS CHRIST ALSO LOVED THE CHURCH AND GAVE HIMSELF UP FOR HER." Another example of what "HE" says is in Judges 19:3, "THEN HER HUSBAND AROSE AND WENT AFTER HER TO SPEAK TENDERLY TO HER." Now compare what "HE" says with what some "DISCIPLES" might say about their wives. Some may say impolite jokes about their wives on Facebook or in some other public situation. Which will you put first? Which will you choose to follow? What "HE" says, or what carnal "DISCIPLES" say? Will you love your wife as Christ loved the church? Will you speak about her kindly or critically?

4) Another thought concerning the word "HE" and the word "DISCIPLES" is that we can see that "HE" is a smaller word than "DISCIPLES." As we consider this, please ask yourself these two questions. Do you see yourself smaller than other disciples? Do you see other disciples smaller than yourself?

If we think we are bigger, it shows we have a big head.

If we think we are bigger, it shows we have a big problem.

In 1 Corinthians 15:9 it says, "FOR I AM THE LEAST OF THE APOSTLES AND DO NOT EVEN DESERVE TO BE CALLED AN APOSTLE."

5) Another thought which we see in the order "HE" being mentioned before "DISCIPLES" is that Jesus led by example. In Mark 10:32 it says, "JESUS WAS WALKING ON AHEAD OF THEM" Then in Mark 14:42 Jesus said, "ARISE, LET US BE GOING" In both of these verses, Jesus is leading His disciples. The context of the verses is leading up to Jesus going to the cross. Jesus took the lead in going to die. A leader leads by dying to self. The only way God raises a man up is on a cross.

6) Now let us consider that the word "DISCIPLES" follows the word "HE." Disciples follow Jesus. To the degree that we follow the Bible is the degree that we follow Jesus Christ. "DISCIPLES" do what Jesus did.

7) Our final point is to understand what "DISCIPLES" are. According to the Thesaurus, he or she is a believer, enthusiast, follower, pupil, recruit, and trainee. All these words express some form of action. Being a disciple is not a spectator sport. So what does it mean to follow? It means to submit, obey, imitate, and shadow. About "DISCIPLES" the Lexicon says, "A learner, pupil. In the New Testament it is more than this, a follower, one who follows both the teacher and the teaching."

#### **4. "DISCIPLES" "BOAT,"**

The word "DISCIPLES" is plural. The word "BOAT" is singular. There were many disciples but only one boat. This is a picture of the church. In 1 Corinthians 12:12 it says, "FOR EVEN AS THE BODY IS ONE AND YET HAS MANY MEMBERS, AND ALL THE MEMBERS OF THE BODY, THOUGH THEY ARE MANY, ARE ONE BODY, SO ALSO IS CHRIST." The disciples did not all have the same personalities, yet they were all in the same "BOAT." In 1 Corinthians 12:14, it says, "NOW THE BODY IS NOT MADE UP OF ONE PART BUT OF MANY." Jesus sent the disciples in the same boat. The disciples were all in the same "BOAT" together. The disciples were not in boats. They were not independent from one another. To get to the other side they needed to help one another. If you do not think you need help, you really need help! Friend, for us to get to the other side we need one another. No one was exempt from obeying the Lord's direction. Each disciple's obedience to the Lord was a help to the other disciples in getting to the other side. Our obedience to the Lord is an encouragement to other disciples to keep going to the other side. Our obedience or disobedience to the Lord greatly affects the eternal destiny of many people. Jesus provided one "BOAT" to get to the other side. He did not provide "boats." Jesus provided one way to get to the other side. There was one way, not many ways to the other side. There is only one way to Heaven. There are not many ways. Jesus provided the way to the other side through His death on the cross and His resurrection from the dead. In Acts 4:12 it says, "SALVATION IS FOUND IN NO ONE ELSE, FOR THERE IS NO OTHER NAME UNDER HEAVEN GIVEN TO MEN BY WHICH WE MUST BE SAVED."

#### **5. "GET INTO THE BOAT,"**

We now focus on the words "GET INTO THE BOAT." Notice that Jesus did not ask them if they would mind getting into the boat. He made them get into the boat. Jesus was in charge, not the disciples. There is not any mention of a disciple arguing with the Lord for having to "GET INTO THE BOAT."

Do we argue with the Lord? How can we know if we argue with the Lord or not? If we make excuses for not obeying the Bible, then we are arguing with the Lord. When we read the Bible as mere information rather than application we can be certain we are arguing with the Lord. In James 1:22 it says, "DO NOT MERELY LISTEN TO THE WORD, AND SO DECEIVE YOURSELVES. DO WHAT IT SAYS." If Jesus is not in charge of your life, then you are not His disciple. If Jesus is not in control, then you are out of control. When Jesus told His disciples to "GET INTO THE BOAT," did any of them argue with the Lord? The Bible does not mention any arguing with Jesus. Do we argue with the word of God?

#### **6. "AND GO AHEAD OF HIM"**

We will now focus on the words "AND GO AHEAD OF HIM." We find out from these words what Jesus wanted His disciples to do after the words "DISCIPLES" and "HE." Or we can say it this way, disciples follow Jesus before they find out what He wants them to do. Disciples choose to follow even before the Lord lets them know what His plan is for them. Disciples do not demand Jesus tell them what He wants to do with their lives, then decide whether to or not to comply. Disciples do not put conditions on Jesus. In this verse the disciples did not say, "We will go over to the other side as long as it is smooth sailing all the way." May we consider that Jesus was willing to let the disciples go ahead of Him to the other side. He was willing to let them arrive first. He was willing to allow them to be first instead of Himself. He lets others go first. Do we let others be first or do we want to be first? How do you feel inside when someone else gets the recognition and not you? How do you feel inside when someone else is recognized for what you did? A disciple of Jesus will follow their Master's example. In Philippians 2:3 it says, "DO NOTHING FROM SELFISHNESS OR EMPTY CONCEIT, BUT WITH HUMILITY OF MIND LET EACH OF YOU REGARD ONE ANOTHER AS MORE IMPORTANT THAN HIMSELF."

#### **7. "TO THE OTHER SIDE,"**

We now will focus on the words "TO THE OTHER SIDE." The disciples did not know what would happen to them before they got "TO THE OTHER SIDE." In our lives we do not know what will happen to us before we get to the other side either. But on the basis of Scripture we know that storms are a part of a disciple's life. From the words "TO THE OTHER SIDE," we learn that the Lord had given them a goal, a vision, and a purpose. To reach their goal they needed to work together. In Mark 6:48 it says, "HE SAW THE DISCIPLES STRAINING AT THE OARS." It does not say He saw some of the disciples straining at the oars. For the disciples to reach their goal would mean they all had to work. There is no mention of any spectators being on the boat. Christianity is not a spectator sport. Being a disciple requires working together. In Matthew 14:19-21 the disciples helped distribute the five loaves and two fish to at least five thousand people. A.T. Robertson said, "The eaters included five thousand men besides the women and children." The twelve disciples helped feed at least four hundred and sixteen people each. How do you think they felt after everyone was fed? Do you think any of them felt fed up? How would you feel if you had to feed at least four hundred and sixteen people? Would you feel fed up? Imagine helping all those people, and Scripture does not mention even one person saying, "Thank you" to them. Perhaps people did thank them, but it is not mentioned. How do you feel if you help people and they do not thank you?

Do you feel fed up? Do you feel offended? Do you feel like you have been used? Perhaps you do not feel any of these negative emotions. It depends on how dead to self you are. If you are easily offended, it reveals an area of the old nature still needing to be crucified. Imagine going to a graveyard and slandering, insulting, and criticizing those in the graveyard. Do you think any of them would be fed up? Do you think any would feel offended? Do you think anyone would feel used? The reason they would feel none of these things is because they are dead. In Galatians 2:20 it says, "I HAVE BEEN CRUCIFIED WITH CHRIST; AND IT IS NO LONGER I WHO LIVE, BUT CHRIST LIVES IN ME; AND THE LIFE WHICH I NOW LIVE IN THE FLESH I LIVE BY FAITH IN THE SON OF GOD, WHO LOVED ME, AND DELIVERED HIMSELF UP FOR ME." You cannot hurt a dead man. The disciples did not know how long it would take to get "TO THE OTHER SIDE." Do you think they were looking forward to getting there? We can be sure they were looking forward to getting there after all they had been through. We do not know how long it will take us to get "TO THE OTHER SIDE." But for all of us who by the grace of God are faithfully obeying the Lord, we really look forward to getting there. Do we eagerly await the Lord's return? If there is no eagerness, then there is something seriously wrong. We may not know what the future holds, but we know who holds the future. Please read Philippians 1:21 and Hebrews 9:28.

# **Matthew 14:23**

## **“HE WENT UP TO THE MOUNTAIN BY HIMSELF TO PRAY; AND WHEN IT WAS EVENING, HE WAS THERE ALONE.”**

We begin this study with an awareness of desperately needing the Lord's help to glean truth from this verse. We will now prayerfully examine this verse in the following seven parts.

- 1. “HE WENT UP”**
- 2. “TO THE MOUNTAIN”**
- 3. “BY HIMSELF TO PRAY;”**
- 4. “TO PRAY;”**
- 5. “AND WHEN IT WAS EVENING,”**
- 6. “EVENING,”**
- 7. “HE WAS THERE ALONE.”**

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### **1. “HE WENT UP”**

In the NASB it says “HE WENT UP.” Why would Jesus go up a mountain to pray? Why did He not stay where He was at? It would not take any effort compared to climbing up a mountain. Jesus did not stay where He was at. He made the effort to go up a mountain. It does not take any effort to stay where you are at but it does take effort to climb higher. Are you content to stay where you are at, or do you want to go higher? May we consider another example of Jesus going up a mountain. It is found in Matthew 15: 29-30. In this account Jesus went along the sea of Galilee, then went up a mountain. We then see something quite remarkable. Great multitudes brought to Him the lame, crippled, blind, dumb and many others and He healed them. Imagine the scene, the crippled, blind, and dumb stumbling and crawling up a mountain. Some might have tripped and cut or bruised themselves. We do not know what time of year it was, but if it was summer it would be very hot. Imagine helping crippled people stumbling and crawling up the side of a mountain in the blazing heat. Each step was a step of faith. Each step up that mountain was a step down.

What I mean by this is they were humbling themselves with each step taken. To go up we have to go down. The way up is the way down. Why did Jesus not heal them while they were down by the sea? Perhaps many answers could be expounded on, but it seems that those who went up the mountain were determined to receive healing from the Lord. They expected to come down different than when they went up. They wanted to come to Jesus more than simply staying where it was comfortable. Often discomfort precedes comfort.

## **2. "TO THE MOUNTAIN"**

We now consider the words "TO THE MOUNTAIN." As we read verses 14 to 23, Jesus had just finished feeding five thousand men, aside from women and children. Scripture does not tell us how He felt after such a huge amount of work. But it may be reasonable to suggest that He was very tired from all His serving. Yet He made the effort to go up a mountain to pray. Would it not have been easier for Jesus to stay by the shore and pray? Surely it would be harder to go up a mountain. Yet Jesus took the harder of the two choices. Taking the hard way requires self-denial. Taking the easy way does not. Remember Jesus sent His disciples off. Then He dismissed the crowd. After Jesus had served everyone else He went off to pray. If we do not go off and pray, we go off. As a true leader He put Himself last. In Mark 9:35 Jesus taught what He had done in this verse, "IF ANYONE WANTS TO BE FIRST, HE MUST BE THE VERY LAST, AND THE SERVANT OF ALL." With Jesus there was the demonstration, then the proclamation. His life preached before His mouth did.

## **3. "BY HIMSELF TO PRAY;"**

Let us now study the words "BY HIMSELF TO PRAY." Jesus had just completed feeding thousands of people. Now He was returning to spend time in prayer with His Father. What Jesus did was foreshadowed in 1 Samuel 17:18. In that verse David's actions were a type of what Jesus did. David gave food to people then he was to bring back news to his father. Jesus gave food to people then spent time with His Father. Jesus had given food then He hungered to be with His Father. The fact Jesus wanted to go and pray was not a sign of weakness but rather of strength. A person who thinks he is strong and does not need to pray is the one who is really weak. There had been thousands of people present when food was being given out. But Jesus was alone praying. When free food is available there will be lots of people. But seldom are there a lot of people to pray. There were thousands to see the miracle of the five loaves and two fish. But only one person to pray. Today it is not much different.

## **4. "TO PRAY;"**

Let us now study the words "TO PRAY." In previous verses beginning with verse 19, we observe Jesus was serving by multiplying the five loaves and two fish. After working Jesus got alone to pray. This is an excellent example for us to apply in our daily lives. What do we do after working? Do we get alone and pray or sit in front of the TV and stray? If we do not pray we stray. Straying is a gradual process. A sobering example in Scripture of a person straying is Lot. In Genesis 13:12 it says, "LOT LIVED AMONG THE CITIES OF THE PLAIN AND PITCHED HIS TENTS NEAR SODOM." Then in Genesis 14:12 it says, "HE WAS LIVING IN SODOM." About five years had passed between these two glimpses into Lot's life. Lot's straying was gradual rather than sudden. A rift preceded a drift. In Hebrews 2:1 it says, "FOR THIS REASON WE MUST PAY MUCH

CLOSER ATTENTION TO WHAT WE HAVE HEARD, LEST WE DRIFT AWAY FROM IT.” Now we return to the words “TO PRAY.” The Lord felt the need of getting away at times from the multitudes into places of loneliness and prayer. Familiarity with the crowd only produces hardening. Familiarity with God issues in a perpetual re-sensitizing of the heart which prevents hardening.

#### **5. “AND WHEN IT WAS EVENING,”**

Let us now proceed to the words “AND WHEN IT WAS EVENING.” The NIV says “WHEN EVENING CAME.” The word “WHEN” speaks of a particular time. When we think of evening we think of a time when it is dark. Remember we have the word “WHEN” and not “if.” The word “WHEN” speaks of certainty. Dark times are a certain. Now please consider the very next verse 24 which says, “BATTERED BY THE WAVES.” The disciples were in a dark time and there was a storm. It was dark, and there was a storm. Dark times in life are characterized by storms. Although these disciples knew Jesus and had seen miracles, they still experienced dark times. Dark times are part of a disciple’s life, but dark times are but for a time.

#### **6. “EVENING,”**

Let us now continue on and go deeper by studying the word “EVENING.” As we touched on in our previous point, “EVENING” is a dark time. Whatever dark time you face in life, remember Jesus is near. The flesh wants to avoid dark times. In dark times do not try to run from them but run to Jesus. In John 8:12 it says, “I AM THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD.” Then Psalms 119:105 says, “THY WORD IS A LAMP TO MY FEET, AND A LIGHT TO MY PATH.” No matter how dark the circumstances are, the Lord Jesus provides light for us to walk in. Do not doubt in the dark what you have heard in the light. In dark times the temptation is to focus on our circumstances instead of the Lord. In dark times the temptation is to focus on the problem instead of the problem solver, Jesus Christ. In dark times the temptation is to allow our minds to dwell on problems and thus steal our peace. So how are we to act in dark times? Here are three verses to help protect our hearts in the midst of dark times. In the RSV Isaiah 26:3 says, “THOU DOST KEEP HIM IN PERFECT PEACE, WHOSE MIND IS STAYED ON THEE, BECAUSE HE TRUSTS IN THEE.” In the RSV Daniel 6:10 says, “PRAYED AND GAVE THANKS.” In a dark time Daniel prayed and gave thanks. In Acts 16:25 it says, “BUT ABOUT MIDNIGHT PAUL AND SILAS WERE PRAYING AND SINGING HYMNS TO GOD.” In a dark time Paul and Silas prayed and sang hymns. Giving thanks to God protects our hearts from bitterness and a critical spirit. In the midst of a dark time remember to take God’s side, expect a miracle, and to never, never, never give up.

#### **7. “HE WAS THERE ALONE.”**

We conclude our study of verse 23 by examining the words “HE WAS THERE ALONE.” In the dark evening, even Jesus was alone. Jesus was alone with His Father, for His Father alone knew what Jesus was going through. When you are in a dark time you may think you are all alone, and that no one else knows what you are going through. With Jesus being alone at a dark time occurred long before you were born. He knows what it is like to be alone in times of darkness. Wherever you are, He has already been there. Friend, when you feel all alone, remember He is there. In Philippians 4:5 it says, “THE LORD IS NEAR” and Hebrews 13:5 says, “I WILL NEVER LEAVE YOU OR FORSAKE YOU.”

# **Matthew 14:24**

## **“BUT THE BOAT WAS ALREADY A CONSIDERABLE DISTANCE FROM LAND, BUFFETED BY THE WAVES BECAUSE THE WIND WAS AGAINST IT.”**

Let us now move on and study this verse in seven parts as indicated below.

1. **“BUT THE BOAT”**
  2. **“A CONSIDERABLE DISTANCE FROM LAND,”**
  3. **“LAND,”**
  4. **“BUFFETED”**
  5. **“BUFFETED BY THE WAVES”**
  6. **“THE WAVES”**
  7. **“BECAUSE THE WIND WAS AGAINST IT.”**
- 

### **1. “BUT THE BOAT”**

The phrase “BUT THE BOAT” directs our attention towards “THE BOAT.”

This is the second time the word “BOAT” is mentioned, the first was in verse 22.

Why does the boat have any significance? Was there anything particularly attractive about the boat? From what we see in Scripture the boat was pretty much non-descript. It would have looked much the same as any other boat.

So why is the boat important? After all it is mentioned in the Bible, the best selling book in the world. Millions of people over the past twenty centuries have read about the boat. It seems the reason the boat had any significance was not



because of itself, but rather for what was in it. In a certain sense we are similar to that boat. On our own we have no significance. But as a result of God's mercy we have the greatest treasure there is right inside of us. In 2 Corinthians 4:6-7 it says, "FOR GOD, WHO SAID, 'LIGHT SHALL SHINE OUT OF DARKNESS,' IS THE ONE WHO HAS SHONE IN OUR HEARTS TO GIVE THE LIGHT OF THE KNOWLEDGE OF THE GLORY OF GOD IN THE FACE OF CHRIST. BUT WE HAVE THIS TREASURE IN EARTHEN VESSELS, THAT THE SURPASSING GREATNESS OF THE POWER MAY BE OF GOD AND NOT FROM OURSELVES." The disciples were in a boat in a storm. In Mark 6:48 it describes the disciples as "STRAINING AT THE OARS." The disciples were straining at the oars because they were obeying the Lord's instruction to go over to the other side. All of them were working to obey the Lord. Let us consider some of the disciples in "THE BOAT." They came from various backgrounds. Andrew, James, John, Peter, Philip, and Simon were fishermen. Matthew was a tax collector. Bartholomew was from royal blood and Luke was a physician. They were various characters, John had extraordinary faith, James the older was courageous. James the younger was the fiery type with a strong character. Jude was a violent nationalist. Peter had strong leadership qualities. Philip had a warm heart and a pessimistic head. Simon was a fanatical nationalist. Thomas was a pessimist. They also came from various educational backgrounds. Yet they were all together in "THE BOAT" doing the Lord's will. In the natural, many of them would have nothing in common. Some would even hate or envy one another. This applies to us as well. It is not our careers, characters, or credentials which unite us, but rather the fact that we are following Jesus Christ. In Romans 15:5 it reads, "MAY THE GOD WHO GIVES ENDURANCE AND ENCOURAGEMENT GIVE YOU A SPIRIT OF UNITY AMONG YOURSELVES AS YOU FOLLOW CHRIST JESUS." Genuine unity is not ecumenical, finding "common ground," or by "tolerance." Genuine unity is a fruit of obeying Jesus Christ. What type of people do we associate with? Those who are straining, or those who are stains? We conclude our first point by pointing out it was the Lord who put them in the boat. The Lord had put them in a situation they would not escape from. Have you ever found yourself in a situation you wanted to escape from but could not? The disciples were in a boat which they could not bolt from.

## **2. "A CONSIDERABLE DISTANCE FROM LAND."**

We now look at the words "A CONSIDERABLE DISTANCE FROM LAND."

The storm came when the disciples were far from the shore. What do you think the disciples would have done had the storm struck just as they were getting into the boat? What would you do? Very likely they would not have got in the boat. Very likely we would not have gotten in the boat either. The Lord does not show us what storms we will face in the future because we would rather run than row. When we get a jolt we often want to bolt.

## **3. "LAND,"**

Next we will look at the word "LAND." When this word is used, which "LAND" do you think it is referring to? Is it the land they had left or the land they were heading towards? It appears the land referred to is that which they had left behind. In the storm these new disciple's attention was on the land which they had left in the past rather than their attention being on the land they were heading for. Surely the land they left behind was better than what they were

going through. Remember that these disciples had been following Jesus for less than three years. When a new Christian is confronted with a storm, their life before conversion can have a strong pull on the emotions. This thought is reflected in Exodus 13:17, "WHEN PHARAOH LET THE PEOPLE GO, GOD DID NOT LEAD THEM ON THE ROAD THROUGH THE PHILISTINE COUNTRY, THOUGH THAT WAS SHORTER. FOR GOD SAID, 'IF THEY FACE WAR, THEY MIGHT CHANGE THEIR MINDS AND RETURN TO EGYPT.'"

Often a new disciple will have a wonderful honeymoon phase after their conversion. Often there is smooth sailing at the beginning. If storms came too soon after conversion, the new convert would likely be shipwrecked.

Do you know Christians that are young in their faith? Are they experiencing stormy circumstances? Please pray for and help them.

Please read Numbers 11:1-5 and Numbers 14:3.

#### **4. "BUFFETED"**

Next we will study the word "BUFFETED." The disciples were not spared from having to go through a storm. Earlier in this chapter the disciples had helped a lot of people. But not one of those people whom they had helped had to go through the storm they faced. Not one person they had helped was there to help.

What went through the disciples' minds knowing that all those people they had helped did not have to go through this horrific storm? What would go through your mind if you were one of them? Even Jesus was not there at that particular moment to help. When they were being battered and fearing for their lives, there was no one there to help them. Being battered is characterized by being betrayed. There will be storms we must face when there will be no one there to help. The disciples were battered by waves. In the storms we endure it is common to be battered by waves of discouragement and the feeling of being abandoned. We may be tempted to think it isn't fair. Sometimes it does not seem fair. Imagine helping people and then find yourself in a helpless situation.

Perhaps some of the disciples remembered what they said in Matthew 14:15, "SEND THE MULTITUDES AWAY THAT THEY MAY GO INTO THE VILLAGES." Some of them may have wished Jesus had sent them to their villages rather than sending them across the sea. Going across seemed like a cross.

Some of them if not all may have wished they were anywhere but where they were. Have you ever wished you were somewhere else than where you are, especially when you are in a storm? Some of them may have heard the devil's sick voice screaming accusations into their minds that they had served the Lord and this is where it had got them. Have you ever felt like this? As they were being buffeted, Jesus was praying. Jesus was praying on but they felt like they were being preyed on. The word "BUFFETED" is translated "TOSSED" in the KJV. The disciples were being tossed around. Have you ever felt you are being tossed around? The storm revealed how weak and frail the disciples were.

Storms that try to sink us bring to the surface our weaknesses.

In Proverbs 24:10 it says, "IF YOU FALTER IN TIMES OF TROUBLE, HOW SMALL IS YOUR STRENGTH." It is always too soon to give up.

#### **5. "BUFFETED BY THE WAVES"**

Let us now continue with the words "BUFFETED BY THE WAVES." Remember in verse 22 Jesus had the disciples get in a boat and set out for the other side. Then they found themselves in the middle of a terrible storm. They ran into a

storm while obeying the Lord. They did not run into a storm because of disobeying the Lord. Remember in verse 22 Jesus had given His disciple's a goal to "GO AHEAD OF HIM TO THE OTHER SIDE." Then they faced an unexpected storm to stop them from obeying. Storms try to stop us from obeying the Lord. Storms try to take our focus off the Lord and onto them. Storms try to stop us from focusing on long term goals. Storms come to make us coarse and drive us off course. When storms come, storm them by obeying the Lord. When attack comes, keep doing the will of the Father. When you get "BUFFETED BY THE WAVES," keep focused on the vision God has given you. Please see Mark 16:15, "AND HE SAID TO THEM, "GO INTO ALL CREATION AND PREACH THE GOSPEL TO ALL CREATION." In the book of Mark these are the first recorded words Jesus spoke after rising from the dead. Just days prior Jesus had gone through the most horrific storm imaginable. Yet His conversation was not about the terrible storm He had endured, but rather His focus was on the gospel being advanced. The vision Jesus had is to be ours. In John 18:37 it says, "FOR THIS I HAVE BEEN BORN, AND FOR THIS I HAVE COME INTO THE WORLD, TO BEAR WITNESS TO THE TRUTH." Jesus came to this world to bear witness to the truth. As believers who God has allowed to be born again, our vision is to be involved with bearing witness to the truth. Please pray and ask our Lord how He wants you to be involved with helping to bear witness to the truth. In Galatians 4:13 and Philemon 1:10 are descriptions of Paul suffering storms of illness and imprisonment, but with God's grace he kept witnessing for Jesus Christ. Storms try to divert our attention away from the desperate need for the gospel to advance. Our time, energy, talents and money are to be focused on helping advance the gospel. May our personal desires be fuel for the gospel. If anyone told you the Christian life was continuous smooth sailing they were lying. If we are not facing opposition it likely means we are opposing God's word.

## **6. "THE WAVES"**

Let us now continue on with our study of "THE WAVES." Waves are very unstable. Waves are always changing. Waves are something you cannot hold onto. In unstable changing circumstances the temptation is to lose sight of or forget the vision God has given you. Which has the most affect on you, unstable changing circumstances you cannot hold onto or the One who never changes, Jesus Christ, the One who is holding onto you? In Malachi 3:6 it says, "FOR I, THE LORD, DO NOT CHANGE." Continuing this thought, Derek Prince said, "One essential condition for a successful life is to have a clearly defined and steadily pursued objective. Without such an objective a person is like a boat drifting on the open sea, carried here and there by the winds of habit and the winds of circumstances, without any control over his or hers destiny." Please consider another example in the Bible concerning "THE WAVES." In Exodus 3:8 God's people had a vision, "TO BRING THEM UP FROM THAT LAND TO A GOOD AND SPACIOUS LAND, TO A LAND FLOWING WITH MILK AND HONEY." Then in Exodus 14:22-23 it says, "THE WATERS WERE LIKE A WALL TO THEM ON THEIR RIGHT HAND AND ON THEIR LEFT. THEN THE EGYPTIANS TOOK UP THE PURSUIT." Moses had a vision. Moses also had a lot of opposition. The opposition tried to stop him from fulfilling that vision. God caused "THE WAVES" to be walls on either side of God's people as they went towards the vision. When you have a vision, expect opposition.

Now let us apply the above verses into our Christian experience. In our lives we will face Red Seas before we reach the promised land. The Red Sea can come in the form of fears, past failures, discouragement, and laziness. Instead of seeing the sea, see the sea divided. We can see the sea divided through eyes of faith. Faith in what the Scriptures say rather than what anything says contrary to what the Scriptures say. Through faith you can wave at the waves. The Egyptians were pursuing God's people. In the Old Testament, Egypt is a type of the world. The world with all its lusts and vain pursuits pursue and attempt to stop you from completing the vision God has given you. In Matthew 14:24, imagine the scene on the boat. The disciple's clothes soaking wet with cargo sliding and falling all around them. The crashing sound of waves pounding the boat and spray from the waves relentlessly blinding their vision. They were in the dark of night in a very dark situation. They were only able to see the unrelenting sea. They did not know when the storm would finish. They did not know if the storm would finish them. They did not know if they would end up on the bottom of the sea before seeing an end to the storm. Storms seem like they will never end, but they come to pass, not to stay.

#### **7. "BECAUSE THE WIND WAS AGAINST IT."**

We now conclude our brief study of verse 24 by examining the words "BECAUSE THE WIND WAS AGAINST IT." The word "BECAUSE" joins the two statements on either side. The boat carrying the disciples was being battered, attacked, punished and pounded "BECAUSE THE WIND WAS AGAINST IT." Remember that the wind was not behind them, driving them to the other side. But was in front of them, trying to stop them from reaching the other side. Notice the word "AGAINST." It means to oppose, anti, contrary, and adverse. In Matthew 12:30 Jesus said, "HE WHO IS NOT WITH ME IS AGAINST ME." As the disciples obeyed Jesus they encountered violent opposition. The fact that the wind kept coming against them shows they were heading into it and did not give up. What would have happened if they had grown weary and given up? The wind would have carried them away from reaching the other side. If the wind is behind you instead of against you, it is time to seriously ask yourself why. As we go on as Christians the opposition does not decrease. If opposition is decreasing in your life, it very likely indicates that you are not going forward. If we do not think we need Him, that is when we most desperately do need Him. If we are not conscious of needing the Lord's help, it is an indication of being spiritually unconscious. How long has it been since you knew you desperately needed the Lord's help?

Remember that the assailing wind was not just trying to keep the boat stationary, but rather was pushing it backward. Let us not be under any illusions, contrary winds in our lives have one purpose. That one purpose is to cause us to go back. Storms try to make us backslide. J. Dwight Pentecost said, "The storm had prevented them from fulfilling Christ's command." Storms come into our lives to try to stop us from fulfilling God's will for us. If we do not experience resistance, it shows we are not resisting. If we are not having resistance it is likely because we are resisting the Lord.

The disciples had to go against the wind to reach the other side. In the Christian life we have to go against the wind to reach the other side. Storms make us better or bitter. Leonard Ravenhill said, "To say that the Christian life is an easy road smells either of compromise or ignorance" Please read Acts 14:22, James 4:7, 1 Peter 5:8-9.

# Matthew 14:25

## “AND IN THE FOURTH WATCH OF THE NIGHT HE CAME TO THEM, WALKING ON THE SEA.”

We will study this verse with an attitude of prayer, asking the Holy Spirit to bring light into our hearts through what He is showing us.

1. “AND IN”
  2. “THE FOURTH WATCH”
  3. “THE NIGHT HE CAME”
  4. “HE CAME TO THEM,”
  5. “NIGHT HE”
  6. “WALKING”
  7. “WALKING ON THE SEA.”
- 

### 1. “AND IN”

We begin our study with the words “AND IN.” The word “AND” continues on from the previous verse. The last verse was pretty bad “AND IN” this verse the darkness only continues. Have you ever experienced times like this?

When things are so rough “AND” they just keep getting darker?

When discouragements come wave after wave. And you do not think you can handle seeing another “AND.” If you have not experienced this yet, very likely you will as you obey Jesus. But be encouraged, for it is not the force of the gale that counts, but rather the set of the sail. “AND” now we will consider seven things about the word “IN.” The disciples were “IN” a raging sea, “IN” a boat with nowhere to escape, “IN” big trouble, “IN” a violent storm, “IN” darkness for a long time, “IN” a desperate situation, “IN” need of immediate help.

Can you relate to the predicament they were “IN”?

### 2. THE FOURTH WATCH”

Let us move on and study the words “THE FORTH WATCH.” The fourth watch was between 3 a.m. and 6 a.m. Jesus came to help His disciples in the last part of the night. Why did Jesus wait so long to come and save them? Here are two reasons. First, Jesus was praying before coming to them. Prayer precedes performing. Second, waiting revealed what was dormant in the disciples’ hearts.

An example of waiting, which brought out what is in the heart is Exodus 32:1 "WHEN THE PEOPLE SAW THAT MOSES WAS SO LONG IN COMING DOWN FROM THE MOUNTAIN, THEY GATHERED AROUND AARON AND SAID, "COME, MAKE US GODS." Waiting revealed idolatry in their heart.

Delays discerns what is dormant in the heart. Delays discerns delusions. If we reject Truth, we accept deception. When light is rejected, darkness is accepted. When Jesus is rejected, Satan is accepted. The spirit can wait, the flesh cannot. Remember the storm had been assailing them for hours. But Jesus waited until the end to help. Do you think the disciples would have liked Him to come earlier to help? It is vital that we realize the disciples did not give up. They kept resisting the wind. In storms it is vital we keep resisting the wind. In storms it is always too soon to give up. Delayed deliverance is a useful tool for producing endurance. Please read Romans 5:3-5.

### **3. "THE NIGHT HE CAME."**

We now look at the words "THE NIGHT HE CAME." These words wonderfully capture the words of John 1:5 "AND THE LIGHT SHINES IN THE DARKNESS." It certainly is good this verse did not end after the word "NIGHT." It would have left the disciples in darkness. But the sentence did not end there. The Lord did not leave them in darkness, "HE CAME" to them. You may be experiencing a time of darkness in your life, but praise God that is not the end of the sentence. The Lord has not sentenced you to darkness. He will set you free. Do not doubt in the dark what you heard in the light.

### **4. "HE CAME TO THEM,"**

Next we study the words "HE CAME TO THEM." There is a wealth of precious truth packed into these four one syllable words. To uncover some of it we will divide this section of verse 25 into seven parts. Then notice that our seventh point will be divided into seven more points.

1) The words "HE CAME TO THEM" are a wonderful picture of the gospel. Jesus took the initiative to come to these people. Jesus came to save them. In verse 23 Jesus was praying to His Father. Jesus came from His Father to save people. In Luke 19:10 it says "FOR THE SON OF MAN HAS COME TO SEEK AND TO SAVE THAT WHICH WAS LOST."

2) Jesus came to people who knew they needed help. Jesus came to people who were desperate. Notice Jesus did not come to them when they were only a few feet from shore. The disciples were not desperate then. They would not have realized they needed help. Jesus helps those who are desperate. Jesus helps those who know they need help. There is a foolish, unscriptural saying, "God helps those who help themselves." The fact is Jesus helps those who realize they cannot help themselves. When we do not think we need Jesus is when we desperately do need Him. In Judges 3:9 it says, "BUT WHEN THEY CRIED OUT TO THE LORD, HE RAISED UP FOR THEM A DELIVERER." The Lord helped His people when they were desperate, and cried out to Him for help.

3) What we see from the words "HE CAME TO THEM" is that they did not come to Him. They were separated from Him. They were unable to come to Him. They needed a bridge from the boat to where Jesus was at. Their plight is a picture of the human race. Mankind is separated from God because of sin. Mankind is unable to come to God and the only bridge between God and sinful people is the cross. The blood of Jesus Christ is the only remedy for sin.

4) They were in darkness without Him. This statement expresses the state of lost sinners. Every sinner is in darkness without Him. Jesus came down from the mountain and saved them. Jesus came down to save. Jesus came down to their level, sea level. Jesus met them where they were at. Jesus came down, He humbled Himself. He came down to our level to meet us where we were at. Please read Philippians 2:5-8.

5) Now consider when Jesus came to them. "HE CAME TO THEM" when they were in trouble. Jesus came to them when they were in a crisis in their lives. They were in hot water. For many of us we can relate to this. For many of us we were in trouble, crisis, or hot water when Jesus came and saved us.

6) Again we consider that "HE CAME TO THEM" when they were in a real mess. Imagine what they looked like being on a boat in a raging storm. Imagine them soaked, and some with clothes ripped. When "HE CAME TO THEM" they were not all sitting nice and neat and looking respectable. They would have looked despicable, not respectable. Jesus did not wait for them to sort out the ship. Jesus came to sort them out. Jesus did not wait for them to try to reform themselves before He came to save them. The same is true for us. No one can reform themselves. No one has perfect form, but let Jesus form you perfectly. Jesus does not wait for sinners to clean up their act. Jesus wants sinners to stop acting and allow Him to clean them up.

7) For our seventh point we point to seven thoughts related to the "HE" and "THEM."

1. When we first look at the word "THEM" we might only see "THEM" and not "HE" inside "THEM." When people look at us do they only see us or do they see Him in us?

2. Notice the word "HE" is in the word "THEM." To simplify it we can say "HE" is in "THEM." Is "HE" in you? This point points to the gospel. In Romans 8:10 it says, "AND IF CHRIST IS IN YOU, THOUGH THE BODY IS DEAD BECAUSE OF SIN, YET THE SPIRIT IS ALIVE BECAUSE OF RIGHTEOUSNESS." Further verses relating to this are Colossians 1:27, and 1 John 3:24.

3. Another thought is the word "THEM" needs the word "HE" to be complete. For "THEM" and for us we need Jesus to be complete. In Colossians 1:28 it says, "AND WE PROCLAIM HIM, ADMONISHING EVERY MAN AND TEACHING EVERY MAN WITH ALL WISDOM, THAT WE MAY PRESENT EVERY MAN COMPLETE IN CHRIST."

4. Another thought to notice about the word "THEM" is that if "HE" is taken out of the middle of the word an empty space is left inside. This observation depicts a person who is not born again. People without Jesus Christ in their lives are empty and seek various means to try to fill that emptiness that only Christ can fill.

5. Another thought to notice about "THEM" is that "HE" is in the centre of the word. Is "HE" in the centre of our lives? In Philippians 1:21 it says, "FOR TO ME, TO LIVE IS CHRIST."

6. Another thought to notice about the word "THEM" is a "T" and "M" are on either side of the word "HE" to make the word. Without "HE" there would be no "THEM." This observation is a picture of our lives. Without Jesus in our lives we are nothing. In John 15:5 it says, "APART FROM ME YOU CAN DO NOTHING."

7. This final thought about the word "THEM" is to notice the letter "T" is separated from the letter "M" and it is "HE" who joins them together.

This illustrates that sinful humans are separated from God and it is only "HE" who can join them together. It is only the blood of Jesus that can cleanse the human race from sin. In 1 Timothy 2:5 it says, "FOR THERE IS ONE GOD AND ONE MEDIATOR ALSO BETWEEN GOD AND MEN, THE MAN CHRIST JESUS."

#### **5. "NIGHT HE"**

Next we give attention to the words "NIGHT HE." As we examine these two words we might be inclined to think, what is there in them that we can possibly learn from. Let us begin by realizing that "NIGHT" is when it is dark. Next we recall that the word "HE" is referring to Jesus. In John 8:12 it says, "I AM THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD;" Jesus is the light of the world. From these two words "NIGHT" and "HE" we can glean they can describe darkness and light. These two words describe our state before and after God saved us. Before Jesus saved us we were in darkness and now we are in light. In Ephesians 5:8 it says, "FOR YOU WERE FORMERLY DARKNESS, BUT NOW YOU ARE LIGHT IN THE LORD."

#### **6. "WALKING"**

Now we move on to study the word "WALKING." Notice it says Jesus was "WALKING" rather than saying He was running. When we read Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, we do not see any references to Jesus ever running. In Matthew 4:18 it says, "JESUS WAS WALKING BESIDE THE SEA." In Mark 10:32 it says, "JESUS WAS WALKING ON AHEAD OF THEM." In Luke 6:1 it says, "JESUS WAS WALKING THROUGH SOME GRAINFIELDS." In John 7:1 it says, "JESUS WAS WALKING IN GALILEE." With Jesus "WALKING," it reflected He had peace inside even though there was a storm outside. When we run rather than walk it often reveals a storm inside our thoughts. Jesus was "WALKING" on top of a very turbulent situation. The way for us to walk on top of turbulent situations is to do what 2 Corinthians 5:7 says, "FOR WE WALK BY FAITH, NOT BY SIGHT."

#### **7. "WALKING ON THE SEA."**

We now complete this verse with the words "WALKING ON THE SEA." The miracle that Jesus did was something the disciples had never seen before. They had seen Him heal the sick, cast out demons, and feed thousands of people. But this was something they had no previous experiences to relate to. The disciples had no past experiences to rely on. They only had Jesus to rely on. If you are going through a storm, you might have no previous experiences to rely on, but you can rely on Jesus. What Jesus was doing was impossible for man to do. The fact that Jesus walked on water proved He is God, for Luke 1:37 says, "FOR NOTHING IS IMPOSSIBLE WITH GOD." We also learn of Jesus' divine power in Job 9:8 "HE ALONE STRETCHES OUT THE HEAVENS AND TREADS ON THE WAVES OF THE SEA." Another aspect of the words "WALKING ON THE SEA" is Jesus did not just suddenly appear at the boat. He walked down the mountain, to the shore, then to the ship. The Bible does not say how long it took Him to walk from the shore, but it took time. When Jesus took the first step the ship was far away, but with each step Jesus came closer until He arrived. Jesus walked step by step. Walking on water was in steps. Jesus was praying before the miracle took place. Miracles start with prayer. Jesus came down from the mountain before He walked on the water. Miracles require coming down, to humble ourselves. Miracles need a first step. Miracles come one step at a time.



# **Matthew 14:26**

## **“AND WHEN THE DISCIPLES SAW HIM WALKING ON THE SEA, THEY WERE FRIGHTENED, SAYING, “IT IS A GHOST!” AND THEY CRIED OUT FOR FEAR.”**

Please prayerfully study these points. In point number three are some quotes which we would be wise to take very seriously.

- 1. “AND WHEN THE DISCIPLES SAW HIM”**
- 2. “THE DISCIPLES SAW HIM WALKING ON THE SEA”**
- 3. “SAW HIM WALKING ON THE SEA”...“IT IS A GHOST!”**
- 4. “THEY WERE FRIGHTENED, SAYING,”**
- 5. “IT IS”**
- 6. “A GHOST!”**
- 7. “AND THEY CRIED OUT FOR FEAR.”**

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### **1. “AND WHEN THE DISCIPLES SAW HIM”**

In verse 26 the words “AND WHEN THE DISCIPLES SAW HIM,” give a sense of expectation. Until then all the disciples saw were their problems. Now they saw their problem solver. Understand that all the disciples could see until then were miles of raging sea. Then one solitary figure appeared. He would seem so small compared to the stormy sea. Have you found when you are in a storm it seems larger than Jesus? When we go through storms, do we look at the problem, or Jesus the problem solver? Fix your eyes on Jesus and see your problem fixed.

## **2. “THE DISCIPLES SAW HIM WALKING ON THE SEA,”**

We will now examine the words “THE DISCIPLES SAW HIM WALKING ON THE SEA.” They saw what Jesus was doing. People see what we are doing. The disciples were frightened because they thought He was a ghost. Why did they think He was a ghost? They had seen Him only a few hours before feeding thousands of people. Their view of Jesus was influenced by their past. At some point the disciples had heard that ghosts appearing at night was a sign of shipwreck. Finis J. Dake said, “To sailors it has always been a sign of shipwreck.” Their past affected their present. Our past can affect the way we respond to situations in the present. In verse 27 Jesus dealt with their wrong reactions. He will help us as well, if we are willing to admit we need help.

## **3. “SAW HIM WALKING ON THE SEA”...“IT IS A GHOST!”**

Please look at the words “SAW HIM WALKING ON THE SEA” and “IT IS A GHOST!” The disciples made an error in thinking He was a ghost. They were in error as a result of having a wrong view of Jesus. The error was a result of not knowing who Jesus was or the power He had. The Wuest translation of Matthew 22:29 reads, “YOU ARE IN ERROR, NOT KNOWING THE SCRIPTURES NOR THE POWER OF GOD.”

The primary cause of religious error is a distorted view of who Jesus Christ is, and what He did. Error comes packaged in various extremes. False religions and cults detract from the Deity of Jesus Christ, and His finished work on the cross and resurrection.

Then there is Catholicism, which exaggerates truth beyond its Scriptural boundaries. It adds to the Deity of Jesus Christ and His finished work on the cross. One of the finest Bible teachers of the 20th century in the English speaking world was Dr. Martyn Lloyd-Jones. In speaking about Catholicism, he said it “is not so much a matter of ‘denial’ of the truth, but rather such an addition to the truth that eventually it becomes a departure from it.”

Concerning the Roman Catholic Mass, C.H. Spurgeon said, “The Mass is a mass of abominations, a mass of hell’s own concocting, a crying insult against the Lord of glory. It is not to be spoken of in terms but those of horror and detestation.”

To present day readers these quotes might come across as quite a shock, particularly when Catholicism is incorrectly described as a Christian denomination. Roman Catholicism is like a chameleon which adapts outwardly to the culture it is in and seeks “common ground.” Sadly its many false doctrines have not been renounced. Please read Isaiah 32:6, Matthew 16:12, 2 Corinthians 11:4, Galatians 1:6-8, and Colossians 2:8.

## **4. “THEY WERE FRIGHTENED, SAYING,”**

Let us move unto the words “THEY WERE FRIGHTENED, SAYING.”

The disciples emotional state was reflected in their words. They were fearful, and they cried out in fear. Another example of a storm revealing a similar pattern is in Jonah 1:5, “THEN THE SAILORS BECAME AFRAID, AND EVERY MAN CRIED.” Our emotional state is reflected in the words we speak. If we are discouraged, discouragement is discerned by listening to the words we speak and the tone of voice. If we have bitterness in our hearts it is discerned by listening to the words we speak and our tone of voice. If we hear criticism coming from our mouth there is pride in our hearts.

Please read Number 21:4-5 and Nehemiah 4:10.

The words we speak, and tone of voice discerns the condition of our hearts. In Matthew 12:34 it says, "FOR OUT OF THE OVERFLOW OF THE HEART THE MOUTH SPEAKS." Practice listening to the words we speak and the tone of voice they are spoken in. This shows if we are spiritually healthy.

### **5. "IT IS"**

The words "IT IS" speak with certainty. The words "IT IS" speak with conviction. The words "IT IS" can speak with presumption. The disciples believed something but they were wrong. The Bible records the mistake that the disciples made. The Bible does not conceal that the disciples were wrong. For the past two thousand years, Christians have read the Bible and learned that disciples made a mistake. Not only made a mistake, but Matthew, one of the disciples wrote about it. Do we ever make mistakes? Do we ever admit to making mistakes? Do you find it hard to say you make mistakes? Do you find it easy to say other people make mistakes? It is a mistake to say we never make mistakes. Now contrast the words "IT IS A GHOST" with John 21:7, "IT IS THE LORD." In both situations is a miracle. In Matthew 14:26 is the miracle of Jesus walking on water. In John 21:7 Peter responded to a miracle, Jesus caused the disciples to net 153 fish. In Matthew 14:26 Peter was wrong about Jesus. In John 21:7 Peter was right about Jesus. Peter had been wrong in his thinking about Jesus being there to help, but he changed. We might be the same as Peter. We might think Jesus does not want to help us, but He does, and will.

### **6. "A GHOST!"**

Now let us look at the words "A GHOST!" The only words uttered in this verse by the disciples were negative ones. For sailors to see what they thought was a ghost meant shipwreck. In the storm the disciples thought the worst. Earlier in this verse the disciples had seen the Lord Jesus. But they did not believe it was Him coming to help them. Had they forgotten what they saw the Lord do in the past? When we are in storms do we forget what the Lord has done in the past? If you are presently in a storm, stop and consider what great things the Lord has done for you in the past. In 1 Samuel 12:24 it says, "CONSIDER WHAT GREAT THINGS HE HAS DONE FOR YOU." Before we entertain thoughts like "Why did they not know Jesus would come and save them?" Let us be honest. Are we not much like them? Do we not often think the worst rather than the best when we are in storms? Do we sometimes think the Lord wants to hurt us rather than help us? The disciples believed Jesus was a ghost. Yet what they believed was not true. In the midst of a storm the disciples believed something that was not true. The disciples doubted it was Jesus. In the midst of storms we are tempted to believe things that are not true. In the midst of storms we are tempted to doubt the truth. Doubt doubts and not the truth. In verse 22 Jesus had given directions to go over to the other side. We know that it was still light out when Jesus sent them because evening came after in verse 23. Jesus had spoken when it was light, and then it got dark. With darkness comes doubt. Do not doubt in the dark what you have heard in the light. Friend, if you are doubting the word of God, you now know your faith is being battered.

The words "A GHOST" were spoken by the disciples. Before Jesus dealt with the storm He dealt with the disciples' hearts.

For further study please read Jeremiah 2:36, Hosea 6:4, Ephesians 4:14, Hebrews 13:9, and James 1:6.

Their hearts needed to be changed and not just their circumstances. How Jesus works is exactly the opposite to how the world is. The world says if a person's surroundings are changed the person will change. Changing a person's surroundings does not change a person's heart. Jesus changes the person and then the person changes their surroundings. What is our attitude when we are in circumstances we do not like? Do we want to be changed, or do we only want our circumstances changed? Pride demands difficult circumstances change but the heart remain unchanged. Humility says, Lord change me, and then circumstances change.

The words "A GHOST" revealed superstition in the disciple's hearts. How could disciples of Jesus have superstition in their hearts? Remember the disciples had been following Jesus for less than three years. There was still a lot of areas in their hearts still needing to be dealt with. As we follow Jesus we continually discover things in our hearts that we did not know were there.

## **7. "AND THEY CRIED OUT FOR FEAR."**

We now complete our study of verse 26 by studying the words "AND THEY CRIED OUT FOR FEAR." We begin by noticing that the word "AND" is a conjunction which joins the preceding words "IT IS A GHOST!" The word "AND" is like glue. It joins two parts of the verse. The disciples believed Jesus was a ghost. The result of what they believed was fear. But Jesus was not a ghost. What they were believing was not true. They were gripped by fear as a result of believing something that was not true. They believed a lie. Fear is the fruit of believing a lie. In Genesis 3:4 it says, "AND THE SERPENT SAID TO THE WOMAN, 'YOU SURELY SHALL NOT DIE.'" This verse records the first lie spoken to a human being. In Genesis 3:10 it says, "AND HE SAID, 'I HEARD THE SOUND OF THEE IN THE GARDEN, AND I WAS AFRAID BECAUSE I WAS NAKED; SO I HID MYSELF.'" This verse reveals the first time fear is spoken to a human being in the Bible. A lie preceded fear. A lie preceded from a person. A lie can come in the form of a thought. In 2 Corinthians 2:11 it says, "THAT WE MIGHT NOT HAVE SATAN GET AN ADVANTAGE AGAINST US, FOR WE ARE NOT IGNORANT OF HIS THOUGHTS." Lies in the mind come in the form of words. Behind these words is an invisible personality. Words come from a person. Words that enter the mind as thoughts come from a person.

Here is a true story to illustrate this point. Several years ago the Lord provided our church with over four thousand New testaments from the Gideons.

The New Testaments had been stored in a factory in northern Spain for seven years. I recall praying and asking the Lord why they had never been distributed. The Lord answered, "Procrastination is not an attitude, it is a personality."

Procrastination is embedded in Spanish culture. It is called "mañana." The word "mañana" which means "tomorrow" is often said as a form of worldly humour, "mañana, mañana" meaning, "tomorrow, tomorrow." The New Testaments were put off being distributed until "tomorrow," which turned into seven years.

To a non-Christian or worldly minded person, procrastination is not seen as evil. It is seen in a humorous way. Procrastination whispers into the mind, "Put it off until tomorrow." In the above situation, tomorrow turned into seven years and the New Testaments were not distributed. Words that come as thoughts have a personality behind them. Did you catch that last sentence? Let me repeat, words that come through thoughts have a personality behind them.

Words that retard the advancement of the gospel have a Satanic origin.

Jesus said in Mark 4:24, "BE CAREFUL WHAT YOU LISTEN TO."

In 2 Corinthians 10:5 it says, "AND WE ARE TAKING EVERY THOUGHT CAPTIVE TO THE OBEDIENCE OF CHRIST." Please consider these men were screaming in total fear. Screaming shows desperation. Screaming preceded getting saved.

Desperation preceded deliverance.

No desperation, no deliverance.

For many of us we had to scream, cry and get desperate before the Lord saved us. The heart attitude of screaming, crying, and desperation also apply for healing and deliverance from evil spirits. Please listen carefully to how the people are speaking in these seven verses. Matthew 8:2, Matthew 15:22, Mark 1:40, Mark 7:32, Luke 7:4, Luke 9:38, John 4:49.

# **Matthew 14:27**

## **“BUT IMMEDIATELY JESUS SPOKE TO THEM SAYING, “TAKE COURAGE, IT IS I; DO NOT BE AFRAID.”**

Please pray before studying these seven points, being thankful for what the Lord is revealing from this verse.

1. **“BUT IMMEDIATELY JESUS”**
  2. **“SPOKE”...“SAYING,”**
  3. **“SPOKE TO THEM SAYING,”**
  4. **“TAKE”**
  5. **“TAKE COURAGE,”**
  6. **“IT IS I;”**
  7. **“DO NOT BE AFRAID.”**
- 

### **1. “BUT IMMEDIATELY JESUS.”**

We begin with the words “BUT IMMEDIATELY JESUS.” The word “BUT” introduces not only the verse but also it introduces Jesus. If the story had finished with verse 26 and the disciples terrorized and crying out in fear, it would have been a hopeless situation. But the Lord never leaves His disciples in a hopeless situation. The Lord does not just tell us our problems or what is wrong with us and leave us in that condition. He provides a remedy. This is described in Romans 6:23, “FOR THE WAGES OF SIN IS DEATH, BUT THE FREE GIFT OF GOD IS ETERNAL LIFE IN CHRIST JESUS OUR LORD.” Let us consider the sound of the word “BUT” as we spell it out slowly. “B”...“U”...“T.” It sounds like bea..u...ty, “beauty.” There is beauty in the word “BUT.” If you watch TV news it very often reports terrible news that has happened somewhere in the world. It leaves a sense of hopelessness. But with the Lord He never leaves us feeling hopeless. An excellent example of this is found in Matthew 17:23, “AND THEY WILL KILL HIM, AND HE WILL BE RAISED ON THE THIRD DAY.” AND THEY WERE DEEPLY GRIEVED.” Jesus told His disciples that He was going to be killed, but He would rise from the dead on the third day.

They responded by feeling terribly grieved. They heard the first part but not the second. They heard discouraging news but not encouraging news. Now let us continue.

In Matthew 14:22 Jesus sent His disciples ahead of Him to the other side.

In Matthew 14:24 the storm is described.

In Matthew 14:26 describes the disciples being afraid.

In Matthew 14:34 the disciples arrived at the other side.

Jesus knew there would be a storm before it happened. Please realize when Jesus wants us to go over to the other side, He will make sure we go there.

The Bible did not leave the difficult parts out. The Bible included the problems and not just the power. Another example of both problems and power being mentioned is in Acts 8:7-9, "WITH SHRIEKS, EVIL SPIRITS CAME OUT OF MANY, AND MANY PARALYTICS AND CRIPPLES WERE HEALED.

SO THERE WAS GREAT JOY IN THAT CITY. NOW FOR SOME TIME A MAN NAMED SIMON HAD PRACTICED SORCERY IN THE CITY AND AMAZED ALL THE PEOPLE OF SAMARIA." Bible teaching which only emphasizes the positive without mentioning the problems is not balanced. The opposite is true as well. Thank the Lord for the word "BUT," when it introduces Jesus. The Lord always brings hope. Thoughts that leave you feeling hopeless are demonic.

The Holy Spirit always gives hope.

## **2. "SPOKE"... "SAYING,"**

Being aware of needing the Lord's help, examine these two words in two parts.

1) The word "SPOKE" is in the past tense. The word Jesus "SPOKE" was to disciples experiencing a terrible situation over two thousand years ago.

From Genesis to Revelation approximately 1,600 years passed and God "SPOKE" to every generation. 14 generations from Abraham to the time of David. 14 generations from David to the deportation to Babylon. 14 generations from the deportation to Babylon to Jesus Christ. From the time of Jesus until now the Holy Spirit has "SPOKE" to every generation of believers.

2) The word "SAYING" is in the present tense. Today the Holy Spirit illuminates the word of God to our lives. When words "jump off the page" it is the Holy Spirit highlighting thoughts from Scripture that He wants to work into our lives.

The Holy Spirit will give us a rhema word for a specific situation in our lives.

The Holy Spirit will give recurring thoughts from various parts of the Bible.

When the Holy Spirit gives a vision, dream or prophecy it will always agree with the Bible. The Holy Spirit will never say anything that disagrees with Scripture.

Any vision, dream or prophecy that does not agree with the full counsel of the Scriptures is not from God.

## **3. "SPOKE TO THEM SAYING"**

Now we look at these words "SPOKE TO THEM SAYING" and consider them in context to verse 25. In verse 25 it says, "HE CAME TO THEM, WALKING ON THE SEA." In this verse we read about Jesus walking. Then in verse 26 Jesus was speaking. Jesus was walking, then talking. In verse 25 the disciples saw what Jesus was doing. In verse 26 the disciples heard what Jesus was saying. They saw Him, then heard Him. What Jesus did came before what Jesus said. In Acts 1:1 it says, "ALL THAT JESUS BEGAN TO DO AND TEACH."

What we can learn from this is our lives are to preach and not just our mouths. People tend to forget what we say but remember what we do.

#### **4. "TAKE"**

The word "TAKE" is a command Jesus spoke to His disciples. It is the first command spoken in this verse. The second command is "DO NOT BE AFRAID." Taking courage and not being afraid go together. A command is not a suggestion. When the Lord says something He means it. He is not like us, who too often say something and not mean it. For example, have you ever said, "I will e-mail you" or "I will phone you" and in too many cases such words are merely a way of finishing a conversation with no intention of keeping that promise. Such empty promises are actually lying. If we do such things it has a corrosive effect on others to do the same. When we say we will do something we are to do it. In Luke 16:10 it says, "HE WHO IS FAITHFUL IN A VERY LITTLE IS FAITHFUL ALSO IN MUCH. HE WHO IS DISHONEST IN A VERY LITTLE IS ALSO DISHONEST IN MUCH."

Now consider how we "TAKE" something. It requires not being passive. It requires a decision, a choice. It requires action rather than inaction.

#### **5. "TAKE COURAGE"**

The words "TAKE COURAGE" is in the present tense. Jesus was speaking into their present situation. Jesus spoke what they needed for that situation. The words "TAKE COURAGE" are encouraging. What Jesus says encourages. What the devil says discourages. Encouragement gives courage. Discouragement steals courage. The storm was a very difficult situation and likely the disciples felt terrible discouragement. Storms bring waves of discouragement. The words "TAKE COURAGE" are comforting rather than critical. Jesus comforts. The devil criticizes. Humility comforts. Pride criticizes. Do our words comfort or criticize? Do we find it hard to comfort but easy to criticize? If we answered "yes" to the last question then we know pride is present in our hearts and need to immediately repent. The words "TAKE COURAGE" were spoken by Jesus to His disciples. From this we learn that it is God's will for His disciples to have courage. Disciples of Christ are to be courageous people. The words "TAKE COURAGE" tells us we are not to be passive. Disciples of Christ are not to be passive. In Proverbs 28:1 it says, "THE WICKED FLEE WHEN NO ONE IS PURSUING, BUT THE RIGHTEOUS ARE AS BOLD AS A LION." Please read Romans 1:16, Ephesians 6:19 and 20.

#### **6. "IT IS I;"**

We now proceed and deal with the words "IT IS I." But more importantly may they deal with our hearts. The words "IT IS" introduce the word "I."

The words "IT IS" do not have meaning on their own. The words "IT IS" seem insignificant just on their own. The words "IT IS" are significant because they introduce the word "I" which is the Lord Jesus. Their significance is because of their relationship to the Lord. Please consider three points.

1) We are like the words "IT IS" because we have no meaning in life. But because of Jesus Christ we have meaning and purpose in life.

2) We are like the words "IT IS" because we are insignificant in ourselves. But because of Jesus Christ we are significant.

3) We observe the words "IT IS" are close to the word "I." Can people see that we are close to the Lord? We are either close to the Lord or closed to the Lord. We draw close to the Lord by spending time worshipping the Lord, reading and studying His word and by spending time in prayer.



To be close to the Lord means we are open to receiving light from His word.  
To be close to the Lord will be reflected in how much the Bible governs our lives.  
To be close to the Lord requires having the same interests as Jesus.  
To be closed to the Lord means we are not open to receiving light from His word.  
The following two verses describe our Lord's interests. In Matthew 18:11 it says,  
"FOR THE SON OF MAN CAME TO SAVE THAT WHICH WAS LOST."  
In John 18:37 it says, "FOR THIS REASON I HAVE BEEN BORN, AND FOR THIS I HAVE COME INTO THE WORLD, TO TESTIFY TO THE TRUTH."  
The interests that Jesus had was saving souls. Do we share this same interest as our Lord had? Is our time and money focused on helping save souls?

#### **7. "DO NOT BE AFRAID."**

With the Lord's help, we now complete our brief study of verse 27 by looking into the words "DO NOT BE AFRAID." Let us divide these words into seven points.

1) First we look at the words "DO NOT." What is our first response when we hear the words "DO NOT." We might hear these words in an angry voice. We might think something negative is going to follow. We might think a rebuke is coming. But the Lord gave this command to help His disciples and not hurt them. When the Lord says "DO NOT" it is not to punish us but rather to protect us.  
2) Next we consider the tone of voice the words "DO NOT BE AFRAID."  
In what tone of voice do you think these words were spoken with by the Lord? Very likely these words were spoken in a comforting tone of voice in a chaotic situation. The Lord's voice is discerned by being comforting in the midst of chaos. The Lord was calmly walking and His talking was calm. The Lord's walk and His talk were the same. Is our walk and talk the same, especially when in a storm?  
3) We learn from the words "DO NOT BE AFRAID" that it is not God's will for disciples of Jesus Christ to be afraid. This truth is still the same today. It is not God's will for a born again Christian to be oppressed by any fear. Behind fear is the voice of the enemy. Behind fear is a lie.

In Psalms 91:10 it says, "NO EVIL WILL BEFALL YOU."

4) How do you think the words "DO NOT BE AFRAID" were spoken? Since the disciples were in a severe storm, the Lord's voice had to be louder than the smashing, buffeting waves against the boat or they would not have heard Him. If the Lord's voice had not been louder it would have been drowned out by the sound of the storm. In your life, is the Lord's voice louder than the buffeting sound of the world? It is imperative we study and memorize Scripture to help discern the Lord's voice. If we watch TV more than read the Bible then the sound of the world will be louder than the Lord's voice. If we watch more TV than read the Bible we will drown.

Do we know voices on TV shows more than God's voice?

Do we spend more time on the Internet than in the Bible?

Do we know whatever cools our love for Jesus is the world?

Do worries and cares of the world drown out God's voice?

Do we listen to the Word, or the world?

Do ask yourself, what I am doing, is it helping or hurting me grow as a Christian?

5) From the words "DO NOT BE AFRAID" the Lord was near to the disciples to be heard. To hear we need to be near. You might ask, how do we stay near to the Lord? If we love someone, we will want to be near them. We will want to spend time with them. If we notice seemingly innocent things gradually creeping in to

come before spending time with Jesus we need to quickly make corrections. For example, is spending time on the internet gradually coming before the Lord? If we turn the computer on to check our email or read the news, then we see a gradual erosion of our love for Jesus. If we spend more time on Facebook than on reading the Bible, we need to face the fact that we need to repent.

6) To obey the words "DO NOT BE AFRAID" requires making a decision, a quick decisive choice to do what the Lord said. Whatever thought causes you to fear, aggressively take it captive to the obedience of Christ. Don't play with it in your mind. Don't passively give in to it. In 2 Corinthians 10:5 it says, "WE ARE TAKING EVERY THOUGHT CAPTIVE TO THE OBEDIENCE OF CHRIST."

7) Let us conclude with the word "AFRAID." This word means to be shy, scared, fearful, anxious, worried, nervous, and timid. In the KJV 2 Timothy 1:7 says, "FOR GOD HATH NOT GIVEN US THE SPIRIT OF FEAR." In the NASB it says, "FOR GOD HAS NOT GIVEN US A SPIRIT OF TIMIDITY" The spirit of fear is discerned by how it manifests itself through a person's actions and words.

Fear is the fruit of demonic activity.

Fear is the manifestation of darkness.

Fear poses as a friend, but is an enemy.

Fear opposes the advancement of the Gospel.

In Genesis 3:4 it says, "AND THE SERPANT SAID TO THE WOMAN, YOU SHALL NOT DIE!" This is the first record of a lie spoken by the devil.

In Genesis 3: 10 it says, "I HEARD THE SOUND OF THEE IN THE GARDEN, AND I WAS AFRAID," This is the first record of fear mentioned in the Bible.

Verse 4 comes before verse 10, or we can say, believing a lie comes before fear. Fear is the fruit of believing a lie.

Fear in its many forms are rooted in believing lies.

If we suffer from fears attacking our minds we need to pray. Ask Jesus our Lord and Saviour to set us free and He will. Jesus came to set captives free from every form of demonic lies. The only thing a Christian is to fear, in the sense of having great reverence for, is the Lord Jesus Christ.

In Psalms 34:9 it says, "O FEAR THE LORD, YOU HIS SAINTS."

In Proverbs 1:7 it says, "THE FEAR OF THE LORD IS THE BEGINNING OF KNOWLEDGE;"

In Ecclesiastes 12:13 it says, "FEAR GOD AND KEEP HIS COMMANDMENTS, BECAUSE THIS APPLIES TO EVERY PERSON."

# **Matthew 14:28**

## **“AND PETER ANSWERED HIM AND SAID, “LORD, IF IT IS YOU, COMMAND ME TO COME TO YOU ON THE WATER.”**

We start a new chapter by dividing verse 28 into seven parts.  
Please read it with a prayerful attitude.

1. **“AND PETER ANSWERED AND SAID,”**
  2. **“LORD, IF IT IS YOU,”**
  3. **“COMMAND ME”**
  4. **“ME”**
  5. **“COME TO YOU”**
  6. **“ON THE WATER”**
  7. **“YOU ON THE WATER.”**
- 

### **1. “AND PETER ANSWERED AND SAID,”**

We begin our study by examining the words “AND PETER ANSWERED HIM AND SAID.” Please give attention to the order the words are described. The word “PETER” comes before the word “HIM.” Another example of this is found in Matthew 26:33, “BUT PETER ANSWERED AND SAID TO HIM, “EVEN THOUGH ALL FALL AWAY BECAUSE OF YOU, I WILL NEVER FALL AWAY.” In that verse Peter is self-confidently stating he would never deny Jesus. The word “PETER” is mentioned before the word “HIM” and Peter denied Him. What the Holy Spirit teaches us from this pattern is when we put ourselves before Jesus, we are putting ourselves in a position to deny the Lord. One of Peter’s weaknesses was he didn’t know he was weak. Is that one of our weaknesses as well?

### **2. “LORD, IF IT IS YOU,”**

With reliance upon the Lord, let us continue with our study of the words “LORD, IF IT IS YOU,” We shall now divide this portion of the verse into seven parts.

1) We begin with the word "LORD." It is the first word Peter spoke. The "LORD" came first. The Lord comes before everything else. This last sentence took only a couple of seconds to read, but it takes a lifetime to live. Is the Lord first in all areas of our lives? In 1 Corinthians 10:31 it says, "WHETHER, THEN, YOU EAT OR DRINK OR WHATEVER YOU DO, DO ALL TO THE GLORY OF GOD."

2) The word "LORD" means master, owner, leader, king, head, chief, sir.

To refer to the Lord Jesus Christ merely in a casual way like calling Him "friend" or "mate" reduces the reverence and respect He rightly deserves.

In Revelation 17:14 it says, "HE IS LORD OF LORDS AND KING OF KINGS."

Then right after the word "LORD" is a comma. The comma causes a pause.

One has to wonder what was going on in Peter's mind during the time of the comma. With the sounds of the raging waves, he wavered in his thoughts.

Was that the Lord's voice or not? His mind would have been getting tossed

around like the ship. In James 1:6 it says, "FOR THE ONE WHO DOUBTS IS LIKE THE SURF OF THE SEA DRIVEN AND TOSSED BY THE WIND."

3) The pause, caused by a comma, is followed by the word "IF." The word "IF" communicates uncertainty, or not sure of something. When we see the words "LORD, IF" it seems like a contradiction. With the roaring sound of the waves it sounds like Peter was uncertain. With the roaring sound of the waves it sounds like Peter was not sure it was Jesus speaking. Have you been uncertain or not sure it was the Lord speaking to you?

In verse 24 it describes there were waves and wind.

In verse 26 it describes there were voices.

Winds and voices can make us uncertain of the Lord's voice.

In Ephesians 4:14 it says, "WE ARE NO LONGER TO BE CHILDREN, TOSSED HERE AND THERE BY WAVES, AND CARRIED ABOUT BY EVERY WIND OF DOCTRINE."

4) Next we move on to the words "IF IT IS YOU." For this study let us remind ourselves that according to verse 25 it was the fourth watch, meaning it was sometime between 3:00 a.m. and 6:00 a.m. That means it was night and dark outside. What Jesus spoke was light in the darkness and Peter heard the Lord's voice in the midst of the darkness. In these words "IF IT IS YOU" we can hear doubt in Peter's voice. What Peter heard was mixed with doubt rather than being mixed with faith. In Hebrews 4:2 it says, "BUT THE WORD THEY HEARD DID NOT PROFIT THEM, BECAUSE IT WAS NOT UNITED BY FAITH IN THOSE WHO HEARD." Peter doubted the Lord's voice because the other disciples were saying it was a ghost they saw. Peter doubted what the Lord said instead of doubting what people said. Peter believed people rather than believe the Lord. That is a fatal mistake for us to make. Do we side with what people say instead of siding with what God's word says? On the waves, Peter was wavering. Peter was listening to what was contrary to the Lord's voice and it caused him to doubt what the Lord said.

Another example of this is found in Acts 9:11-13 where Ananias was doubting the Lord because of what he heard others say. In the storm Peter was surrounded by people who were saying what was contrary to what the Lord said.

In storms we need to be very careful what we listen to because we are influenced by who and what we listen to.

In Mark 4:24 it says, "TAKE CARE WHAT YOU LISTEN TO."

5) Again let us consider more carefully these words "LORD, IF IT IS YOU." These words almost sound like they are challenging what the Lord had said. The words sound like they are questioning what the Lord had said. In storms we are tempted to question what the word of God says. Do not doubt in the dark what you have heard in the light.

6) When Peter heard the Lord speak, there was also the sound of crashing waves against the boat. In storms crashing waves try to wash away the Lord's voice. So how do we correctly discern the Lord's voice? First we understand that the Holy Bible is the inspired word of God. The Holy Spirit speaks to us through the Bible by highlighting certain verses that apply to the situation we are in throughout our Christian lives. We can read a particular verse and it will almost jump off the page, where as we have read it several times previously and it was like we never saw it before. The Lord speaks through circumstances that reflect a Scriptural truth. The Holy Spirit can speak through a vision or prophecy. We need to emphasize that what is of God will always agree with the full counsel of Scripture. Any vision or prophecy that does not agree with the Bible is not from God. The Holy Spirit always exalts Jesus Christ and will never say anything that contradicts Scripture. The Lord's voice encourages and never discourages. The Lord's voice gives hope instead of hopelessness. The Lord's voice corrects and comforts and never condemns. If we watch hours of TV each day and spend only a few minutes reading the Bible then the world will drown out the Lord's voice. The more we read the Bible, listen to it, and obey it, the more we are able to discern the Lord's voice. The Lord's voice is discerned by the witness of the Spirit. In Colossians 3:15 it says, "AND LET THE PEACE OF CHRIST RULE IN YOUR HEARTS."

Here is a true story to illustrate. Awhile ago my wife and I were in southern England. At that time a friend of ours was attending his Mother's funeral in Spain. He phoned us and asked if we could come and meet him at 11:00 p.m. at Gatwick airport. So we prayed and asked the Lord if He wanted us to take a train to the airport. Inside I had absolutely no peace about going to the airport. Condemning thoughts started flooding my mind accusing me of being heartless and selfish for not going to meet my friend. Someone even commented that it would show true Christian charity to go meet him. That comment really laid on the guilt. But still I had no peace about going. The condemning thoughts were very strong, but the Lord gave me the strength to obey Colossians 3:15.

A few days after, we met our friend who had come from Spain and he said it was good we hadn't come to the airport for the airplane had been 9 hours late.

7) Listen to the words "IF IT IS YOU" from a different perspective. Putting emphasis on these words sounds like Peter was hoping it was the Lord. Read these words with emphasis on "IT IS." In a seemingly hopeless situation it sounds like Peter was daring to hope it was Jesus. In seemingly hopeless situations let us keep hoping, expecting, and believing the Lord will help us.

### **3. "COMMAND ME"**

Now we will examine the words "COMMAND ME." But more importantly they will examine us. From these words we learn Peter wanted to receive a command from the Lord. Do we like to receive commands or give commands?

How many of us like to be told what to do by someone in authority? If we are honest, many of us do not like being told what to do, even from a humble leader.

Pride likes to be asked politely and not commanded. The reason a proud person likes to be asked is because they are in control, they are in charge and they decide to do what they want, if they want. We discover pride lurking in our hearts when we are told to do something rather than being asked.

A humble leader commands correctly. A proud person responds incorrectly.

In 2 Kings 5:10-11 is an excellent example of this.

#### **4. "ME"**

Let us now look into the word "ME." Peter did not say "command someone else" to get out of the boat. Peter was willing to obey even if it meant going alone. Peter was willing to obey whether anyone else did or not. Peter was willing to obey even in a very dangerous situation. Will we obey the Lord whether other people do or not? Will we obey the Lord when it feels like we are all alone? Will we obey the Lord even in a dangerous situation? Peter's actions and his unreserved desire to obey Jesus is mirrored in Isaiah 6:8, "HERE AM I, SEND ME." Now consider another perspective and that is Peter's actions also revealed a certain element of impulsiveness in his behaviour. Peter was willing to go overboard for Jesus. Peter was impulsive and went overboard.

When we are impulsive we usually go overboard as well.

#### **5. "COME TO YOU"**

Let us proceed with the words "COME TO ME." From these words we learn what Peter's priority was. Even in the midst of a raging storm his priority was to be with Jesus. When we face raging storms in our lives how do we respond?

Is our priority to be with Jesus or do we grow bitter and rebel against Jesus?

Storms serve as good mentors because they teach us to desire to go to be with the Lord. From these words "COME TO ME" the Holy Spirit teaches us that Peter was talking to the Lord in the midst of a storm. In a storm do we talk to the Lord or talk against the Lord? In the midst of a storm Peter was talking to the Lord, but there is no mention of him speaking to any of the other disciples. When we are in a storm do we talk to other disciples but not talk to the Lord? When we need help, do we cry out to the Helper? When we are under pressure, do we press in to prayer? In the storm Peter had been busy straining at the oars, but he was not too busy to speak to the Lord. When we are straining at the oars, we are never too busy to speak to the Lord. When straining we need sustaining.

The more busy we are the more we need to pray. In a storm Jesus wanted Peter to come to Him. In a storm Jesus wants us to come to Him. In a storm do we seek His face or turn our backs on Him? In a storm we need to face the fact that we need to seek His face. In Matthew 11:28 it says, "COME TO ME, ALL WHO ARE WEARY AND HEAVY-LADEN, AND I WILL GIVE YOU REST." As we find in 2 Kings 19:15 it says, "AND HEZEKIAH PRAYED BEFORE THE LORD."

When Hezekiah was in a storm of imminent danger from the Assyrians he immediately came to the Lord and prayed. In 1 Peter 5:7 it says, "CASTING ALL YOUR ANXIETY ON HIM, BECAUSE HE CARES FOR YOU."

#### **6. "ON THE WATER"**

We shall now move on to the words "ON THE WATER." Peter was willing to try something he never tried before. Are we willing to try something that we never tried before? Peter was willing to leave the safety of the boat. Are we willing to leave the safety of our surroundings? Peter was willing to leave what was familiar for Jesus. Are we willing to leave what is familiar for Jesus?

Peter knew in his own ability he could not walk on water. Are we willing to try what we cannot do in our own ability? Peter was willing to put himself in a position where he had to completely rely on the Lord. Are we willing to put ourselves in a place where we have to completely rely on the Lord? Peter didn't let the fear of sinking stop him. Are we letting the fear of sinking stop us? Peter didn't let the fear of criticism stop him. Are we letting the fear of criticism stop us? Fear is an enemy of faith. Fear poses as a friend. Fear paralyzes Christians from obeying Jesus. Without the Lord's help, Peter would sink. Without the Lord's help we will sink. It was only the Lord Jesus that could enable Peter to walk on water, something in his own ability he couldn't do. The Lord Jesus enables those who are unable. Do you feel unable? If you answer "yes" then you qualify for the Lord to enable. What would have happened if Peter had succeeded at walking on the water? It is possible other disciples would have been jealous at Peter's success. Some people get jealous of other people's success but none get jealous of people who are failures.

#### **7. "YOU ON THE WATER"**

Now we conclude our study of verse 28 with the words "YOU ON THE WATER." The word "YOU" refers to Jesus Christ. Let us consider the following facts.

1. Jesus was on the water.
  2. Jesus Christ, the Anointed One. Luke 4:18, Hebrews 1:9.
  3. The word "anoint" is used touching a body with oil.
  4. The word "anoint" is spoken of in connection with oil.
  5. When oil and water are mixed, oil comes to the surface.
  6. Jesus the Anointed was on the surface of the water.
  7. The fact Jesus was on the water showed He was the Anointed One.
- The words "ON THE WATER" completes what Peter said to Jesus in this verse. In many Bibles the page layout has a white space or gap after these words and before the Lord answered in verse 29. The white space or gap, is almost like a pause or waiting period between when Peter asked for something and when Jesus answered. After the final period in verse 28 was a waiting period. In storms we often experience being in that white space.

# **Matthew 14:29**

## **“COME, HE SAID. THEN PETER GOT DOWN OUT OF THE BOAT AND WALKED ON THE WATER TO JESUS.”**

We now move on to verse 27, and with the Lord's help  
we shall study the following seven points.

- 1. “COME,”**
- 2. “HE SAID.”**
- 3. “THEN PETER GOT DOWN”**
- 4. “OUT OF THE BOAT”**
- 5. “AND WALKED”**
- 6. “ON THE WATER”**
- 7. “TO JESUS.”**

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### **1. “COME,”**

1) The word “COME” comes after a waiting period between verses 28 and 29. We don't know how much time passed between Peter asking to come on the water and Jesus saying “COME.” Waiting weighs the motives of the heart. Matthew Henry said, “The boldest spirits must wait for a call to hazardous enterprises, and we must not rashly and presumptuously thrust ourselves unto them.” A missionary named Daniel Del Vecchio said, “I regretted raising men up too fast, but I have never regretted waiting.

2) The word “COME” is a one syllable word. It is simple, not complicated. When we read through the Gospels we find the majority of words that Jesus spoke were one syllable words. Jesus used words that people could understand. Jesus used words, but Jesus never used people. Using long complicated words often reflects pride or insecurity in the heart. If a person is talking over our heads it shows they think they are higher than us. Notice where Jesus was when He spoke the word “COME.” Jesus was actually a little lower on the water than the disciples were in the boat. The Lord's position and His use of simple words reflected His humility.



- 3) The word "COME" likely was heard by the other disciples in the boat and not just heard by Peter. But it was only Peter who responded to what Jesus said. This point applies to each of us as we read the Bible. As we read, we can hear what the words on the page are saying to us. But how many of us actually exercise our wills and respond to what the Bible says?
- 4) The word "COME" is the Lord's voice being clearly spoken. The word "COME" is very specific. The word "COME" is not vague. The word "COME" is not confusing. When the Lord deals with things in our hearts He is always clear and specific. The Lord's voice is never vague. The Lord's voice is never confusing.
- 5) The word "COME" reminds us of another occasion when Jesus said "COME." In Matthew 11:28 Jesus said "COME" to Me, all who are weary and heavy-laden, and I will give you rest." In Matthew 11:28 Jesus was speaking to a general audience and here Jesus is speaking to a specific person.
- 6) The word "COME" was spoken by Jesus when He was already out on the water. Jesus was calling Peter to where He was at. Jesus was calling Peter to do something He had already done. Jesus wasn't telling Peter to do something He hadn't already done. Jesus the good shepherd was already ahead of Peter. Jesus was leading by example. A true shepherd leads by example. A true shepherd doesn't tell people to do something he hasn't done. You cannot lead where you have never been led. In Mark 10:32 it says, "JESUS WAS WALKING ON AHEAD OF THEM"
- 7) We now conclude our study of the word "COME" by realizing that Jesus was already where Peter was going. As we go on in the Christian life we can receive comfort knowing that Jesus will already be where we are going.

## **2. "HE SAID"**

Please consider the words "HE SAID" in the following seven parts.

- 1) When we consider this first point, we seem to realize at first there is nothing to glean from them. But the fact is we have already gleaned something from them. First let us ask ourselves, do we only look at what "HE SAID" when we read the Bible? Or, do we give serious heed and serious attention to what "HE SAID" and humbly have a contrite attitude to do what "HE SAID." Any thought that enters your mind as you read the Bible that suggests "there is nothing to get out of this part of the Bible" is to be discerned as demonic and such a thought is a lie.
- 2) When we read the Bible and see the words "HE SAID" there is a subtle temptation to skip over them because a small voice may whisper that they do not seem very important. We can almost hear a thought saying to skip over them and get onto a more interesting part in the story. But what we need to heed is these words "HE SAID" are part of Scripture. It is extremely dangerous and careless to skip over parts of Scripture that we might think is not important, or even what we might think is boring.
- 3) Another thought is seen in the NIV the position on the page of the words "HE SAID" are found. They are found following what Jesus said. Are we daily found following what Jesus said? Are we found following what "HE SAID" when no one is watching?
- 4) Another thought is what "HE SAID" actually did happen. Jesus told Peter to come and that is what happened. When the Lord says something will come to pass, it will come to pass. In Numbers 23:19 it says, "GOD IS NOT A MAN, THAT HE SHOULD LIE."

5) Another thought about the words “HE SAID” is to realize they are past tense words. Then we read the word “COME” was spoken in Peter’s present situation. The past had a direct relationship to the present. The past affects the present. An example of this is found in Genesis 32:1. In the NASB, verse 1 begins with the word “NOW.” The story was in the present for Jacob. He was greatly afraid of facing his brother Esau. Then in Genesis 27:42 we learn Esau was planning to kill Jacob. In Genesis 31:38 we learn that at least twenty years had passed. Jacob’s present fear of his brother had its roots in his past. Christians are not to dwell on the things of the past. In Isaiah 43:18 it says, “DO NOT CALL TO MIND THE FORMER THINGS, OR PONDER THINGS OF THE PAST.”

In Philippians 3:13 it says, “FORGETTING WHAT IS BEHIND AND STRAINING TOWARD WHAT IS AHEAD.” We can ask the Lord to set us free from those things in our pasts that still hurt us in the present and hinder going forward.

6) Another thought about the words “HE SAID” is to consider that “HE” refers to Jesus, the Word. Whatever the situation we find ourselves in, let us ask ourselves, what does the Word say about our situation? In Romans 4:3 it says, “FOR WHAT DOES THE SCRIPTURE SAY?”

7) This will be our final thought concerning the words “HE SAID.” They are the final words to study in this part of verse 29. Let us ask ourselves if what “HE SAID” has the final say in our lives? As we continue on following Jesus it becomes sadly obvious that what “HE SAID” does not have final say in many people’s lives.

### **3. “THEN PETER GOT DOWN”**

With the Lord’s help, we shall now proceed with the words “THEN PETER GOT DOWN” and examine them in seven parts.

1) We begin with the word “THEN.” It refers to a specified time. Once Peter heard what the Lord said, “THEN” he responded to the Lord’s command. Peter had asked the Lord to command him to come to Him on the water. Peter “THEN” waited for the Lord’s response. Do we follow Peter’s example or we pray and “THEN” not wait for the Lord’s response? Peter did not make a move until the Lord told him to. Peter did not act independently from the Lord. Peter was under the Lord’s authority.

2) Now we focus on the word “PETER.” When we stop and think about “PETER,” we consider events up until this event. In Matthew 4:20 when Peter heard the Lord calling him and Peter answered the call without hesitation. In Matthew 8:34 Jesus was rejected by a whole city for casting demons out of a person. Peter would have known about this, and a temptation would be to not be “too intense” in following Jesus if it would mean getting rejected by people. Please consider what Jesus said in Matthew 10:16 to 23. Jesus told Peter and the other disciples the sobering reality that genuine disciples face in this life. The temptation for Peter and for us is “not take being a Christian too serious.” Remember the temptation Pharaoh tried against Moses in Exodus 8:28, “PHARAOH SAID, “I WILL LET YOU GO TO OFFER SACRIFICES TO THE LORD YOUR GOD IN THE DESERT, BUT YOU MUST NOT GO VERY FAR.” After all that Peter had seen and experienced, he was still ready and willing to obey Jesus and climb out a boat in the middle of a raging storm. Have disappointments made you stop following Jesus? Have you been through hardships and do not want to get hurt anymore? Lord help us be like Peter.

3) Next we focus on the words “GOT DOWN” in response to the Lord’s voice. The posture that the words “GOT DOWN” communicate is Peter humbling himself to be able to come to Jesus. In the J.B. Phillips translation it reads, “PETER STEPPED DOWN FROM THE BOAT.” To respond to the Lord’s voice requires we humble ourselves. For anyone to come to Jesus requires coming down. The humble hear and are glad. The proud hear and are mad. In Psalms 34:2 it says, “MY SOUL SHALL MAKE ITS BOAST IN THE LORD; THE HUMBLE SHALL HEAR IT AND REJOICE.”

4) The words “PETER GOT DOWN” show Peter was obeying what Jesus said. Peter did not stay sitting in the boat after he knew what the Lord had said for him to do. If we stay, rather than obey, we become staid. Peter was still obeying as he did when the Lord called him in Matthew 4:20. Peter did what James 1:22 tells us to do, “DO NOT MERELY LISTEN TO THE WORD, AND SO DECEIVE YOURSELVES. DO WHAT IT SAYS.” May we ask ourselves a question. Are we obeying the Lord as we did years ago?

5) From the words “PETER GOT DOWN” we learn that Peter made a decision to go lower than the other disciples. Peter chose to make himself lower than the other disciples in the boat. There is no mention of the other disciples commending him for making himself lower than them. Peter “GOT DOWN” not to receive praise from other disciples, but he did it for Jesus. Are we willing to make ourselves lower than other disciples? Are we willing to make ourselves lower even if we are not recognized for doing it? Take the lowest seat, because it will always be empty.

6) The next thought expressed through the words “PETER GOT DOWN” is he was the only person to get down out of the boat. Peter experienced being alone from the other disciples as he obeyed the Lord. There are times in life when obeying the Lord Jesus means experiencing being all alone. Are we willing to obey the Lord Jesus even when it means being all alone?

7) We now conclude our brief look into the words “PETER GOT DOWN.” Remember it was Matthew writing this account of Peter getting down out of the boat. It was not Peter boasting about how brave he was to have “GOT DOWN” out of the boat. It was Matthew commending Peter for what he did. Matthew was commending another disciple. Here are seven questions to ask ourselves. Do we like to commend or do we like to condemn? Do you find it difficult to commend another disciple? Do we find it easy to not commend another disciple? Do we like to commend or do we like to be commended? Do we like to commend ourselves but not commend others? Do we rejoice with those who are commended instead of us? Do we say a grateful prayer, or grumble and say it isn’t fair? In Proverbs 27:2 it says, “LET ANOTHER PRAISE YOU, AND NOT YOUR OWN MOUTH.”

#### **4. “OUT OF THE BOAT”**

We now continue on by studying these words in the following seven parts.

1) In verse 25 we are reminded that it was in the night when Peter got “OUT OF THE BOAT.” Peter’s actions were done at night, and his actions were done in the sight of Jesus and the other disciples. We see from verse 25 how Peter acted when it was dark outside. His actions were out in the open for everyone to see. He was not trying to hide what he was doing. May we ask ourselves some very heart searching questions. How do we act when it is dark outside?

Do we do certain things at night that we would not dare do if other Christians were watching us? Often sinful actions are done at night, under the covering of darkness. The Holy Spirit reminds us of 2 Samuel 11:2, "NOW WHEN EVENING CAME DAVID AROSE FROM HIS BED." Evening is when it is dark.

After darkness fell, David fell. David then tried to keep his sin a secret. Sins in secret secrete out. Peter did not try to keep his actions a secret from the Lord or from other people. The Lord Jesus saw Peter's actions and his words. The Lord sees ours as well. For more study please read Matthew 10:26, Luke 12:2, and Hebrews 4:13.

2) In this second point please consider there was a second point in Peter's life when he chose to get "OUT OF THE BOAT." The second point when Peter chose to get "OUT OF THE BOAT" was in John 21:7. May we consider from John 21:7 that Peter jumped into the water and swam to Jesus. The fire in Peter's heart for the Lord Jesus was not drowned by the water. Remember, water is part of the physical world. Is the fire for the Lord Jesus being drowned by the world? Although time had passed between the two points in Peter's life, his desire to be with Jesus did not pass. As time passes, is our desire for Jesus also passing? Is our desire to be with Jesus the same as it was years ago?

3) Peter dared to "GET OUT OF THE BOAT" while the rest likely stared. Peter dared to obey Jesus in a dangerous situation. Do I dare or stare?

4) As we consider that Peter got "OUT OF THE BOAT" let us also consider those who were still in the boat. If we were one of those still in the boat, what would we be thinking as we saw Peter climbing out of the boat? Would we be cheering for Peter walking on the water or cheering when Peter started sinking?

Here are four penetrating questions we need to ask ourselves.

Would we be glad when we saw him walking on the water?

Would we be sad when we saw him walking on the water?

Would we be glad when we saw him sinking?

Would we be sad when we saw him sinking?

In Romans 12:15 it says, "REJOICE WITH THOSE WHO REJOICE, AND WEEP WITH THOSE WHO WEEP."

5) Please consider those in the boat when Peter got "OUT OF THE BOAT."

If this situation were to happen today what would be our opinion of Peter?

Some would accuse him of being a lone ranger. Some would accuse him of being independent. Some would accuse him of not being sent out by a church. Such negative opinions would be wrong because he was obeying Jesus.

6) Now consider Peter's profession in respect to the words "OUT OF THE BOAT." In Matthew 4:18 and John 21:3 we learn that Peter was a fisherman.

Boats were familiar surroundings for a fisherman. But Peter was willing to leave what was familiar to obey Jesus. Are we willing to leave what is familiar for Jesus? The people in the boat were Peter's friends. But Peter was willing to leave his friends for Jesus. Are we willing to leave our friends for Jesus?

7) To conclude our study of the words "OUT OF THE BOAT" we consider this as the actions of an impulsive, headstrong young man. But these were the actions of a man later described in Acts 2:41 who would by the grace of God, lead about three thousand people to salvation. Then later in his life he would by the grace of God, write two books that are part of the New Testament. Finally, Peter would die as a martyr for his faith in Jesus Christ.

Yes, Peter may have been an impulsive, headstrong young man, but he did not stay that way. When we see young, impulsive, headstrong young Christians, let us avoid the temptation to think they will always be that way and never amount to anything. The Lord changed Peter and He can change anyone. Here is a true story to illustrate this point. Several years ago I was helping construct a church in Malaga, Spain. Many of the Spanish workers were former drug addicts prior to the Lord Jesus saving them and their conversion to Christianity. One very hot afternoon I was frustrated looking at how lazy some of them were. I thought to myself in a very indignant manner that these men will never amount to anything. The Holy Spirit immediately corrected me for my bad attitude. He reminded me of Philippians 2:13, "FOR IT IS GOD WHO IS AT WORK IN YOU, BOTH TO WILL AND TO WORK FOR HIS GOOD PLEASURE." Many of the young men were lazy, but the Lord showed me from this verse that I was wrong to think they would always remain that way. By the grace of God we will be more like Jesus in the future than we are today. When we see wrongs in others we are to talk to the Lord about them instead of talking to other people about them. When we see faults in one another we are to pray for one another. Please carefully read through the following seven verses, John 17:17, 1 Corinthians 1:30, 2 Corinthians 4:16, Ephesians 5:26, 1 Thessalonians 5:23, Hebrews 13:12, and 1 Peter 1:2.

#### **5. "AND WALKED"**

Now with the words "AND WALKED" please consider the following seven points.

- 1) Peter's heart pounded as the waves pounded the boat. Peter's fingers loosened their grip from the side of the ship. Peter let go of temporal security "AND WALKED" to Jesus. Let go of temporal securities to walk with Jesus.
- 2) For Peter to obey Jesus required taking steps of faith. For us to obey Jesus requires taking steps of faith. For Peter to get closer to Jesus required steps of faith. For us to get closer to Jesus requires steps of faith. Do you know what steps of faith are? Steps of faith are steps of obedience. Steps of obedience bring us closer to Jesus. In Hebrews 11:8 it says, "BY FAITH ABRAHAM, WHEN HE WAS CALLED, OBEYED." Ask yourself, what does the Bible say, then obey. Pray then obey. We are not to ask, "what does the world say," or "what does fear say," or "what does the flesh say?" In Galatians 4:30 it says, "BUT WHAT DOES THE SCRIPTURE SAY?"
- 3) For Peter to fix his eyes on Jesus would mean he was not looking over his shoulder at the boat. Peter did not look back. If you are looking back you are not looking forward. Christians do not have to keep looking back because we have an incredible future to look forward to. Do thoughts enter your mind to remind you of a person who hurt you in the past? These thoughts are attacks. As soon as such thoughts enter your mind forgive that person who hurt you. Do not ponder on the thoughts, because they will try to take root and cause bitterness to grow in your heart. Keep forgiving the person each time the thought comes into your mind, even if the thought attempts to come four hundred and ninety times. In Matthew 18:21-22 is armour of light. If the devil reminds you of your past, remind him of his future. As unbelievers get older they often think and talk about the past. They are like a person rowing a boat, going forward, but sitting, continually looking back. Remember and tremble at what Genesis 19:26 says, "BUT LOT'S WIFE LOOKED BACK, AND SHE BECAME A PILLAR OF SALT."

4) Peter was looking forward because he had something to look forward to. Later in Peter's life he wrote in 2 Peter 3:13, "BUT IN KEEPING WITH HIS PROMISE WE ARE LOOKING FORWARD TO A NEW HEAVEN AND A NEW EARTH, THE HOME OF RIGHTEOUSNESS." In Matthew 14:29 Peter practiced looking forward. In 2 Peter 3:13 Peter preached about looking forward. Peter's actions preached before his mouth did. This example reflects what is described about Jesus in Acts 1:1, "JESUS BEGAN TO DO AND TEACH."

5) This is the second time walking is described in this section of Scripture. In Matthew 14:25 it describes Jesus walking. Now in this verse it describes Peter walking. Peter was following the example of Jesus. To use a figure of speech, Peter was walking in the Lord's footsteps. Let us look closely with these two references to walking. In verse 25 it says Jesus was "WALKING." In verse 29 it says Peter "WALKED." The word "WALKING" is present continuous tense. The word "WALKED" is in the past.

One is in the present.

One is in the past.

It is now the past when Peter lived, but Jesus is alive now in the present.

Another thought about the word "WALKED" is it was Peter's feet that were doing the walking. The feet are the lowest part of the body. The lowest parts of Peter's body were the ones enabling him to accomplish a miracle. The lowest parts in the body of Christ are the ones who accomplish miracles.

In the body of Christ it is the lowest ones that obey the head, Jesus Christ.

In Ephesians 1:22-23 it says, "AND HE PUT ALL THINGS IN SUBJECTION UNDER HIS FEET, AND GAVE HIM AS HEAD OVER ALL THINGS TO THE CHURCH, WHICH IS THE BODY, THE FULNESS OF HIM WHO FILLS ALL IN ALL."

6) The word "AND" joins the two stages in Peter's obedience to the Lord Jesus. Peter got "OUT OF THE BOAT" then it says, "AND WALKED." Peter did not just obey half the way by only getting "OUT OF THE BOAT." Peter fully obeyed "AND WALKED." Partial obedience is not obedience. Divided obedience shows a divided heart.

7) Please notice there is no comma between the words "OUT OF THE BOAT" "AND WALKED." If there had been a comma between them it would have indicated a pause or short delay. But there was not even a slight hint of hesitation. Peter did not pause nor did he hesitate in obeying Jesus. A pause or slight hesitation would indicate a small delay. Delayed obedience is polite disobedience. When we delay to obey, we stray.

## **6. "ON THE WATER"**

With the Lord's help, let us now examine the words "ON THE WATER."

The water was and still is a constantly changing mass. Everything around Peter was unstable, including himself. The Lord Jesus was the only one who was stable out there. We certainly can relate to Peter's predicament. We live in an unstable world, and when we go through storms we find out just how unstable we are. But thankfully Jesus is stable. The Lord Jesus is our stability.

In Isaiah 33:6 it says, "AND HE SHALL BE THE STABILITY OF YOUR TIMES."

As Peter obeyed the Lord, Peter experienced what Jesus was already experiencing. As we follow Jesus we experience to some measure what He experienced.

## 7. "TO JESUS."

We shall now complete our brief study of Matthew 14:29 by looking into the words "TO JESUS." Here are seven points that deal with these words.

- 1) At the beginning of our study from Matthew 14:22 the NIV says, "IMMEDIATELY JESUS." Now we find the last word in verse 29 is "JESUS." At the beginning of verse 22 and at the end of this verse "JESUS" is referred to. The pattern reflects Revelation 22:13, "I AM THE ALPHA AND THE OMEGA, THE FIRST AND THE LAST, THE BEGINNING AND THE END."
- 2) We see the final word in this verse says "JESUS." What we can learn from this is to ask ourselves these questions. Does what Jesus says have the final word in our lives? Does His word, or the world have the final say in our lives?
- 3) Now we shall focus on the word "TO." It is one of those insignificant words. But it does have tremendous significance because it introduces Jesus. Friend, you may think you are insignificant, but you can introduce people to Jesus, and that has eternal significance.
- 4) Again we study the word "TO." We can see it is close to the word "JESUS." If we are close to Jesus people will see it. If we are not close to Jesus people will see that as well.
- 5) Another thought about the small, unimportant word "TO" is that it comes before the word "JESUS." This order reflects the humility of Jesus, who put those who are considered small and unimportant before Himself. Do we put the small and unimportant before ourselves? In Matthew 20:28 it says, "THE SON OF MAN CAME NOT TO BE SERVED, BUT TO SERVE, AND GIVE HIS LIFE AS A RANSOM FOR MANY." In Philippians 2:3 it says, "BUT WITH HUMILITY OF MIND LET EACH OF YOU REGARD ONE ANOTHER AS MORE IMPORTANT THAN HIMSELF."
- 6) Now to continue on we consider the word "JESUS" comes after the word "TO." This pattern reminds us of the words John the Baptist spoke in Matthew 3:11, "BUT HE WHO IS COMING AFTER ME IS MIGHTIER THAN I, AND I AM NOT FIT TO REMOVE HIS SANDALS."
- 7) We shall now conclude our study of the words "TO JESUS." Prior to these words a miracle was described with Peter being able to walk on water. The miracle had one purpose, and that was to get Peter "TO JESUS." Most assuredly an entire book could be written on the subject of miracles, but for now we shall touch on only a few thoughts. Please understand that a genuine miracle from God is to direct people "TO JESUS." An example of a miracle directing people "TO JESUS" is recorded in Matthew 2:2, "WHERE IS HE WHO WAS BORN KING OF THE JEWS? FOR WE SAW HIS STAR IN THE EAST, AND HAVE COME TO WORSHIP HIM." Notice the miraculous appearance of the "STAR" is mentioned only once, but there are four references to Jesus, "HE," "KING," "HIS," "HIM." This teaches us that the emphasis is on Jesus and not the miracle. The wise men talked more about the Lord Jesus than they did about the miracle. We are to believe God for miracles, but we are to keep our eyes fixed on Jesus and not the miracles. Another example of miracles directing to Jesus is found in Acts 8:5-6, "AND PHILIP WENT DOWN TO THE CITY OF SAMARIA AND BEGAN PROCLAIMING CHRIST TO THEM. AND THE MULTITUDES WITH ONE ACCORD WERE GIVING ATTENTION TO WHAT WAS SAID BY PHILIP, AS THEY HEARD AND SAW THE SIGNS WHICH HE WAS PERFORMING."

In the book *Surprised by the Power of the Spirit*, Jack Deere said, "When God is pleased to give physical manifestations today, we should accept them from His hand, but we should not make the mistake of glorifying them. After all, it is not the manifestation that is of ultimate significance but rather the work of the Spirit." If miracles are not directing people to Jesus then they are directing people away from Jesus. If we are more interested in the miracles which Jesus does than we are interested in Jesus, then we will sink. Purported miracles that exalt the virgin Mary or attest to a so called dead saint are not from God, for they do not draw people to Jesus Christ, but rather away from Him. In cases where alleged apparitions of the virgin Mary have appeared, those apparitions do not direct people to Jesus and salvation. Instead, such manifestations keep people in deception. In Matthew 7:20 Jesus said, "THUS, BY THEIR FRUIT YOU WILL RECOGNIZE THEM."

Please remember that miracles were normal in the book of Acts.

The book of Acts has a supernatural event in every chapter.

The book of Acts shows us the supernatural was natural.

The book of Acts is not just an historical account of the early church.

The book of Acts is to be our blueprint.

As an exercise, go through all twenty seven books in the New Testament and count how many end with some form of blessing, doxology, or an Amen.

All of the books end this way, except one. Do you know which one it is?

The one which has no blessing, doxology, or an Amen is the book of Acts.

The book of Acts has a beginning but not an ending as the other

New Testament books. I am not saying there is new revelation.

What I am saying is the book of Acts is our blue print to follow.

Now we have programs but no power. In the book *Power Evangelism*,

John Wimber said, "Many third world missionaries on furlough attend my course of Signs and Wonders at Fuller Theological Seminary. After I lecture on world

view, they usually comment to me their inability to discuss supernatural phenomena when they are in the United States. Magic, sorcery, witchcraft,

frequently seen on the mission field, are viewed by many of the missionaries'

American brothers and sisters as fantastic superstition, manifestations of

"natives" ignorance. If the missionaries describe these spiritual phenomena as

real, they risk their credibility with financial supporters. So most missionaries

remain silent." There is a temptation with miracles for the flesh to want to run

after, exalt and follow after them instead of the Lord Jesus.

There is a temptation to worship the miracles Jesus does instead of worshipping Jesus. Giving in to the temptation to worship miracles instead of God is idolatry.

In Exodus 20:3 it warns, "YOU SHALL HAVE NO OTHER GOD'S BEFORE ME."

Please allow me to share how the Lord corrected me. In the first few years as a missionary the Lord allowed me to see several people being delivered from evil

spirits. At the time it was quite exciting and the temptation was to become

preoccupied with that rather than occupied with the Jesus. The Holy Spirit

highlighted Luke 9:51, "AND IT CAME ABOUT, WHEN THE DAYS WERE

APPROACHING HIS ASCENSION, THAT HE RESOLUTELY SET HIS FACE TO

GO TO JERUSALEM." Prior to this, in Luke 9:42 Jesus cast an evil spirit out of a

boy. This was a miracle, but the Lord Jesus did not keep focusing on demons

but rather was focused on going to Jerusalem.



Jesus was focused on going to the cross. Through this the Holy Spirit gave understanding that the Lord wanted me to experience casting out demons and healing the sick, but not to focus on them rather than the Lord Jesus. We are not to boast in miracles, but we are to boast in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ. If we are occupied with Jesus, we will not become preoccupied with miracles. In Galatians 6:14 it says, "MAY I NEVER BOAST EXCEPT IN THE CROSS OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST." Too often our experiences, or lack of experiences dictate our view of Scripture. When in fact the Scriptures are to dictate our experiences. Over time we become so used to the abnormal that we rationalize it as being normal. If some of us were to see things that are normal in the New Testament those same people might strongly oppose them. Take for example what we call a church service. When we hear that phrase we likely think of what ours is like in the church we attend. The format is quite predictable Sunday after Sunday, month after month. Now let us look at a church service in the New Testament and see if our experience is the same as that found in Scripture. The following are seven examples of church services.

- 1) In Matthew 12: 11-13 Jesus was teaching in a synagogue and then He healed a man with a withered hand. The church service included teaching and healing.
- 2) In Luke 13: 10-13 Jesus was teaching on the Sabbath and He healed a woman. That church service included teaching, deliverance and healing.
- 3) In Acts 8: 5-7 Philip was preaching with attesting miracles following. In this religious service or as some might call a "revival meeting" many unclean spirits were cast out with loud shrieks during the meeting, and healings took place. Have you ever seen demons cast out?
- 4) In Acts 10: 27-46 was a church service which included a testimony time in verses 30-32 by Cornelius describing having seen an angel. The angel appeared and gave supernatural guidance. Please note that Cornelius was a very stable person. He was an officer in the Roman army. He was not some religious nut case. In Acts 10:22 Cornelius is described as, "A CENTURIAN, A RIGHTEOUS AND GOD- FEARING MAN WELL SPOKEN OF BY THE ENTIRE NATION." During the church service in Acts 10: 44-46 the Holy Spirit fell in the middle of Peter's sermon and people started speaking in tongues.
- 5) In Acts 17: 2-5 was a church service that did not have Paul closing with a hymn, but rather with a mob wanting to attack him. Remember our Lord's first sermon in a church service in Luke 4:28-29, the congregation wanted to kill Him. Instead of an offering after the sermon, the people offered to kill Him.
- 6) In Acts 20: 7-10 was a church service which lasted until midnight. F.F. Bruce said, "Church meetings were not regulated by the clock in those days, and the opportunity of listening to Paul was not one to be cut short." According to Luke the Physician, the meeting included a young boy dying as a result of falling from the third floor, but was brought back to life after Paul embraced him. Please read 1 Kings 17:21 and 2 Kings 4:34.
- 7) In 1 Corinthians 14: 26-33 is an example of a church service which included prophecies, tongues and interpretation, prophets speaking and their words weighed very carefully. In 1 Thessalonians 5: 19-21 it says, "DO NOT QUENCH THE SPIRIT; DO NOT DESPISE PROPHETIC UTTURANCES. BUT EXAMINE EVERYTHING CAREFULLY; HOLD FAST TO THAT WHICH IS GOOD;"

# **Matthew 14:30**

## **“BUT SEEING THE WIND, HE BECAME AFRAID, AND BEGINNING TO SINK, HE CRIED OUT, SAYING, “LORD, SAVE ME!”**

In the NASB this verse is divided into seven parts.

1. **“BUT SEEING THE WIND,”**
2. **“HE BECAME AFRAID,”**
3. **“AND BEGINNING TO SINK,”**
4. **“HE CRIED OUT,”**
5. **“SAYING,”**
6. **“LORD,”**
7. **“SAVE ME!”**

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### **1. “BUT SEEING THE WIND,”**

We begin our study with the words “BUT SEEING THE WIND.” Let us examine these words in the following seven parts.

1) We shall begin with the word “BUT.” When we are presented with the word “BUT” at the beginning of a verse it is introducing one of two things. Either a problem, or the problem solver Jesus Christ. In this case, “BUT” was introducing a problem for Peter.

2) In the NASB and the NKJV this is the second time the word “BUT” begins a verse with a description of the wind in it. The other example is in verse 24.

The word “BUT” and the problem with the wind are referred to twice.

Even though Peter was in a different situation, the problem repeated itself.

Do you have a problem in your life that keeps repeating itself? Then cry out to the Lord before it causes you to sink.

3) For the third point we study “BUT SEEING THE WIND.” From these words we see Peter taking his eyes off Jesus. This was the first time Peter turned from the Lord. Later in Peter’s life he would turn away a second time by denying the Lord Jesus three times. In Mark 14: 71-72 it says, “BUT HE BEGAN TO CURSE AND SWEAR, “I DO NOT KNOW THIS MAN YOU ARE TALKING ABOUT!” AND IMMEDIATELY A COCK CROWED A SECOND TIME.”

4) This is the fourth point in considering the words "BUT SEEING THE WIND." Peter turned his eyes away from the Lord and onto his circumstances. Peter had been following the Lord for less than three years. It was evident by his conduct in the storm that he was spiritually immature. Storms discern our spiritual maturity. Peter had heard the word of the Lord. Peter started to obey the Lord but when circumstances assaulted him he lost sight of the Lord. Peter had begun to walk by faith, but then was governed by his sight. In 2 Corinthians 5:7 it says, "FOR WE WALK BY FAITH, NOT BY SIGHT." All that Peter saw was changing because the wind was misbehaving. The only One not changing was the One who changes not. In Malachi 3:6 it says, "I THE LORD DO NOT CHANGE." A characteristic of spiritual immaturity is a person being controlled by circumstances instead of what the Scriptures say. In Romans 4:3 it says, "FOR WHAT DOES THE SCRIPTURE SAY?" In Galatians 4:30 it says, "BUT WHAT DOES THE SCRIPTURE SAY?" Whatever circumstance we find ourselves in and how we are to respond to it, we need to ask the question, what does the Scripture say? Compare Peter's response to that of Paul in Acts 16: 22-25. When this account of Paul's life took place he was more spiritually mature than Peter was during the storm. In Acts 16: 25 it says, "ABOUT MIDNIGHT PAUL AND SILAS WERE SINGING HYMNS TO GOD." Notice the word "MIDNIGHT." "MIDNIGHT" is a dark time. Both Paul and Peter were in the night, a dark time when they faced difficult circumstances. Both were in dark times. Paul looked to the Lord rather than his circumstances. Peter looked at his circumstances rather than the Lord. Paul sang. Peter sank. In dark times, are we like Paul or Peter? Do we sing or sink? In Psalms 57:5 it says, "BE EXALTED, O GOD, ABOVE THE HEAVENS; LET YOUR GLORY BE OVER ALL THE EARTH." We sing this Psalm as a worship song. Yet if we read the context, in verses 4 and 6 we discover that David was worshipping the Lord when he was surrounded by evil people. How do we respond when we are surrounded by evil people? Do we talk about hurtful people or talk to the Lord about the hurtful people? In Psalms 37:1 it says, "DO NOT FRET BECAUSE OF EVIL DOERS." The temptation for our hearts and minds is to be preoccupied with evil, hurtful people, instead of occupied with the Lord Jesus, who heals us from all the hurts caused by people. Circumstances make us better or bitter. The difference between the words "bitter" and "better" is "I." How I respond to difficult circumstances is the difference.

5) This is the fifth point in studying the words "BUT SEEING THE WIND" from another angle. In the storm Peter turned from the Lord. It is in storms that people turn from the Lord. The Bible does not tell us how far Peter had walked before he turned from the Lord. No matter how far we have walked, we need to realize that storms bring with them the temptation to turn from the Lord.

6) This is now our sixth point in studying the words "BUT SEEING THE WIND." Peter's focus was on the waves, which were something fleeting. How often are our eyes taken off of the eternal and tantalized with the temporal? Do we despise or fantasize the lust of the eyes? Do we get mesmerized by materialism?

7) This is the seventh point in our study of the words "BUT SEEING THE WIND." We see the word "SEEING" is in the present continuous tense. What Peter was "SEEING" made him tense. At the present time, is what you are "SEEING" making you tense. If your answer is yes, then you know you are looking at "THE WIND" and not the Lord.

## **2. "HE BECAME AFRAID"**

We now give our full attention to the words "HE BECAME AFRAID."

Peter had exhibited great faith. Now Peter exhibited great fear. In the man was a mix. This mixture is described in Romans 7:18-25. In volume 6 of Romans by Dr. Martyn Lloyd-Jones is a great source of encouragement on these verses for all who desire to obey the Lord Jesus but also see this same mixture in their own lives. In the book The King Has Come, by C.H. Spurgeon, he expounds on the words "HE BECAME AFRAID" by saying, "His heart failed him, and then his foot failed him." Peter's feet followed his heart. Our feet follow our heart. A wrong walk reflects a wrong heart. A right walk reflects a right heart.

The condition of our hearts affects the course of our lives. In Proverbs 4: 23 it says, "WATCH OVER YOUR HEART WITH ALL DILIGENCE, FOR FROM IT FLOW THE SPRINGS OF LIFE." Then in Proverbs 23:7 it says, "FOR AS HE THINKS WITHIN HIMSELF, SO HE IS."

## **3. "AND BEGINNING TO SINK"**

Let us now proceed with the study of the words "AND BEGINNING TO SINK."

As we have done in previous studies, we will divide this phrase into seven parts.

1) It was soon after Peter's great steps of faith he was "BEGINNING TO SINK." After a spiritual high comes the temptation for the flesh to sink low. After a victory comes the temptation for a great defeat.

In 1 Kings 18: 37-38 is a spiritual high, "ANSWER ME, O LORD, ANSWER ME, SO THESE PEOPLE WILL KNOW THAT YOU, O LORD, ARE GOD, AND THAT YOU ARE TURNING THEIR HEARTS BACK AGAIN." "THEN THE FIRE OF THE LORD FELL AND BURNED UP THE SACRIFICE, THE WOOD, THE STONES AND THE SOIL, AND ALSO LICKED UP THE WATER IN THE TRENCH."

In 1 Kings 19: 3-4 is a spiritual low, "ELIJAH WAS AFRAID AND RAN FOR HIS LIFE." "HE CAME TO A BROOM BUSH, SAT DOWN UNDER IT AND PRAYED THAT HE MIGHT DIE."

How do you think Peter felt as he began to sink? Since he was crying out for help, it would seem he was terrified. How do you think Peter felt getting out of the boat, his foot touching the water and starting to walk?

Very likely he felt terrific.

Peter went from feeling terrific to feeling terrified.

Peter would have experienced two extremes in his emotions.

Peter's emotions went up and down like the stormy waves.

Peter's emotional state was governed by his external circumstances.

When circumstances govern how we feel, we will be as unstable as a stormy sea. In the J.B. Philips translation of Romans 12:12 it says, "BASE YOUR HAPPINESS ON YOUR HOPE IN CHRIST." The Biblical basis for happiness is our hope in Christ rather than some external pleasure experience. When our hope in Christ is the foundation for our happiness, then the Lord can take us through any storm. Seek holiness, not happiness.

What is holiness? To be wholly His.

2) The second point under the words “AND BEGINNING TO SINK” we see the storm continued on, but Peter did not. Peter petered out. Peter’s weak faith was revealed. The continuation of a storm reveals weaknesses in our faith. Winds reveal weaknesses. In Proverbs 24:10 it says, “IF YOU FALTER IN TIMES OF TROUBLE, HOW SMALL IS YOUR STRENGTH.” By the grace of God may we live what Revelation 2:3 says, “YOU HAVE PERSEVERED AND ENDURED HARSHIPS FOR MY NAME, AND HAVE NOT GROWN WEARY.”

3) The third point under the words “AND BEGINNING TO SINK” allows us to consider that the people in the boat saw Peter take his eyes off the Lord and began to sink. The people in the boat saw Peter make the mistake of taking his eyes off the Lord. What do you think the disciples in the boat were feeling when they saw Peter sinking? The Bible does not tell us how the other disciples were feeling seeing Peter sinking.

How would we feel if we saw another disciple sinking?

Would we cry or criticize?

Would we be compassionate or cold?

Would we feel concerned, or would we feel critical?

Would we be in prayer for them, or indifferent to them?

How have we felt when a fellow disciple has sunk back into the world?

Hopefully our response is not apathetic. To be apathetic is pathetic.

Peter made a mistake and the disciples on the ship saw him do it. There are two types of people who do not make mistakes. People who do not do anything.

People who are dead.

4) Let us continue on with the fourth point under the words “AND BEGINNING TO SINK.” Matthew wrote this part of Scripture. Matthew was describing Peter’s failure. Matthew was describing what Peter did wrong. But notice in the preceding verse 29 Matthew described what Peter did right. In verse 29 Matthew described Peter obeying the Lord. Matthew mentioned what Peter did right before he mentioned what Peter did wrong. Matthew did not just mention what Peter did wrong. Matthew mentioned the good and not just the bad.

This pattern is in harmony with Revelation 2 and how Jesus addressed the churches of Ephesus, Pergamum, Thyatira. Jesus commended them before correcting them. We are to follow Jesus’ example, and commend before correcting. I have been guilty of only mentioning the wrong a person does without first mentioning the right a person does. The Holy Spirit highlights this, not because we are doing it but because we are not doing it.

But with His help we will do it.

5) For the fifth point please consider another thought from the words “AND BEGINNING TO SINK.” Peter began to sink. But the Lord Jesus proved His love for Peter by stopping him from finishing what he started to do. The Lord Jesus proved His love for Peter by stopping him from going any deeper and drowning. The Lord Jesus proves His love for us by stopping us from finishing some of the wrong things we begin. The Lord Jesus proves His love for us by stopping us from going deeper and drowning in problems we get ourselves into.

6) For the sixth point of looking at the words “AND BEGINNING TO SINK” we have to think how deep had Peter sunk. Did Peter sink up to his knees?

Did Peter sink up to his waist? Did Peter sink up to his neck?

How far down did Peter sink before he looked up?

How far down do we have to sink before we will look up? When a person turns from the Lord and begins to sink, it does not take long before they are sunk. If you are sinking, do you look to liquor or to the Lord? If you are sinking, quickly look up.

7) This is our seventh and concluding point concerning the words “AND BEGINNING TO SINK.” We notice these words are in the present continuous tense. In the text there is a comma after the word “SINK,” then Peter cried out to the Lord to save him. A comma indicates a slight hesitation. A comma indicates a pause or waiting. Do you feel your life is beginning to sink? Do you feel tense in your present tense? Then do not hesitate, pause, or wait, but seek the Lord. In 1 Chronicles 16:11 it says, “SEEK THE LORD AND HIS STRENGTH; SEEK HIS FACE CONTINUALLY.”

#### **4. “HE CRIED OUT”**

Now we move on to the words “HE CRIED OUT.” Out in the water Peter “CRIED OUT” as he was sinking. Do you think Peter cared if other people in the boat heard him crying out for help? Do you think Peter was thinking about what people were thinking? No, Peter was thinking about sinking.

When you are sinking, stop thinking about what people are thinking.

When you are sinking, do not pretend you are sailing along smoothly.

Another thought related to the words “HE CRIED OUT” is to consider that Peter was crying out to the Lord. This reminds us of Judges 3: 9, “AND WHEN THE SONS OF ISRAEL CRIED TO THE LORD.” In the case of Peter and the sons of Israel, they both were desperate and cried to the Lord for help. When we are in a storm, do we cry to the Lord or just cry? Some might suggest about Peter that when “HE CRIED OUT” it was not a positive confession. Actually when “HE CRIED OUT” that was a very positive confession. If we are in trouble and we deny that we are in trouble, then we are in real trouble. When we are in trouble, pride whispers into our thoughts to not trouble anyone. If we are sinking and pretend we are not sinking, we will sink.

#### **5. “SAYING”**

We now give attention to the word “SAYING.” The word “SAYING” is a verb, in the present tense and Peter knowing he might drown presently was very tense. Peter’s present tense was very tense. The word “SAYING” is a word that cannot stand on its own. It needs the “LORD” next to it. We are very much like the word “SAYING” because we cannot stand on our own. We need the “LORD” next to us as well. The Holy Spirit reminds us of the words of Jesus in John 15:5, “FOR APART FROM ME YOU CAN DO NOTHING.”

#### **6. “LORD”**

We continue on to the word “LORD.” With the Lord’s help we could amass a massive study from this one word. But we shall constrain ourselves by studying the word “LORD” in the following seven parts.

1) We begin by noticing that the word “LORD” is mentioned in verse 28 and in this verse. When a word is repeated we need to be careful to take special note of it. The fact a word is repeated shows it is important. In both verses when Peter spoke the word “LORD” it was the first word from his mouth. Or we can say, the “LORD” came first. Does the “LORD” come first in our lives?

Notice Peter referred to Jesus with the word “LORD” and not “Saviour.”

Too often Jesus is referred to as “Saviour” but not as “LORD.”

When Jesus is referred to only as Saviour, but not as "LORD" it can result in self serving saints. A weak gospel message makes a mess.

2) Next please notice when Peter was in trouble the words that came from his mouth were not excuses. Neither was Peter blaming the wind for making him take his eyes off of the Lord. Peter did not blame shift on the shifting winds.

When we are in trouble, what comes out of our mouths?

3) The word "LORD" was the first word that came from Peter's mouth when he was in trouble. When we are in trouble, what are the first words that comes out of our mouths? When the ungodly are in trouble, any reference to Jesus is cursing rather than crying. Notice in the words "LORD, SAVE ME" that the word "LORD" comes before the word "ME." The "LORD" comes before "ME." Can we honestly say the "LORD" comes before "ME." Let us consider the word "LORD" came out of Peter's mouth before the words "SAVE ME." Do we consider the "LORD" before other words come out of our mouths?

4) The next thought about the word "LORD" is to imagine what the phrase would sound like if the word "LORD" was not there. All there would be is "SAVE ME." Without the word "LORD" in front, the words "SAVE ME" would sound like Peter was very demanding. Peter was in no place to be making demands.

When a person makes demands, it shows they think they are in charge.

Demanding reflects pride. If you think you can make demands on the Lord it surely sounds like you have been taught a damnable heresy.

In the KJV of 2 Peter 2:1 it says, "BUT THERE WERE FALSE PROPHETS ALSO AMONG THE PEOPLE, EVEN AS THERE SHALL BE FALSE TEACHERS AMONG YOU, WHO PRIVILY SHALL BRING IN DAMNABLE HERESIES, EVEN DENYING THE LORD THAT BOUGHT THEM, AND BRING UPON THEMSELVES A SWIFT DESTRUCTION."

5) We now continue with a related thought to the previous one. When we read the word "LORD," we notice it is followed by the words "SAVE ME." We can hear desperation in Peter's tone of voice. The Lord Jesus does deliver the desperate, but the demanding are damned.

6) Next in our study of the word "LORD" we see it is referring to a Person. Following the word "LORD" are the words "SAVE ME." These two words express performance. The Person came before His performance. We learn from this pattern that a person comes before their performance. A person is first, and their performance is second, or we can say a person is more important than their performance. In Mark 1:11 it says, "YOU ARE MY SON, WHOM I LOVE; WITH YOU I AM WELL PLEASED." Then in Mark 1:15 it says, "THE TIME HAS COME," HE SAID, "THE KINGDOM OF GOD IS NEAR. REPENT AND BELIEVE THE GOOD NEWS." From these two verses the Lord teaches us that Jesus was loved prior to His public ministry. A person comes before their performance.

We glorify God, not for acceptance, but because He has already accepted us.

In 1 Corinthians 6: 20 it says, "FOR YOU HAVE BEEN BOUGHT WITH A PRICE; THEREFORE GLORIFY GOD IN YOUR BODY." The Lord puts more importance on people than what they do. This is completely opposite to how the world thinks and operates. The world puts importance on people because of their performance. People are more important than their positions, possessions, or performances. In 1 Corinthians 6: 20 it says, "FOR YOU HAVE BEEN BOUGHT WITH A PRICE; THEREFORE GLORIFY GOD IN YOUR BODY."

The Lord puts more importance of people than what they do. In the following verses the Lord teaches us that a person comes before their performance. In 2 Corinthians 8:23 it says, "TITUS, HE IS MY PARTNER AND FELLOW WORKER."

In Ephesians 6:21 it says, "TYCHICUS, THE BELOVED BROTHER AND FAITHFUL MINISTER."

In Philippians 2:25 it says, "EPAPHRODITUS, MY BROTHER AND FELLOW WORKER."

In Colossians 4:7 it says, "TYCHICUS, OUR BELOVED BROTHER AND FAITHFUL SERVANT."

In 1 Thessalonians 3:2 it says, "TIMOTHY, OUR BROTHER AND GOD'S FELLOW WORKER."

In Philemon verse 1 it says, "TO PHILEMON OUR BELOVED BROTHER AND FELLOW WORKER."

7) To conclude, the first thing Peter said was "LORD." The second thing Peter said was "SAVE ME." The words "SAVE ME" describe what Peter wanted the "LORD" to do. Many people want the second but not the first. Do we want Jesus to do things for us but do not want Him as "LORD." This type of attitude reveals a heart that wants to be served rather than wanting to serve.

## **7. "SAVE ME"**

We now conclude this powerful verse with the words "SAVE ME." With reliance on the Lord to help us, please consider the following seven parts.

1) First let us ask ourselves in what tone of voice do you think Peter spoke these words. Was he whispering the words "SAVE ME"? Was he bored when he said the words "SAVE ME"? Was he nonchalant about how he said the words "SAVE ME"? It is extremely unlikely Peter spoke in any of these ways.

So how did Peter say the words "SAVE ME"? Very likely Peter screamed the words "SAVE ME."

2) When Peter uttered the words "SAVE ME" he had sunk about as far as he could go without dying. For many of us we can identify with having to sink very low before we cried out to the Lord "SAVE ME."

3) Peter cried out "SAVE ME" after he realized he was sinking. When a person realizes they are sinking, then they are ready to cry out the words "SAVE ME."

4) Next we need to ask why did Peter cry out "SAVE ME." Could he not have just swam back to the boat and saved himself? After all, he was an experienced swimmer. In John 21:7 it says, "WHEN SIMON PETER HEARD THAT IT WAS THE LORD, HE PUT HIS OUTER GARMENT ON (FOR HE WAS STRIPPED FOR WORK), AND THEN THREW HIMSELF INTO THE SEA." Peter's own abilities and self-effort could not save him and neither can anyone else.

5) When Peter screamed the words "SAVE ME" it was obvious to everyone watching from the boat that he needed to get saved. But the one person on the sea who needed to see Peter needing saving was himself. All around people are sinking, but until they admit they are sinking they will not cry out "SAVE ME."

6) Before Peter cried out "SAVE ME" he had to realize he needed to get saved. His crisis caused him to cry out to the Christ. Often people have to face a crisis before they cry out to the Christ. When there is no crisis there is no crying.

If we think we need nothing, we need to know we are needy. When people are comfortable, some do not think they need the Comforter.



Such an attitude discerns self-deception. If you are not aware right now of desperately needing Him, then you desperately need Him.

7) In conclusion of our study of the words "SAVE ME" we understand Peter was not crying out to the other people in the boat to save him. Peter cried out to the only One who could save him, and that was the Lord Jesus Christ.

Peter experienced Jesus saving him. Later on in Peter's life he would preach about his Lord in Acts 4:12, "AND THERE IS SALVATION IN NO ONE ELSE; FOR THERE IS NO OTHER NAME UNDER HEAVEN THAT HAS BEEN GIVEN AMONG MEN, BY WHICH WE MUST BE SAVED."

Peter was able to preach this truth because he had already experienced it.

Peter was a saved man and preached to save men. Let us do the same.

# **Matthew 14:31**

## **“AND IMMEDIATELY JESUS STRETCHED OUT HIS HAND AND TOOK HOLD OF HIM, AND SAID TO HIM, “O YOU OF LITTLE FAITH, WHY DID YOU DOUBT?”**

Please divide this verse into the following seven parts.

- 1. “AND IMMEDIATELY JESUS”**
- 2. “STRETCHED OUT HIS HAND”**
- 3. “AND”**
- 4. “TOOK HOLD OF HIM,”**
- 5. “AND SAID TO HIM,”**
- 6. “O YOU OF LITTLE FAITH,”**
- 7. “WHY DID YOU DOUBT?”**

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### **1. “AND IMMEDIATELY JESUS”**

We begin our study of verse 31 with the words “AND IMMEDIATELY JESUS.” Let us start with the word “AND.” In the NASB it is used seven times to begin verses starting back in verse 22. According to W.E.Vine, the number seven means, “Signifying to be full, abundant, sometimes used as an expression of fullness.” It generally expresses completeness.

Next consider that the word “IMMEDIATELY” is an adverb which means at once, this instant, promptly, right now, without delay.

The words “AND IMMEDIATELY JESUS” capture the response to Peter’s cry “LORD, SAVE ME.”

Although Peter had taken his eyes off the Lord, the Lord never took His eyes off of Peter. As soon as Peter cried out to be saved, Jesus at once, this instant, promptly, right now, without delay saved him. What the Lord did was in agreement with what the Scripture says in Romans 10:13 "FOR WHOEVER WILL CALL UPON THE NAME OF THE LORD WILL BE SAVED." Is what we do in our daily lives agree with what Scriptures say?

## **2. "STRETCHED OUT HIS HAND"**

Next we give our attention to the words "STRETCHED OUT HIS HAND."

With the Lord's help, examine these words in the following seven parts.

1) From these words we can picture Jesus stretching out His hand to save Peter. The Lord Jesus was also Peter's Saviour. The Lord Jesus also stretched out His hands and had them nailed to a cross to save us.

2) The second thought from the words "STRETCHED OUT HIS HAND" to save Peter showed that Jesus was very near Peter to be able to reach him.

Whatever storm we ever are sinking in, the Lord Jesus is very near to save us.

3) The third thought from the words "STRETCHED OUT HIS HAND" to realize Peter was very close to reaching Jesus when Peter turned away. From verse 29 we learn that Peter walked on the water and was coming toward Jesus.

The Bible does not tell us how far Peter had walked on the water before he started to sink, but he was within arm's reach of reaching the Lord. Peter turned his eyes off the Lord just before reaching the end of the task the Lord had called him to. There is a solemn warning for us to learn from this. Please read this carefully, it may save your life. Whatever task the Lord calls you to do, be certain there will a temptation to try to sink you just before you are finished. Here are two stories to illustrate this point. A missionary had faithfully served for eight years, and one month before he was return to North America, he was severely tempted to commit adultery. By the grace of God he was spared from that trap.

A second example is a Christian woman faithfully serving the Lord by working in a bank. A couple of weeks prior to he resigning from working in the Bank she was tempted to slack off and come to work late. The temptation came to undermine he faithful testimony as a Christian. In the book of John is a perfect example of faithfulness right to the very end. In John 17:4 Jesus was praying to His Father, "I HAVE BROUGHT YOU GLORY ON EARTH BY COMPLETING THE WORK YOU GAVE ME TO DO." Please open a red letter edition of the Bible and turn to John chapters 14, 15, 16 and 17. You will notice that 112 of the 117 verses in those chapters have Jesus teaching His disciples. Jesus finished teaching at the end of chapter 17 and chapter 18 proceeds with Judas betraying Him.

Jesus was faithful to the end. Then to repeat this line of thought please see John 19: 30, "IT IS FINISHED." Jesus finished the task His Father had given Him to do. In Paul's life he was faithful to the end by the grace of God.

In 2 Timothy 4:7 Paul said, "I HAVE FOUGHT THE GOOD FIGHT, I HAVE FINISHED THE COURSE, I HAVE KEPT THE FAITH;" Then in Hebrews 11: 5 is the testimony of Enoch, "BEFORE HIS BEING TAKEN UP HE WAS PLEASING TO GOD." Friend, may our ambition until the very end of our lives be pleasing to the Lord Jesus. Please see 2 Corinthians 5:9.

4) The fourth thought from the words "STRETCHED OUT HIS HAND" is to picture Peter lower than Jesus. Peter was sinking below the water as Jesus was on top of the water.

Jesus reached down to save Peter. Jesus also reached down to save us. We are to follow the example of Jesus to reach down to people so He can save them.

5) The fifth thought from the words "STRETCHED OUT HIS HAND" is to consider the position of the Lord's hand. Was the Lord's hand open or closed when He stretched it out? The Lord's hand was open, rather than closed.

The position of the Lord's hand reflected the passion of His heart. Jesus was and still is open to help the helpless.

What is our position when it comes to helping the helpless? Are we open or closed to helping a brother who is sinking?

6) The sixth thought from the words "STRETCHED OUT HIS HAND" is to realize that Jesus was bending down to save Peter. Bending down reflects a heart that is bent down. Bending down is a reflection of humility. Our hearts have to be bent down before our backs bend down.

7) The seventh thought from the words "STRETCHED OUT HIS HAND" is that the Lord's hand would have been outstretched as well. This action of the Lord reminds us of what Exodus 6: 6 says, "I WILL REDEEM YOU WITH AN OUTSTRETCHED ARM AND WITH GREAT JUDGMENTS." The Lord spoke these words to Moses, a man set apart to deliver God's people from the bondage of Pharaoh and Egypt. In the Old Testament, Pharaoh is a type of the devil, and Egypt is a type of the world. Jesus delivered Peter with His outstretched arm and "STRETCHED OUT HIS HAND" so Peter could be used by God to deliver people from the devil and the world by preaching the gospel. Jesus delivered us from the devil and the world's control so we can help deliver others. Jesus' hands were stretched out and nailed to a cross as the sacrifice for our sins.

### **3. "AND"**

We now consider the word "AND." In the NASB of Matthew 14: 31 there are twelve words before the word "AND." There are also twelve words after "AND." "AND IMMEDIATELY JESUS STRETCHED OUT HIS HAND AND TOOK HOLD OF HIM, AND SAID TO HIM, "O YOU OF LITTLE FAITH, WHY DID YOU DOUBT?" What does the number twelve remind us of? The number reminds us that Jesus had twelve disciples. Next we realize there are an exact number of words on either side. Or we can say each side is equally balanced.

Next may we look closer at the contents on each side of the word "AND."

In the first twelve words before the word "AND" we can see what Jesus was doing. In the second twelve words after the word "AND" we can see what Jesus was saying. There was a perfect balance between what Jesus did and what Jesus said. This is how Jesus taught His twelve disciples. May the Lord help us to apply this into our Christian walk.

### **4. "TOOK HOLD OF HIM,"**

Now we will study the words "TOOK HOLD OF HIM" in seven parts.

1) Jesus "TOOK HOLD OF HIM," and saved Peter from drowning, even though Jesus knew Peter would deny Him three times in the future. In Matthew 26: 34 it says, "JESUS SAID TO HIM, "TRULY I SAY TO YOU THAT THIS VERY NIGHT, BEFORE A COCK CROWS, YOU SHALL DENY ME THREE TIMES."

What Jesus did demonstrated to Peter what 2 Timothy 2: 13 says, "IF WE ARE FAITHLESS, HE REMAINS FAITHFUL; FOR HE CANNOT DENY HIMSELF."

Are we willing to help people even if they turn on us?

In Hosea 7: 14 and 15 it says, "THEY TURN AWAY FROM ME. ALTHOUGH I TRAINED AND STRENGTHENED THEIR ARMS."

In 1 Samuel 23: 5 we read about David and his men saving the people of Keilah, "SO DAVID AND HIS MEN WENT TO KEILAH, FOUGHT THE PHILISTINES AND CARRIED OFF THEIR LIVESTOCK. HE INFLICTED HEAVY LOSSES ON THE PHILISTINES AND SAVED THE PEOPLE OF KEILAH." Although David risked his life to help the people of Keilah, the people were going to betray him by handing him over to Saul. In 1 Samuel 23:12 it says, "AGAIN DAVID ASKED, 'WILL THE CITIZENS OF KEILAH SURRENDER ME AND MY MEN TO SAUL?' AND THE LORD SAID, 'THEY WILL.'" When reading verse 11 and then verse 12 it seems like David could not believe people he had helped would turn on him. As we follow Jesus we will experience this. David and his men had helped the people of Keilah, and all they got in return was betrayed. Thankfully the story does not stop there. In 1 Samuel 23:13 it says, "SO DAVID AND HIS MEN, ABOUT SIX HUNDRED IN NUMBER, LEFT KEILAH AND KEPT MOVING FROM PLACE TO PLACE." Please notice the words "LEFT KEILAH AND KEPT MOVING FROM PLACE TO PLACE." They did not stay in Keilah, they moved on. David and his men did not stay in Keilah.

David and his men did not stay in a place of betrayal.

It is important to notice that the wrong done to David and his men by the people of Keilah is not mentioned again. This teaches us when people hurt us, we are not to dwell on it and talk about it. We are to keep moving forward as David did. If you have suffered a Keilah experience please do not stay there by continually rehashing the situation over and over and over in your mind. If you have been betrayed, please do not stay there in your thoughts. Forgive and move on. Leave it and keep going forward. Do not let Keilahs keep you from keeping on. From this example David is a type of Christ. In our Christian life the Lord will have us help people of whom some will unfortunately betray us in the future. Do not be shocked when it happens because you are experiencing what the Bible teaches. The Word of God is becoming experiential, and not merely theoretical in your life.

2) May we now focus on the word "TOOK." This word shows effort. Effort was required to save a man from dying. Effort is still required to save people from dying in their sins. Effort does not come without effort.

3) Again please consider the word "TOOK." The Lord Jesus "TOOK" hold of someone who was weak and foolish. Later on the Lord Jesus would use this weak and foolish man to confound the wise. If we think we are strong and smart in ourselves, then we do not have the right qualifications to be used by the Lord Jesus. In Acts 4:13 it says, "NOW AS THEY OBSERVED THE CONFIDENCE OF PETER AND JOHN, AND UNDERSTOOD THAT THEY WERE UNEDUCATED AND UNTRAINED MEN, THEY WERE MARVELING, AND BEGAN TO RECOGNIZE THEM AS HAVING BEEN WITH JESUS." In 1 Corinthians 1:27 it says, "BUT GOD HAS CHOSEN THE FOOLISH THINGS OF THE WORLD TO SHAME THE WISE, AND GOD HAS CHOSEN THE WEAK THINGS OF THE WORLD TO SHAME THE THINGS WHICH ARE STRONG."

4) Now we continue on by giving attention to the word "HOLD." The word "HOLD" means to grip, contain, and control. Peter was out of control, but Jesus was in control. In our lives, if Jesus is not in control, then we are out of control.

5) Another thought from the words "TOOK HOLD OF HIM" is to picture Jesus grabbing Peter with a strong grip. The Lord exerted strength to help someone who was weak. Do we use our strength to help the weak or merely help ourselves? In 2 Corinthians 12:9 it says, "MY GRACE IS SUFFICIENT FOR YOU, FOR POWER IS PERFECTED IN WEAKNESS."

6) From these words "TOOK HOLD OF HIM" we can picture Jesus saving Peter up from where he had sunk. This situation is a picture of our conversion. Jesus saved us out of a stormy sea from which we had sunk. Jesus raises us up in His time. Peter had gone down before the Lord raised him up. Going down precedes going up. There has to be a death before there can be a resurrection. Suffering precedes glory. Do you have talents or areas of expertise that you want to use for the Lord? Before the Lord can safely use them, the self-exalting, self-gratifying, self-promoting motives behind them has to die. If you feel indignant about the last sentence it shows you have some dying to do. After it is all through for you, then the Lord can safely work through you. In Proverbs 18:12 it says, "HUMILITY GOES BEFORE HONOR."

7) This concludes our last point from the words "TOOK HOLD OF HIM." Concerning these words, may we ask ourselves a question. Do you think Peter loved Jesus more after being saved from drowning? Very likely Peter did for he knew what a terrible situation the Lord Jesus had saved him from. In Luke 7:47 it says, "FOR THIS REASON I SAY TO YOU, HER SINS, WHICH ARE MANY, HAVE BEEN FORGIVEN, FOR SHE LOVED MUCH, BUT HE WHO IS FORGIVEN LITTLE, LOVES LITTLE." A person who realizes how sinful they really are and how much they have been forgiven will have a deep love for the Lord. A person who has a growing love for Jesus is a person who has a growing awareness of how really sinful their fallen human nature really is.

#### **5. "AND SAID TO HIM,"**

We shall now continue on with the words "AND SAID TO HIM." These words show what Jesus said. The words immediately before are "AND TOOK HOLD OF HIM." These words show action. The Lord's actions came before His words. The Lord's actions were seen and then His words. Actions cost, mere words are worthless. Does our lives and actions speak or just my mouth? Do we have big hearts or just big mouths? In 1 John 3:18 it says, "LITTLE CHILDREN, LET US NOT LOVE WITH WORD OR WITH TONGUE, BUT IN DEED AND TRUTH." The songwriter Kevin Prosch sang in one of his songs, "It is better to have a heart without words than words without a heart." Here is another thought expressed through the words "AND SAID TO HIM." They introduce a corrective word from Jesus to Peter, but before doing the correcting, Jesus had shown compassion. Do we follow Jesus by showing compassion before giving correction? Correction without compassion corrupts.

#### **6. "AND SAID TO HIM,"**

Now we continue on by studying the words "O YOU OF LITTLE FAITH." From these words we learn Jesus was dealing with what was wrong in Peter's heart. Then in the next verse, Jesus dealt with the storm. The Lord's priority was to change the heart before changing the weather. The Lord was more interested in changing Peter than He was in changing Peter's circumstances. In Jonah chapter 2 we see a classic example of the Lord wanting to change a man before changing a man's circumstances.

The Lord changed Jonah's heart before changing Jonah's circumstances. The words "O YOU OF LITTLE FAITH" express the Lord's opinion of Peter. The Lord said these words because of Peter's conduct. C.H. Spurgeon said, "Peter's mixture of unbelief was not to be justified, nor may it be used as an excuse for ourselves. The unbelief that makes faith little is to be confessed as sin, and mourned over as such: it would be to regard it as a mere infirmity and invent excuses for it. In Peter's character there was a mixture of the strong and the weak. We ourselves are made of much the same materials; in us also are mingled the iron and the clay." From the boat Peter rose quickly and sank quickly. A person raised up too quickly runs a great risk of falling. Rushing gives a rush, but it is really risky. Rashness brings a rash of problems. In Ecclesiastes 5:2 it says, "DO NOT BE HASTY IN WORD OR IMPULSIVE IN THOUGHT." In 1 Timothy 5:22 it says, "DO NOT LAY HANDS UPON ANYONE TOO HASTILY."

#### **7. "WHY DID YOU DOUBT?"**

We conclude our study of verse 31 with the words "WHY DID YOU DOUBT?"

First we give attention to the word "WHY." It begins the Lord's correction to His companion Peter. The Lord had just shown His concern by stretching out His hand to save Peter. Now the Lord would give Peter correction. Concern and correction are to go together. We should be concerned when there is correction without concern. We should be concerned if there is no concern.

Here is another thought from the words "WHY DID YOU DOUBT?"

The Lord caught Peter then taught Peter. Caught then taught reminds us of evangelism and then discipleship. First the Lord saved, then corrected Peter for how he had behaved. Jesus corrected Peter while they were away from the boat. The Lord reproved Peter in private.

The Lord demonstrated truth, then taught it.

The Lord saved us, and corrects us when we misbehave.

The Lord demonstrated, then gave the application in Matthew 18:15.

The Lord gave a demonstration, and we are to do the application.

This pattern is seen through Paul's life, in Acts 14:5, 6 and 22.

Now let us conclude with the word "DOUBT." Do you remember what time it was when Peter doubted? In verse 25 we learned it was between 3 a.m. and 6 a.m.

It was dark when Peter was doubting. When there is doubt in the heart there is darkness in the heart. Doubting and pouting go together. If you have a bout with doubt about the Lord, doubt those doubts. It is not fair to say it is not fair.

Thank you Lord.

# **Matthew 14:32**

## **“AND WHEN THEY GOT INTO THE BOAT, THE WIND STOPPED.”**

This verse concludes our exposition which started back in verse 22.

As the Lord enables, we will glean truth from this verse.

Let us proceed by studying the following seven parts.

- 1. “AND”**
  - 2. “WHEN”**
  - 3. “THEY”**
  - 4. “GOT INTO THE BOAT,”**
  - 5. “INTO THE BOAT,”**
  - 6. “THE WIND STOPPED”**
  - 7. “STOPPED.”**
- 

### **1. “AND”**

This is now the last verse we shall study “AND” we will complete our study beginning with the word “AND.” We have just barely scratched the surface of all that there is to be found in this incredible portion of Scripture. For certain there is a vast amount more to discover than has been covered in these few pages.

We are thankful to the Holy Spirit for the insight He has given us.

With His enabling, we shall examine the word “AND” in seven parts.

1) The first thing to note about the word “AND” is that it is in the beginning of the verse. In such a seemingly unimportant word we are reminded of the account of creation. In Genesis 1:1 it says, “IN THE BEGINNING.”

2) Next the word “AND” is in the beginning of the sentence. It serves as a picture of the deity of Jesus Christ as described in John 1:1 “IN THE BEGINNING WAS THE WORD, AND THE WORD WAS WITH GOD, AND THE WORD WAS GOD.”

3) The next thought about the word “AND” is to notice it is made of three parts. Three parts reminds us of the Trinity.

Here are seven references relating to the doctrine of the Trinity,

1. Matthew 3:16-17
2. Matthew 28:19
3. John 14:26
4. John 15:26
5. 2 Corinthians 13:14
6. Galatians 4:4-6
7. 1 Peter 1:2



4) The word "AND" is a very simple beginning to the verse which proved, by the wind stopping, that Jesus is the Son of God. This observation reminds us of the very simple beginning that Jesus had. He had a simple beginning, being born in a manger and not a mansion.

5) The next thought concerning the word "AND" is it reminds us of another beginning. The beginning of the week was when Jesus rose from the dead. Please read Matthew 28:1, Mark 16:2, and Luke 24:1.

6) Now please concentrate on the first letter in the word "AND."

There are three things to notice about the letter "A."

1. "A" is at the head of the alphabet.

2. "A" is at the beginning of the alphabet.

3. "A" is the first letter of the alphabet.

Three words stand out, head, beginning, first. These three describe Jesus Christ in Colossians 1:18, "HE IS ALSO HEAD OF THE BODY, THE CHURCH; AND HE IS THE BEGINNING, THE FIRSTBORN FROM THE DEAD; SO THAT HE HIMSELF MIGHT COME TO HAVE FIRST PLACE IN EVERYTHING."

7) Here is the final point about "AND" being at the beginning. The people in the boat had a new beginning to their journey because Jesus came on board.

When Jesus comes into our lives we have a new beginning.

In 2 Corinthians 5:17 it says, "THEREFORE IF ANYONE IS IN CHRIST, HE IS A NEW CREATION; THE OLD HAS GONE, THE NEW HAS COME."

## **2. "WHEN"**

Now we will study the word "WHEN" in these seven parts.

1) "WHEN" is a word that gives a ray of hope through the stormy clouds that the disciples were experiencing. Up until now there had not been any relief for the disciples from the raging storm. From Mark 6:48 we learned the disciples had been straining at the oars. In the storm they were still obeying the Lord's instruction to go over to the other side. Do you think it was easy for the disciples to obey the Lord in the midst of a storm? Very likely it was not easy.

Very likely some of them felt like giving up. In a storm it is not easy to obey and some of us do feel like giving up. It takes effort to obey.

It is always too early to give up.

2) "WHEN" the disciples were straining at the oars they would have been under incredible strain.

Very likely they were tired from straining at the oars.

Very likely they were in pain from straining at the oars.

Very likely they were sore from straining at the oars.

They may not have felt like obeying the Lord but they did anyway. Obeying pays. If we disobey we pay. In Jonah 1:3 it says, "BUT JONAH ROSE UP TO FLEE TO TARSHISH FROM THE PRESENCE OF THE LORD. SO HE WENT DOWN TO JOPPA, FOUND A SHIP WHICH WAS GOING TO TARSHISH, PAID THE FARE, AND WENT DOWN INTO IT TO GO WITH THEM TO TARSHISH FROM THE PRESENCE OF THE LORD." Notice the words "PAID THE FARE."

Jonah disobeyed, then he paid. When we disobey we pay.

3) "WHEN" and not if storms hit us, we dare not drop anchor. We dare not be satisfied with where we are at. Complacency kills. The storm was attacking the disciples. But they were not just sitting with their anchor dropped in the sea waiting to see when the storm would stop seething.

4) "WHEN" you are in a storm you may feel tired and in pain. The disciples may have been weary as they obeyed the Lord's instruction to go to the other side. In storms we may grow weary and be tempted to disobey the Lord.

In Galatians 6:9 it says, "AND LET US NOT LOSE HEART IN DOING GOOD, FOR IN DUE TIME WE SHALL REAP IF WE DO NOT GROW WEARY."

5) "WHEN" the disciples were being assaulted by the storm they did not assault one another. They kept obeying the Lord by assaulting the storm.

In storms the devil tempts us to stop obeying the Lord and start assaulting other disciples. When we humble ourselves and obey the Bible we assault the devil.

6) "WHEN" you are in a storm and if you just sit there with your arms folded, you will fold.

7) "WHEN" a storm hits, do not have a fit. When attack comes, keep doing the will of the Father.

### **3. "THEY"**

Now please give attention to the word "THEY." Both the Lord and Peter got into the boat together. Do you think Peter was different getting into the boat from when he had got out of the boat? Very likely he was a changed man because he was with the One who can change a man. In the storm Peter was saved by Jesus. The word "THEY" communicates a closeness between two people.

When Jesus saves us from storms it causes us to have a deeper, closer relationship with Him. The Lord saved Peter from the depths of the sea.

After that Peter would have a greater depth in his relationship with the Lord.

The born again Christian with depth is a person who has walked with Jesus through many storms. In deep water is depth. Those who stay in shallow waters are shallow.

### **4. "GOT INTO THE BOAT"**

Next we move on to study the words "GOT INTO THE BOAT." With the Lord's help, we shall study these words in seven points.

1) We begin our seven points by looking at two words "GOT INTO" which are composed of seven letters. In the NIV these words are condensed into the seven letter word "CLIMBED." Let us realize they had to come out of the water before they "GOT INTO THE BOAT." We can condense this thought further by saying there has to be a coming out before there is a coming in.

The word "CLIMBED" shows a step by step coming out of the water and into the boat. Jesus helped Peter to separate himself from a place where he would sink and die to a place that was safe. There was a separation which took place.

This observation illustrates a person's conversion. Before the Lord saved us and caused us to be born again, we were sinking in a corrupt and perverse world. When a person experiences the new birth, there is a separation which takes place. In Colossians 1:13-14 it says, "FOR HE HAS RESCUED US FROM THE DOMINION OF DARKNESS AND BROUGHT US INTO THE KINGDOM OF THE SON HE LOVES, IN WHOM WE HAVE REDEMPTION, THE FORGIVENESS OF SINS." This verse confirms the scene seen in Genesis 1:2-4, "DARKNESS WAS OVER THE SURFACE" and "THEN GOD SAID, 'LET THERE BE LIGHT.'" "AND GOD SAW THAT THE LIGHT WAS GOOD; AND GOD SEPARATED THE LIGHT FROM THE DARKNESS."

God separated light from darkness. God did not try to mix light with darkness. God was and still is not into ecumenism. God requires regeneration.

All that you get when you try to mix light and darkness is grayness.

Please read 2 Corinthians 6:14-17. Do you think Peter was wet when he got into the boat? Peter was separated from the water but he would still be wet.

This observation deals with justification and sanctification.

First the words "GOT INTO" is a picture of justification.

Then the words "THE BOAT" show Peter was separated from the water and would be able to dry off. This is a picture of sanctification.

First we deal with justification. What is justification? Basically it means accounting the guilty just before God. It means to acquit, or to pardon us from our sins. Remember it was not because of self-effort that Peter "GOT INTO" the boat. Peter would not be able to brag about what he did before getting into the boat because all he managed to do was nearly get drowned.

We are not to boast about what we did before Jesus saved us.

Boast in the Lord, not in the past.

Please read Jeremiah 9:23, 1 Corinthians 1:31, and Ephesians 2:8-9.

In verse 32 it says, "THEY GOT INTO THE BOAT." Please consider the word "THEY." Jesus enabled Peter to separate himself from the water.

In Romans 5:9 it says, "SINCE WE HAVE NOW BEEN JUSTIFIED BY HIS BLOOD, HOW MUCH MORE SHALL WE BE SAVED FROM GOD'S WRATH THROUGH HIM."

Here are seven verses about justification.

1. Romans 3:20
2. Romans 5:9
3. Romans 5:16
4. 2 Corinthians 5:21
5. Galatians 2:16
6. Titus 3:7
7. James 2:18

Now consider that Peter was in "THE BOAT." This illustrates sanctification.

What does sanctification mean? Basically it means separation to God.

Sanctification is the relationship with God that men and women enter into by faith in Jesus Christ. Sanctification is growing in holiness.

W.E. Vine said, "Sanctification is also used in the N.T. of the separation of the believer from evil things and ways." This sanctification is God's will for the believer. 1 Thessalonians 4:3, and His purpose in calling him by the gospel, it must be learned from God, verse 4, as He teaches it by His word.

It cannot be transferred or imputed, it is an individual possession, built up, little by little, as the result of obedience to the Word of God, and of following the example of Christ."

Here are seven verses about sanctification.

1. John 17:17
2. Romans 15:16
3. 1 Corinthians 1:30
4. Ephesians 6:26
5. 2 Thessalonians 2:13
6. Hebrews 13:12
7. 1 Peter 1:2

Please read through the verses relating to both justification and sanctification.

- 2) A second thought to consider is why Jesus got "INTO THE BOAT" when He could have simply kept walking to the other side of the sea. In verse 33 we see that the disciples could see Jesus was the Son of God, and they worshipped Him. The Lord "GOT INTO THE BOAT" to benefit His disciple's faith. Still under this point, remember in verse 23 Jesus ascended a mountain to spend time with His Father. Now He was coming to His disciples to take them to the other side. The order of the Lord's actions serve as a picture of His ascension and His second coming.
- 3) A third thought from the words "GOT INTO THE BOAT" is that Jesus chose to be with His disciples. Let us ask ourselves, do we like being with other disciples? What type of people do we choose to associate with? The type of people we choose to associate with is a very good discerner of where we are at spiritually. Birds of a feather flock together. Please read Psalm 1:1, Proverbs 20:19, and 1 Corinthians 15:33.
- 4) A fourth thought to consider from the words "GOT INTO THE BOAT" is that Jesus chose to be with spiritually young disciples. He wanted to be with them all the way to the other side. Do we like to spend time with spiritually young Christians? What is our motive for wanting to spend time with spiritually young Christians? Is it to help them get to the other side? Let us remember the words of Acts 16: 3, "PAUL WANTED THIS MAN TO GO WITH HIM." Please notice the word "WANTED." Paul wanted to take along a younger Christian to disciple him. Surely Timothy the lad was glad he had Paul as a spiritual dad. Timothy would see Paul glad, mad, bad, and sad instead of just on a Sunday morning wearing a three piece suit behind a pulpit. Paul "WANTED" to be up front instead of keeping up a front. Do we want to spend time with younger Christians to help them grow? Perhaps the reason we do not want to spend time with younger Christians is because of selfishness. Please stop and pray, asking the Lord if this applies to you, and if so, ask Him to change your heart attitude towards young Christians.
- 5) A fifth thought to consider about the words "GOT INTO THE BOAT" is Jesus was with His disciples in a boat on a stormy sea. In verse 33 it describes the disciples together in a place worshiping the Lord. What comes to your mind when you think of Christians together worshiping the Lord? This event serves as a picture of the church in a church building. Another thought is Peter had gone overboard in obeying the Lord. Then he was a failure when he failed to keep his eyes on the Lord. Then we see Peter crawling back into the boat. Do you think any of the other disciples helped him back on board. When a fellow Christian goes overboard, are we willing to help them get back onboard? Remember that Peter had the Lord help him get to where he wanted to be. Peter also had to make an effort to climb up the side of a slippery boat to get to where he wanted to be. This truth applies to us. We need the Lord to help us get to where He wants us to be. We need to make an effort to get to where He wants us to be. Please read James 2:17-18.
- 6) A sixth thought to consider from the words "GOT INTO THE BOAT" is that the boat was in the middle of the sea. The boat was in the middle of the sea, but thankfully very little of the sea "GOT INTO THE BOAT." If the sea had been in the boat, they all would have sunk. If the sea had been on top, they would have been on the bottom.

This observation serves as a picture of the Christian life. We are to be in the world but not the world in us. If the world is in us, we are sunk. So what is the world? For many of us we do not even realize the world is a lethal enemy. In the book, *Love not the World*, Watchman Nee said, "We find cosmos is used in Scripture for worldly affairs: the whole circle of worldly goods, endowments, riches, advantages, pleasures, which though hollow and fleeting, stir our desire and seduce us from God, so that they are obstacles to the cause of Christ." Anything that cools my love for the Lord Jesus is the world. Do you find your heart strangely pulled to spend hours looking in shops and finding great enjoyment in doing so? But after you feel defiled inside, knowing you seldom spend that much time in prayer. Do you find it easy to spend hours on the internet but difficult to spend five minutes reading the Bible? If our religious masks were stripped away and we were to be ruthlessly honest, many of us would have to admit we love the enticements of the world more than spending time with the Lord. If you can relate to this then wake up. You are under the world's seducing power. A simple way for discerning if we are in love with the world is our attitude towards going to heaven. If we have little desire or eagerness to go to heaven, it discerns a heart seduced by the world. If you are single, what do you want more, to get married, or see the second coming of Christ? How you answer that question discerns where your affections are. Seek holiness, not happiness. If you read non-Christian books, magazines, watch TV and listen to worldly music, you run a dangerous risk of the world's opinions and values shaping your thinking rather than the Holy Bible. TV programs and commercials dull and desensitize the human conscience. A Christian with a dull conscience is easily conned. In Hebrews 5:14 it says, "BUT SOLID FOOD IS FOR THE MATURE, WHO BECAUSE OF PRACTICE HAVE THEIR SENSES TRAINED TO DISCERN GOOD FROM EVIL." If you have to read worldly literature for your work or study then pray, asking the Lord to cleanse your mind of the world's corrupting influence. Always filter what you read or listen to through the screen of Scripture. If it does not go by the Bible it does not go. The spirit of antichrist is behind every form of secular media which directly assaults the Christian's faith. If you think you cannot be deceived, you likely already are. Here are seven verses in the Old Testament about worldliness.

1. Genesis 3:6
2. Genesis 13:10
3. Exodus 23:2
4. Deuteronomy 12:30
5. 1 Samuel 8:20
6. 2 Kings 17:15
7. Jeremiah 2:5

Here are seven verses in the New Testament about worldliness.

1. Luke 21:34
2. Romans 12:2
3. Colossians 3:2
4. 2 Timothy 2:16
5. Titus 2:12
6. James 4:4
7. 1 John 2:16

7) The concluding thought about the words “GOT INTO THE BOAT” is that Jesus came to His own to be with them until they reached the other side. The disciples had been through a terrible, terrifying storm, but the Lord was with them to take them safely to the other side. Friend, have you been through terrible storms in your life? Take comfort, the Lord is with you. The Lord Jesus will take you safely to the other side. In Deuteronomy 31:6 it says, “BE STRONG AND COURAGEOUS, DO NOT BE AFRAID OR TREMBLE AT THEM, FOR THE LORD YOUR GOD IS THE ONE WHO GOES WITH YOU. HE WILL NOT FAIL YOU OR FORSAKE YOU.”

#### **5. “INTO THE BOAT”**

Now we shall examine the words “INTO THE BOAT.” When Jesus came “INTO THE BOAT” the wind stopped. This event surely reminds us of a person’s conversion experience. The Lord takes our stormy lives and pours His peace into our hearts. Imagine what the other disciples were doing when the Lord and Peter got “INTO THE BOAT.” Do you think any of them were excited when Jesus climbed “INTO THE BOAT.” Of course they were excited about the Lord coming to them. Were you excited when Jesus came into your boat? Are you still excited about Jesus being in your boat? If not, why not? Have the storms of life drowned out the excitement? What makes you excited? The things that excite us discerns if we are carnal or Christ like. If we are not in awe of Him, there is something awfully wrong. Stay awe full when things are awful. Remember Peter would have been very close to Jesus when they got “INTO THE BOAT.” Peter had been closer to the Lord than any of the other disciples. Do you think the other disciples were glad or mad to see Peter? What is our response when we see other disciples who are closer to the Lord than ourselves? Are we glad or mad? Are we glad or mad when we see someone who fears the Lord? What makes you glad? What makes you mad? How we answer those questions help to discern our spiritual condition. In Psalms 119:74 it says, “MAY THOSE WHO FEAR THEE SEE ME AND BE GLAD, BECAUSE I WAIT FOR THY WORD.”

#### **6. “THE WIND STOPPED”**

Now we focus on the words “THE WIND STOPPED.” When the storm stopped, the disciples had a drastically different view of who the Lord Jesus was than before they went into the storm. The storm had provided the disciples with a new understanding of the Lord’s power. When we go through storms they serve the purpose of seeing the Lord’s power in a way we could never otherwise know. We hear the disciples say in verse 33, “YOU ARE CERTAINLY GOD’S SON.” These were the words spoken after the storm. The disciples knew Jesus was not a mere man. The disciples had experienced what Ecclesiastes 8:8 says, “NO MAN HAS POWER OVER THE WIND TO CONTAIN IT.” The disciples knew from what Jesus did that He is the Son of God. Here is another thought to consider from the words “THE WIND STOPPED.” When Jesus was getting into the boat the wind was still blowing. Why did Jesus not stop the wind before He got into the boat? Why did Jesus get into the boat and then cause the wind to stop? The disciples did not know the storm would stop once Jesus stopped in the boat. Jesus had to be wanted, whether the storm stopped or not.

Do we want Jesus even if storms in our lives do not stop?

Do we want Jesus only because of what He can do for us?

Do we think, if Jesus stops the storm, then I will want Him?

If we only want Jesus because of what He can do for us, then that shows our hearts are not surrendered to the Lordship of Jesus Christ. Do we worship the Lord, or do we worship worship? A related thought to this is some people turn to religion when they are in storms. But without a genuine repentance from sin, the interest in religion passes once the storm passes. A fine example of this is found in 1 Kings 1:50-51, "AND ADONIJAH WAS AFRAID OF SOLOMON, AND HE AROSE, WENT AND TOOK HOLD OF THE HORNS OF THE ALTAR. NOW IT WAS TOLD SOLOMON, SAYING, "BEHOLD, ADONIJAH IS AFRAID OF KING SOLOMON, FOR BEHOLD, HE HAS TAKEN HOLD OF THE HORNS OF THE ALTAR, SAYING, "LET KING SOLOMON SWEAR TO ME TODAY THAT HE WILL NOT PUT HIS SERVANT TO DEATH WITH THE SWORD." In these verses Adonijah suddenly got very religious when he was faced with a major storm.

## 7. "STOPPED"

We now stop our study by stopping and looking at the word "STOPPED."

In this Scripture the word "STOPPED" is referring to the wind stopping.

In the book *The Words and Works of Jesus Christ*, J. Dwight Pentecost said, "This incident was designed to reveal to these men that obedience to Christ does not remove all obstacles to the completion of His will. The faith that first prompted a disciple to obedience must persist throughout the course of events involved in obedience to the will of God." Have storms in your life "STOPPED" you from going forward? When Jesus got into the boat He did not stop where He was at. Jesus did not stop in the middle of the sea and reminisce about the good old days when He fed five thousand men, besides women and children. Neither did He sit in the boat dwelling on all the horrible things of the past, which included an entire town rejecting Him in Matthew 8:34 after He had healed a demon possessed man. In Matthew 12:14 the Pharisees planned to kill Jesus. He withdrew in verse 15 and then kept going forward. After John the Baptist's death in Matthew 14:12 Jesus withdrew for a short period of time in verse 13 and then in verse 14 kept going forward. No matter what Jesus went through, He went through. Withdrawing is often emotionally necessary after going through severe traumatic storms. Withdrawing serves as a recovery period.

But a word of caution, withdrawing is only to be temporary.

Remember Jesus continued on ministering after a withdrawal period.

During a season of withdrawing please be very careful to guard your prayer life and a disciplined daily study of the Bible. In Isaiah 49:2 it says, "HE MADE ME INTO A POLISHED ARROW AND CONCEALED ME IN HIS QUIVER."

Have you "STOPPED" where you are at? With all that you have gone through, do you feel it is all through for you? Or are you going forward? How can we discern if we have "STOPPED" going forward? When we refer to what the Lord did in the past but do not refer to what the Lord is doing now, then we realize we have "STOPPED" going forward. We cannot live on past experiences.

Nor can we afford to keep dwelling on horrible things that happened in the past. The devil wants us to keep a record of wrongs done to us in the past.

That way, we will turn away. He has "STOPPED" many this way.

In 1 Corinthians 13:4 and 5 it says, "LOVE...KEEPS NO RECORD OF WRONGS." The devil keeps a record of wrongs, but love does not. Who are we going to listen to, what God says, or what the devil says?

Another thought about the word “STOPPED” is seen in Mark’s account of the storm in Mark 6:45 to 51. Mark “STOPPED” from mentioning Peter’s walk on the water. Peter had made history, but Mark never mentioned it in his story. How would we feel if you did something important and it was not mentioned? Would you resent the fact that the facts were not mentioned? Such a feeling is the flesh. We should also notice that in Mark’s account he did not count Peter’s failure. Do we make a point of pointing out people’s failure? When we point the finger, three fingers are pointing back at us. If we think we have arrived, then we have “STOPPED.” The Lord Jesus and His disciples kept going forward until they reached the other side. May the Lord help us to keep going forward until we reach the other side. When storms stop and life becomes comfortable, there comes the temptation to stop going forward. Let us ask ourselves, do we get uncomfortable when things get too comfortable? If we do not, then do. The desire for ease is a disease. Flesh craves great comfort more than advancing the great commission. The storm “STOPPED” but the disciples did not.

May we conclude by considering church history. Many denominations have started, “STOPPED” and stagnated. If we think our group is above such a fate, it is likely under such a fate. Do we defend the denomination we belong to, or do we defend the One we belong to? History records ten of the twelve disciples died as martyrs and only one died of old age. They never “STOPPED” following the Lord. There was only one who “STOPPED” and he was a traitor. Storms come to pass, not to stay. No matter what the storm is, the Lord will stop it. Thank you Lord Jesus.



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