

Matthew 14:22-33
“How to walk on water”

“Immediately Jesus made the disciples get into the boat and go on ahead of him to the other side, while he dismissed the crowd. After he had dismissed them, he went up on a mountainside by himself to pray. When evening came, he was there alone, but the boat was already a considerable distance from land, buffeted by the waves because the wind was against it.

“During the fourth watch of the night Jesus went out to them, walking on the lake. When the disciples saw him walking on the lake, they were terrified. ‘It’s a ghost,’ they said, and cried out in fear.

“But Jesus immediately said to them: ‘Take courage! It is I. Don’t be afraid.’ ‘Lord, if it’s you,’ Peter replied, ‘tell me to come to you on the water.’ ‘Come,’ he said. Then Peter got down out of the boat, walked on the water and came toward Jesus. But when he saw the wind, he was afraid and, beginning to sink, cried out, ‘Lord, save me!’ (31) Immediately Jesus reached out his hand and caught him. ‘You of little faith,’ he said, ‘why did you doubt?’

“And when they climbed into the boat, the wind died down. Then those who were in the boat

worshiped him, saying, ‘Truly you are the Son of God.’”

Because this passage refers to water-walking, even non-church-goers know about it.

Skeptics question it and that’s OK.

It’s only natural to enquire about things.

- **A few of us have gone surfing or water skiing.**
- **We’ve all waded into water.**
- **None of us has seen water-walking, I’m sure.**



You’ve probably heard jokes about water-walking.

Peter’s short water-walk grabs great attention.

But this text confronts us with other matters we shouldn’t neglect.

One: “Who is/was Jesus?”

We claim that we are Christians.

We attend churches that teach about Jesus.

Yet we rarely face this truth.

Unless we believe that Jesus is the only Son of God, and we trust and obey to the end, church benefits us no more than the garden club, the Moose Lodge, the Lion’s Club, or any organization.

To a great extent, Matthew wrote to answer the question: Who is/was Jesus?

We should also read this text asking:

“What can Jesus do for 21st century people?”
What evidence proves Jesus to be the real king of the Universe?

Another question demands an answer:

“Can faith in Jesus help us overcome fear?”
People are dealing with anxiety and phobias.
Covid-19 grips folks with fear of dying.

Some fears help us if they make us cautious and careful, but most fears paralyze and defeat us.



Many people now suffer fear paralysis.

Does your faith in Christ help you defeat fear?

Let's openly ask these vital questions.

1. “Who is/was Jesus?”

Mark chapter 6 and John 6 tell us intriguing info.

- **Jesus and his disciples drew large crowds on their preaching tour of Northern Israel.**
- **Using just five fish and a two loaves of bread Jesus fed about five thousand men.**

I hear that one way to assure that many people will attend your funeral is to feed them well.

Jesus impressed folks because:

- **He fed hungry people.**
 - **He healed the sick.**

- **Jesus told-it-like-it-is; he didn't mince words.**
That combination made Jesus popular.
John's Gospel says that Jesus so captivated people, they wanted to force him to become king.

Those types of effects still occur.

- **Most people hunger for strong leaders.**
- **They want someone to take charge and solve the problems they face.**

Some Israelites figured Jesus was the guy to do it.

- **He made great speeches.**
 - **He did things for them.**
- **He spoke against the establishment.**

Those folks failed to understand that during His entire life, Jesus obeyed God.

- **God sent Jesus to teach His will, to die for us, and then to be raised from his grave.**
- **Jesus didn't complete mission until he obeyed every command, he died on the cross and he came back from death.**

In the same way,

- **Until we make changes, honor Jesus, and live as Jesus did, we haven't finished our mission.**
- **We must change within.**

“What do you mean by ‘within,’ Bob?”

People look for great leaders to change the world, solve all problems, and make them happy.

Politicians and preachers keep promising to bring us that kind of contentment.

Because Jesus fed them, healed them, and talked straight, people wanted him to take charge.

They didn't see that Jesus rules differently.

He didn't pander as politicians and ministers do.

Jesus commanded people to repent.

Until we change, nothing will improve.



To repeat the earlier point:

- **Jesus learned God's will and he submitted his entire life to doing God's will.**
- **Until he humbly died on the cross and returned from death, Jesus didn't finish his mission.**
- **Jesus' message isn't complete in us until we repent and change our thinking and behavior.**

Jesus' love must rule within each of us.

God's love, his forgiveness, his purity, his gratitude must control us.

Jesus should control our temper, our bank accounts, our tongues, our recreation, our habits, our pastimes, and our minds.

That's what it means to make Jesus our Lord.

Before he told that story about building a house on sand, he asked: “Why do you call me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ and do not do what I say?” (Luke 6:46).

Do you ardently try to do Jesus' will?

The questions remain:

Who Is Jesus?

Why should I make him my king and Lord?

First century writers, Matthew, the tax man, Mark the power guy close to Peter, Doctor Luke, and fisherman John wrote about Jesus:

- **Dr. Luke interviewed numerous people who witnessed the healings and likely even some of the folks Jesus healed.**
- **Matthew and John actually saw him heal people on numerous occasions.**
- **When Matthew and John saw him feed thousands of people at one time from just a few resources, they knew that no mysterious caterer supplied the food.**
- **The Galilee McDonalds didn't hide thousands of fish and pita bread loaves in a nearby cave.**

The evening after Jesus fed five thousand people, the apostles left Jesus by himself and set out in a boat to the far side of Lake Galilee.

- **Jesus went to a nearby mountain and spent several hours praying.**

- At dark, strong winds began blowing against the apostles’ sail and oar-powered boat.
- They didn’t have a huge Mercury Marine Engine, or Yamaha or Evinrude or Chrysler.

About 4 AM, a scary sight terrified them.

They saw what appeared to be a man walking on the water.

Imagine seeing a sight like that after midnight, and you are sober.

Would your knees do a little knocking?
They thought they saw a ghost.

“Don’t be fearful guys. It is I,” Jesus said,

“Lord, if it is you, command me to come to you on the water,” said Peter.

Strange, isn’t it that Peter said “Command!”?
Peter knew that walking on water requires something extraordinary.

Jesus spoke one word.

When you were a kid outside playing, did your mother call you in to eat at supper time?

If you disregarded her first call, the next time did she say to you, “Get in here! And when I say ‘get,’ you’d better get”?

Your mother and you may not have known it, but she spoke in the imperative mood.



Matthew reveals that Jesus used the commanding mood: “Get out here, Peter!”

When Jesus said, “Come,” he didn’t extend Peter an invitation.

Jesus ordered Peter to come out.

Jesus’ command overcame Peter’s fear.

Peter climbed out and started walking.

The high wind kicked Peter in his face and likely created waves up to his knees.

Imagine that happening to you on the water miles from shore.

Sloshing waves sank Peter’s boldness.

We conquer some fears only to face others we never expected.

We often begin godly projects with great confidence and faith.

Unexpected challenges come and we forget God’s power.

Fear and anger begin to sink us.

We’re afraid the project costs too much, or it will offend someone, or **“We’ve never done this.”**

What’s the state of your faith today?

Is your faith in God strong, resolute, and unshakeable?

Or does a slushing on your feet scare the faith out of you? You thought I might say something else didn't you?



Jesus helped Peter into the boat. Peter not only didn't drown; the storm stopped.

- **The Apostles saw Jesus heal sick folks.**
- **They saw him feed masses of people.**
- **Jesus controlled storms and walked on water.**
- **The Apostles also saw real love and concern.**
- **Every guy in the boat worshiped Jesus saying “This is it. You are God's Son, for sure!”¹**
- **Matthew, the writer of our text, was in the boat that night and witnessed everything.**

I don't need to walk on water.

But I know this.

I've seen Jesus in action enough that I intensely believe he's the only Son of God.

He's gotten Norma and me through tough situations when my faith was failing.

And,

If we fully commit our lives to Jesus, change our ways and live for him, we receive increasing confirmation that he's God's only Son.

Our lesson title states: “How to walk on water”

If we repent and live for Jesus to the end, guaranteed—we'll walk on water.

Because later editions of the NIV reflect political correctness and use inaccurate grammar, I recently switched to the New American Standard Bible.

This NASB Revelation 15 Judgment scene caught my attention:

“Then I saw another sign in heaven, great and marvelous, seven angels who had seven plagues, *which are* the last, because in them the wrath of God is finished.

And I saw something like a sea of glass mixed with fire, and those who had been victorious over the beast and his image and the number of his name, standing on the sea of glass, holding harps of God.

Two quick observations:

First, God's plan includes the Judgment, when He will fairly judge all people.

No one will escape the Judgment.

Judging is God's realm, not ours.

Romans 2 clearly states that God doesn't want us to waste time judging others now.

We don't know hearts and minds as he does.

Right now, God wants us to trust him, gladly obey, love one another, and witness for Jesus.



¹ *The Message*

Second, The NASB accurately tells where God’s people gratefully stand after the Judgment—when God’s “wrath is finished.”

Did you notice where they stand and praise God?

When Moses led Israel across the Sea of Reeds, God parted the waters and the Israelites walked on a dry sea bed; water-walls stood on each side.

Exodus 15 tells us the Israelites stood on the opposite side and sang the Song of Moses.

In the NASB scene of *Revelation 15*, the redeemed stand on the sea.

The NIV and many translations read: “**beside the sea,**” but as you see, the NASB reads: “**on the sea**” as does the King James Version.

This difference caught my attention, so I checked. Here’s what I found; you decide which is correct:

The Matthew 14 Greek text regarding Jesus uses the preposition “epi,” which means *over*.

The Greek text of *Revelation 15* also uses the preposition “epi.”

Epi often appears as a prefix in English words such as *epidermis*, the *over* or *top* layer of skin.

Matthew 4:18 describes Jesus beside the sea.

There, Matthew used the preposition *para*, beside.

We use *para* in paramedic, a medic who comes alongside you.

In today’s text, Matthew used “epi,” not “para.”

Thus the NASB and KJV correctly translate: “**And I saw something like a sea of glass mixed with fire, and those who had been victorious over the beast and his image and the number of his name, standing on the sea of glass, holding harps of God.”** If your Bible reads, “*standing beside*” in *Rev. 15*, you might make a notation: “**Should be ‘on.’**”

As Hebrews chapter 3 tells us, Jesus, God’s Son does things a lot better than Moses ever did. Moses remains in his grave; Jesus blasted out of his three days after his enemies killed him.

If we honor and please God, not our friends, family, political party, or our desire for money, we’ll not only walk on water, we’ll *stand on* the crystal sea with that loving crowd in eternity.

Without masks or human restrictions we’ll sing the song of Moses, the bond-servant of God, and the song of the Jesus the Lamb:

‘Great and marvelous are Your works, O Lord God, the Almighty; Righteous and true are Your ways, King of the nations!’”

God bless you as you faithfully serve God through our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ!

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