

Today's Truth

Between three and six o'clock in the morning, Jesus came to them, walking on the water. When his followers saw him walking on the water, they were afraid. They said, 'It's a ghost!' and cried out in fear. But Jesus quickly spoke to them, 'Have courage! It is I. Do not be afraid.' Peter said, 'Lord, if it is really you, then command me to come to you on the water. Jesus said, 'Come.' And Peter left the boat and walked on the water to Jesus. But when Peter saw the wind and the waves, he became afraid and began to sink. He shouted, 'Lord, save me!' Immediately Jesus reached out his hand and caught Peter. (Matthew 14: 25-31, NCV)

Friend to Friend

Jesus and His disciples fed more than five thousand people with only five loaves of bread and two fish. Now that is what I call a miracle! The disciples not only saw the miracle Jesus performed, but were the ones Jesus actually commissioned to distribute the bread and fish.

Witnessing the miracles of Jesus was not a new experience for the disciples. In fact, I am fairly certain they considered themselves mature, devoted and unshakable disciples. But when Jesus sent them out onto the water in a small fishing boat while He went up into the hills to pray – their faith was put to the test.

Everything was fine – the disciples' faith intact – until the storm hit. It is easy to believe God when the skies are blue and the nets are full of fish. How strong is our faith when we are clinging to the side of a rocking boat in the death grip of a brutal storm? The disciples cried out in fear, and Jesus came – at the right time and in the right way. Like the disciples, we often question God's timing and His ways. When they don't translate into methods we can understand, we surrender our faith to the tyranny of fear. Fully devoted followers of Christ are willing to forsake the known for the unknown. They choose to trust God and walk by faith – not by sight or human logic. The response of Jesus to the disciples' fear was encouragement and a call to step out in faith and obedience. The only taker in the boat was Peter.

Matthew 14:28-29 (NCV) "Peter said, 'Lord, if it is really You, then command me to come to You on the water.' Jesus said, 'Come.' And Peter left the boat and walked on the water to Jesus."

Faith demands a willingness to give up what we can see in exchange for what we cannot see.

"Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen" (Hebrews 11:1, NKJV). This verse indicates a persuasion or conviction in response to unseen evidence. But just because we can't see it, does not mean it isn't there.

As a fisherman, Peter knew all about boats and storms. However, I feel safe in saying that Peter had probably never tried walking on any kind of water, much less tempestuous water. It didn't matter. Jesus said, "Come." Jesus wrapped a world of truth in that one word. Strength for every trial, faith for every storm, courage for every conflict, the promise of His presence and absolutely everything we need to obey is promised to those who are willing to leave the safety of the boat and "come" to Jesus. God never forces us into obedience. He invites us to obey and leaves the choice to us.

Peter chose obedience when he slipped off his sandals, hitched up his robe and climbed over the side of that boat. Peter left the *known* behind and stepped through his fear in a radical faith that pleased God. Peter then did what we all have done at some point in life. He took his eyes off of Jesus.

And when he began to sink, Peter cried out in fear. I love the fact that Jesus *immediately* reached out and grabbed the flailing hand of Peter. I would probably have let the doubting disciple sink like a stone to teach him a lesson. Not Jesus. Grace covered it all – the storm, the sin and Peter’s plea for rescue. Love heard Peter’s cry. Mercy saved him.

What about you, friend? Are you trapped in a storm, clinging to the sides of a rocking boat and wondering where God is and why He is silent? Is your heart in the grip of fear and doubt? Cry out to God. Take one step of faith, and He will meet you there.

Let’s Pray

Father, my heart is filled with doubt and I am afraid. I want to believe You, Lord. I want to step out in faith, trusting You to meet me at the point of my greatest need, but I am so weak. Please teach me to listen for Your voice above the crashing waves of fear and the deadly whispers of human logic. Give me the strength to keep my eyes on You – no matter what my sea of circumstances may be.

In Jesus’ Name,
Amen.

Now It’s Your Turn

Read Psalm 56:3 (NIV) “When I am afraid, I put my trust in You.” What do you think it means to “put” your trust in God? Right now, take a step of faith by making the choice to let peace rule in your heart.