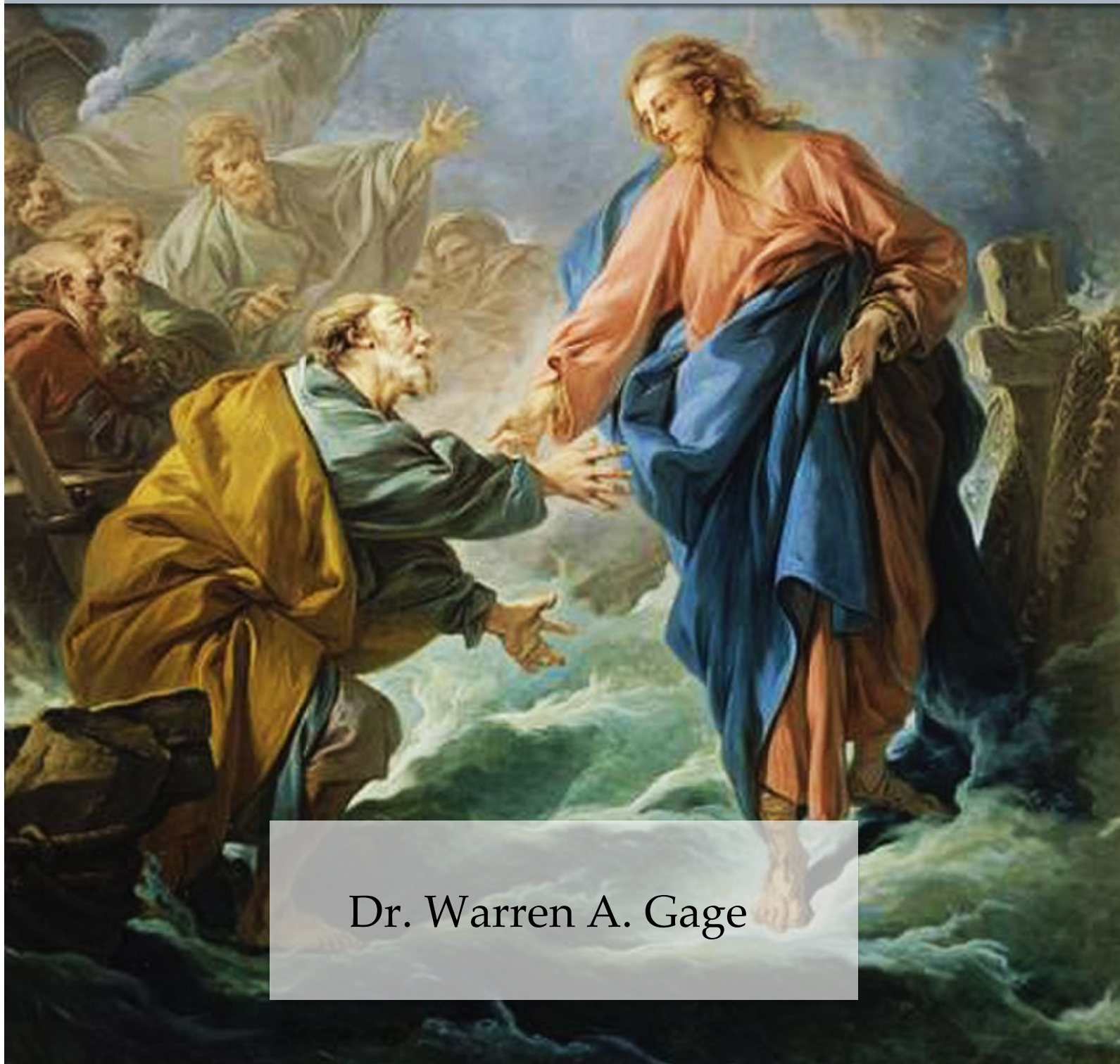




The Alexandrian Forum

JESUS WALKS ON THE SEA

MATTHEW 14



Dr. Warren A. Gage

Christ in all of Scripture

Jesus Walks on the Sea

Matthew 14:13-32

Read the Passage

Matthew 14:13-32

¹³When Jesus heard it, He departed from there by boat to a deserted place by Himself. But when the multitudes heard it, they followed Him on foot from the cities.

¹⁴And when Jesus went out He saw a great multitude; and He was moved with compassion for them, and healed their sick. ¹⁵When it was evening, His disciples came to Him, saying, "This is a deserted place, and the hour is already late. Send the multitudes away, that they may go into the villages and buy themselves food."

¹⁶But Jesus said to them, "They do not need to go away. You give them something to eat." ¹⁷And they said to Him, "We have here only five loaves and two fish." ¹⁸He said, "Bring them here to Me." ¹⁹Then He commanded the multitudes to sit down on the grass. And He took the five loaves and the two fish, and looking up to heaven, He blessed and broke and gave the loaves to the disciples; and the disciples gave to the multitudes. ²⁰So they all ate and were filled, and they took up twelve baskets full of the fragments that remained. ²¹Now those who had eaten were about five thousand men, besides women and children.

²²Immediately Jesus made His disciples get into the boat and go before Him to the other side, while He sent the multitudes away. ²³And when He had sent the multitudes away, He went up on the mountain by Himself to pray. Now when evening came, He was alone there. ²⁴But the boat was now in the middle of the sea, tossed by the waves, for the wind was contrary.

²⁵Now in the fourth watch of the night Jesus went to them, walking on the sea. ²⁶And when the disciples saw Him walking on the sea, they were troubled, saying, "It is a ghost!" And they cried out for fear. ²⁷But immediately Jesus spoke to them, saying, "Be of good cheer! It is I; do not be afraid." ²⁸And Peter answered Him and said, "Lord, if it is You, command me to come to You on the water." ²⁹So He said, "Come." And when Peter had come down out of the boat, he walked on the water to go to Jesus. ³⁰But when he saw that the wind was boisterous, he was afraid; and beginning to sink he cried out, saying, "Lord, save me!" ³¹And immediately Jesus stretched out His hand and caught him, and said to him, "O you of little faith, why did you doubt?" ³²And when they got into the boat, the wind ceased.



"Jesus Walks on the Sea"
by Ivan Aivazovsky
1888



JESUS WALKS ON THE SEA

1. **Jesus directs his disciples to feed the multitude of five thousand men with bread he provides by blessing and breaking the loaves** (Matt 14:13-21).
2. **Jesus separates himself from the disciples, instructing them to embark on a boat and cross the Sea of Galilee, where he will meet them** (Matt 14:22).
3. **Jesus goes to a mountain alone to pray** (Matt 14:23).
4. **The disciples, when separated from Jesus, are distressed** by powerful and adverse winds upon the sea (Matt 14:24).
5. **After three watches** in the night, the disciples see Jesus appearing to walk on the sea. **They are terrified and cry out in fear, thinking they are seeing Jesus' ghost** (Matt 14:25-26).
6. Jesus calls out to his disciples, saying, **"Fear not!"** (Matt 14:27).
7. **Peter** asks to come to Jesus on the sea, but **suffers a public failure of faith, uttering three words of folly** (Matt 14:28-30).
8. **Jesus rescues Peter**, and they enter the boat. **The disciples worship Jesus with the confession, "Truly you are the Son of God"** (Matt 14:32-33).

JESUS' SUFFERING & GLORY

1. **Jesus takes bread** at the Passover, **blesses and breaks it, and directs his disciples to partake. They will later share this supper with the multitudes of believers** (Matt 26:26; cf. 1 Cor 11:23-26).
2. **Jesus directs his disciples to persevere while he is separated from them, assuring them he will see them in Galilee** (Matt 26:31-32).
3. **Jesus goes to the Mount of Olives (Gethsemane) to pray alone** (Matt 26:36, 39).
4. **The disciples are separated from Jesus and are distressed** and perplexed (Matt 26:56).
5. **Three days after** Jesus is crucified, the disciples hear that Jesus has been raised from the dead (Matt 28:6-7). He appears to them, but **they fear that he is a spirit** (Luke 24:37).
6. Jesus tells his disciples, **"Fear not!"** (Matt 28:10).
7. **Peter has a public failure of faith, uttering three denials of Jesus** (Matt 26:34, 69-75).
8. **Jesus rescues Peter** (John 21:15 -17). **The disciples meet Jesus and worship him** (Matt 28:16-17), of whom **the centurion had confessed, "Truly this one was the Son of God"** (Matt 27:54).



Prophetic Narrative of the Gospel in the Text

1. There is a clear correspondence between the accounts of Jesus feeding the five thousand and the institution of the Eucharist. At the feeding in the wilderness, Jesus miraculously multiplies the bread to a quantity that fully satisfies the entire assembly. Jesus blesses and then breaks the physical bread, which represents his own body that was to be broken to satisfy the spiritual hunger of his people. Jesus distributes the miraculous bread through his own hands and then through the hands of his disciples to the multitudes.

All of these particulars will find an expression in the Memorial Supper Jesus will inaugurate at the Passover, the celebration of the Eucharist or the "Last Supper." The correspondence between the two accounts is reinforced by the sequence of analogies to the Passion narrative in which the account of the feeding of the five thousand is embedded.

- 2.-3. After the wilderness feeding, Jesus intentionally sends his disciples across the sea to Galilee, where he promises to meet them. He is separated from the disciples for a season of prayer upon the Mount of Solitude. This corresponds to the Lord's being separated from his disciples upon his arrest in Gethsemane, the garden at the foot of the Mount of Olives, where Jesus likewise sought a season of prayer. After the resurrection, Jesus instructed the disciples to proceed to Galilee, where he would meet them (Matt 28:7).
4. The disciples, sent across the sea, were met with adverse winds. These severe challenges underscored the helplessness of the disciples when Jesus was not among them. The adversity and danger of the disciples upon the sea anticipated the adversity and danger the disciples would experience when Jesus was taken from them in death.
5. In the fourth watch of the night, that is, after three watches, Jesus appeared to the disciples, whose boat was being battered by the winds. The Savior appeared miraculously, walking on the sea. The disciples assumed Jesus was dead and that they were seeing his immaterial apparition or ghost.

Three days after Jesus was crucified, he appeared to the women, who then reported to the disciples that angels said he had miraculously risen from death. The incredulous disciples assumed the women had seen Jesus' immaterial spirit.

6. Jesus, who came to his disciples walking on the sea, told them to "Fear not!" Likewise, Jesus' word to the disciples after his resurrection was "Fear not!"
7. Embedded in both accounts is a narrative of Peter's spectacular three-fold failure and Jesus' restoration of his disciple. Peter uttered three words of folly upon seeing Jesus during the storm, anticipating his three denials of Jesus during the Passion.



Peter's first word of folly was to say, with the rest of the disciples regarding Jesus, "It is his ghost!" (Matt 14:26). His second word was "Lord, if it is you, command me to come to you on the water" (Matt 14:28). Peter's failure of faith was the basis of his third and final word "Lord, save me!" (Matt 14:30). Both accounts have restoration narratives for Peter.

8. Both accounts conclude with a confession of Jesus as Lord, worthy of worship (Matt 14:32-33; Matt 27:54).

Gospel Takeaways from the Text

1. Jesus in kindness rehearses our times of testing, intending always to fortify our faith for the hour of trial. But even if we fail spectacularly, like Peter, Jesus will save us when we cry out to him. What a Savior!
2. The rhythm of grace is gospel suffering followed by glory. The sequence is determined by God. It is designed to strengthen our **faith** and to give us **hope**, for glory always follows suffering. And in all of his providence, God is marking us with the same gospel Jesus knew, inviting us to share in his cross but always with the assurance we will share in his crown as well. By such means we know the Savior's **love**. These three: **faith, hope, and love**. But the greatest of all is the **love** of Jesus!





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Every blessing in Christ,

Dr. Warren A. Gage
President of the Alexandrian Forum



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