

Influence Ministries

WATER WALKERS

LESSON 1

TITLE: WHAT'S WATER WALKING?

Matthew 14:25-29 -ERV

25 Between three and six o'clock in the morning, Jesus' followers were still in the boat. Jesus came to them. He was walking on the water.

26 When they saw him walking on the water, it scared them. "It's a ghost!" they said, screaming in fear.

27 But Jesus quickly spoke to them. He said, "Don't worry! It's me! Don't be afraid."

28 Peter said, "Lord, if that is really you, tell me to come to you on the water."

*29 Jesus said, "Come, Peter."
Then Peter left the boat and walked on the water to Jesus.*

This walk that Peter did on the water has so many aspects of following Christ.

He has the wisdom to discern when Jesus is present.

Having the courage to get out of the boat.

The euphoria of walking on water and the panic of sinking, and the sense of relief that Jesus is strong enough to save.

This story is intriguing because, in a way, it's Jesus' invitation to all of us.

Jesus is still looking for followers who are willing to get out of the boat and come to Him on the water.

So, if you're up for the challenge, let's go take a walk.

Every day people wake up and try to convince themselves that everything will be OK if they have a positive attitude.

The real question is, is there someone greater than Me that's guiding my life?

And, is His character and confidence such that I can trust Him with my life?

That brings us to the beautiful story of fear and faith about Jesus and His friends.

Jesus comes to them on the water. When they got into the boat, it was still light.

Jesus comes to them around 3am at the height of the storm. And, those are the conditions that Jesus is going to have Peter get out of the boat.

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Peter gets out of the boat, and he sinks. The question is, did Peter fail?

Before we get into that, let me ask us all one question. Have you ever failed? Have you ever said the wrong thing? Have you ever done the wrong thing?

If you ever experienced social, relational, financial, vocational, spiritual failure of any kind, raise your hand.

Out on the water, there's a storm, it's dark, it's windy, and there are problems.

And if you get out of your boat, whatever your boat is, there's a good possibility that you might sink, you might have problems, you might fail.

But, if you don't get out of the boat, you'll never walk on water.

Walking on the water is the kind of picture of doing something together as God gives me the power to do it that I could never do independently.

What that means is, following Jesus is always going to be a choice between the comfort and securing the safety of the boat and the risk of getting out.

All of us that follow God have a choice to make, and generally, it involves comfort or growth.

We are into comfort... what's the #1 best-selling chair in America? Lazy Boy. It's not risky boy; it's not worker boy.

We say we want to chill, we want to veg, and if you do it in front of a TV, we call you couch potatoes.

The disciples that stayed in the boat were boat potatoes. They wanted to follow Jesus, but they don't want to take the risk of following Him out of the boat.

Comfort, which sounds so inviting may be one of the most dangerous things of all.

The boat may not be as safe as we think. Remember the Titanic?

There are a lot of good reasons to get out of the boat. For one thing, that's the only way you grow.

We need challenges and risks if we're ever going to learn.

When you give in to comfort, your life gets stagnant.

But the most significant single reason why someone ought to get out of the boat is... because that's where Jesus was.

It's when you're willing to take the risk of obeying God and saying yes and getting out of the boat is when you meet Him.

Peter does that in this story. He gets out of the boat. It's just him and Jesus. Then he gets his eyes on Jesus.

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He notices there's a wind, he sees the waves are high, and the night is dark; he looks at the storm, and he sinks.

Failure in not so much about what happened, but how we process what happened.

Did Peter fail? In a sense, he did. His faith was not strong enough; he took his eyes off Jesus, he sank.

But this is what I think... 11 bigger failures were sitting in the boat.

It's interesting, nobody ever criticizes their failure. Their failure goes un-noticed, un-criticized.

Only Peter knew the embarrassment and humiliation of public failure.

But I'll tell you two other things only Peter knew. Peter knew the feeling of what it is to walk on water.

I don't think he ever forgot that. Once you walk on water, you never forget the experience and power of God. It marks you until the day you die.

Another thing, only Peter knew that the hand of God was strong enough to pick him up and rescue him.

What matters is when somebody gets out of the boat.

The credit belongs to the man who is actually in the arena... who at the best knows in the end the triumph of high achievement, and who at the worst, if he fails, at least fails while daring greatly, so that his place shall never be with those cold and timid souls who neither know victory nor defeat. -Theodore Roosevelt

Sometimes we will fail. All of us, but Jesus is still looking for someone to love Him enough and trust Him enough to leave what is safe and comfortable. But this one thing is true.

IF YOU WANT TO WALK ON WATER,

YOU HAVE TO GET OUT OF THE BOAT.