

PETER WALKING ON WATER

— Part 2 —

Selected Text

In our study together last time, we began looking at the miracle of Peter walking on the water – and there were three things that we saw together last time ...

1. The sailing.

After feeding the 5000, Jesus sent the disciples to the other side of the sea so that they would not become caught up in the “*grassroots movement*” to make Jesus a King – and after that the disciples had departed:

- a. Jesus sent away the multitude.
- b. Jesus went up into a mountain to pray.

2. The storm.

- a. The time of the storm – *i.e.* while they were doing God’s will.
- b. The tempest of the storm – *i.e.* great waves driven by strong winds.
- c. The terror of the storm – *i.e.* they were totally off course.

3. The Savior.

Jesus came walking on the water in the fourth watch – *i.e.* from 3-6 AM – and, when they saw Him, their hearts were filled with dread! But then we saw ...

Mark 6:50 “... immediately he talked with them, and saith unto them, **Be of good cheer: it is I; be not afraid.**”

Now it is here that we will continue our study by noticing ...

IV. The stepping.

In other words, it is here that we are going to see Peter also walking on the water – as we consider this miracle, there are three things I want us to notice.

A. The faith of it.

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

We need to understand that the word “*if*” did not mean that Peter was not sure that it was really Jesus who was speaking to them – rather, the word must be understood in the same way that we find it used in ...

Matthew 4:3 “And when the tempter came to him, he said, If thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread.”

Obviously no mere human could turn stones to bread. Therefore, in this temptation, Satan was not questioning the deity of Jesus Christ; rather, he was saying, “*Since you are the Christ ...!*”

And that is the very same thing we find in our text. Peter knew exactly Who he was speaking to – *i.e.* he knew it was Jesus, the eternal Son of God! And because of that faith, we then find ...

B. The request of it.

I have read that the ancient Egyptians, in their hieroglyphics, when representing something that was impossible, would draw the figure of a man with his feet walking on the sea. And that was the impossibility that Peter desired in ...

Matthew 14:28 “... Peter ... said, Lord, if it be thou, bid me come unto thee on the water.”

Since Peter was convinced it was the Lord Jesus who was speaking, Peter dared to ask for something that was humanly impossible.

One commentator said, “*The way some of us pray, you would think God was a weakling unable to do much about anything. Our prayers make circumstances, nature, and people more powerful than God. God must be insulted by the littleness of our requests.*”

I read about a man who once requested some great thing of Alexander the Great and it was instantly granted. When his counselors asked why the request was so quickly granted, Alexander said the request had honored him because it was such a great request.

Certainly I think God must feel the same way – *i.e.* He is greatly honored when His children, by faith in His omnipotence, dare to ask for the impossible.

But let me quickly point out that the ability to walk on water ...

1. Was NOT the real desire of Peter.

2. Was simply a means of obtaining his real desire – *i.e.* to be with Jesus!

And because that was Peter's motive, we see ...

C. The answer of it.

As soon as Peter had made his request, he did not jump out of boat – rather, Peter waited for God's timing in the matter. In other words, Peter did not move until Jesus gave the word.

Matthew 14:29 “And he (*i.e.* Jesus) said, Come ...”

And because of his faith – and his willingness to wait for God's timing – when the invitation was given, Peter was able to do something humanly impossible. The Bible says in ...

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

Unfortunately, however, we are also reminded in this story that present victories do not guarantee continued victories – *i.e.* the greatest victories may often times be followed by the greatest failures! So notice ...

D. The failure of it.

As Peter walked on the water – *i.e.* doing something humanly impossible – his eyes were totally focused on the Lord Jesus. We do not know how long this great miracle was in effect – but as he walked on the water something happened:

1. Maybe doubting Thomas yelled at him, “*Look out, Peter! There's a huge wave coming at you!*”
2. Maybe there was a blinding flash of lightening – a powerful gust of wind – a huge boom of thunder – that caught Peter's attention.

However, whatever the reason/excuse was, Peter's focus was turned away from the Lord Jesus. As soon as his focus changed, Peter's faith died and a miraculous victory was turned to a natural defeat – the Bible says in ...

Matthew 14:30 “... when he saw the wind boisterous, he was afraid (*i.e.* his faith died); and beginning to sink ...”

The same is true for us! The circumstances in our lives will seldom encourage us to walk with the Lord – in fact, the circumstances in our lives will nearly always cause us to be discouraged and cause our faith/trust in God to fail.

But one of the great truths that we find in the Bible is simply that failure does not need to be permanent – remember, the psalmist said in ...

Psalm 37:23-24 “The steps of a good man are ordered by the LORD: and he delighteth in his way. Though he fall, he shall not be utterly cast down: for the LORD upholdeth him with his hand.”

And with that thought in mind, notice ...

E. The salvation of it – and there are two things we see concerning his salvation:

1. His prayer.

As soon as Peter turned his focus from Jesus to the circumstances that surrounded him, he began to sink. And immediately, Peter was faced with several options – for example:

- a. He could see how long he could tread water.
- b. He could try to swim back to the boat.
- c. He could humbly ask Jesus to save him.

Matthew 14:30 “... and beginning to sink, he cried, saying, Lord, save me.”

Notice three points with me concerning Peter’s prayer.

a. It was focused.

As soon as Peter began to sink, his focus immediately snapped back to where it should have been all along – *i.e.* the Lord Jesus Christ!

b. It was sincere.

This was not the time to put on a religious show. Peter knew that he was sinking – the Lord Jesus knew that he was sinking – even the disciples in the boat could see that he was sinking.

Therefore, Peter sincerely stated his need – *i.e.* to be rescued/saved from the waters that were pulling him down. And this brings us to the next thing concerning his prayer ...

c. It was humble.

By asking Jesus to save him, Peter was humbly acknowledging that he was – very literally – in over his head!

In other words, Peter was claiming the promise found in ...

Psalm 50:15 “... call upon me in the day of trouble: I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me.”

So, humbly trusting in the faithfulness of God, Peter cried out to the Lord Jesus, trusting in God's promise.

2. His rescue.

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

Jesus did not ask this question because He did not know why Peter had doubted – rather, the question was designed to cause Peter to examine himself and to understand for himself the reason for his lack of faith.

V. The result.

Matthew 14:32 “And when they were come into the ship ...”

- A. There was a calming – *i.e.* the wind ceased (*cf.* **Matthew 14:32; Mark 6:51**).
- B. There was a landing.

John 6:21 “... immediately the ship was at the land whither they went.”

- C. There was a worshipping.

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

Conclusion

May God help us to learn from this great miracle the importance of:

- 1. Not becoming distracted by the circumstances of life.
- 2. Keeping our eyes fixed/focused on the Lord Jesus.