

Walking on Water

Sermon by Andy Sochor

Text: Matthew 14:22-33

Throughout Jesus' earthly ministry, He performed various miracles to demonstrate His divine power. The miracle we are discussing here was when Jesus walked on the water (and Peter would as well). As we study this miracle, as with every Bible passage, it is important to understand the context. This miracle teaches us certain things about Jesus and provides an important lesson for us.

The Context

- This came “immediately” after Jesus fed five thousand (Matthew 14:15-21) – as we noticed then, this was just after John the Baptist was beheaded (Matthew 14:1-12)
- Again, Jesus was alone in prayer (Matthew 14:22-23) – He sent the crowds away and send His disciples across the sea; reemphasizing the need for time alone in prayer
- This was on the Sea of Galilee – the geography of the area made it common for violent storms to arise suddenly; we previously studied another miracle in which Jesus calmed the storm here (Matthew 8:23-27)
- At least some of the disciples were experienced fishermen (Matthew 4:18-22) – they would have seen storms like this and would know how dangerous they were

The Miracle

- They were “a long distance from the land” (Matthew 14:24) – nowhere close to the shore; no way someone could be there; besides, Jesus had gone “up on the mountain” (Matthew 14:23); He could not have reached them by boat on His own
- Jesus “came to them, walking on the sea” (Matthew 14:25) – they saw Him and thought they saw a ghost; not an uncommon belief (that departed spirits could visit the living); despite their time with Jesus, this was their first reaction
- Peter also walked on the water (Matthew 14:28-29) – he was sometimes too quick to speak (cf. Matthew 16:21-23), but this was faith; he stepped out on faith and walked on the water until he took his eyes off of Jesus (Matthew 14:30-31)
- When Jesus got to the boat the storm stopped (Matthew 14:32) – notice how the disciples' reaction differed from the last time (cf. Matthew 8:26-27); question vs. statement

The Lesson

- Jesus questioned Peter, “You of little faith, why did you doubt?” (Matthew 14:31) – would we call his faith “little”?; Peter got out of the boat when the other disciples stayed there and watched; Peter called out to the Lord to save him when he was

sinking, so he knew where to turn; Peter is very commendable here, yet Jesus said he had “little faith”

- The lesson is that we need to examine ourselves to see if we have “little faith” – we may do more than others, but they are not our standard (2 Corinthians 10:12; Matthew 5:20); we may trust in Christ to save us, but we may let other things distract us (Luke 8:14; Hebrews 12:1-2); no matter what our faith looks like, we have room to grow (2 Peter 1:5-8; cf. Hebrews 6:11)

Conclusion

- This miracle shows us Jesus’ power over nature (we have already seen this) – more than that, it challenges us to examine our faith
- We need to be willing to do what others will not do – then remain completely focused on the Lord