

The Gospel Of Matthew

Title: Worshipping The Son Of God

Text: Matthew 14:22-33

Introduction: The miracle of the feeding of the 5,000 was essentially for the disciples, cf. vs. 19-20. As the disciples reached into the basket it never ran out, and in fact, there were leftovers. They were satisfied, which is a term that often means an animal who has stood at the trough and ate until he was full. Now Jesus sends the crowds away, and sent the disciples on the boat to go ahead of Him.

The word “made” literally means “compelled” them to go.

POINT 1 - A TIME OF PRAYER AND REST (VS. 23)

No matter what you do, work, ministry, teaching, there are times you need refreshing. A time to hear from God without any distractions. Specifically a time to pray. So I want to ask the question. Why don't we spend specific moments just praying? You don't have to have a “prayer closet” literally. You need time alone with God. You need to hear from Him. Not in some formation of clouds or tree bark that looks like Jesus' face.

Prayer is vital to our spiritual health. We don't pray to change God's will, we pray to know God's will. The best example of this is Jonah. Jesus also expressed the need to pray and for His disciples, Luke 22:32, **“but I have prayed for you, that your faith may not fail; and you, when once you have turned again, strengthen your brothers.”** The reason for this was the verse before, **“Simon, Simon, behold, Satan has demanded permission to sift you like wheat”** (Luke 22:31). John 17:6-26 is the most descriptive, hopeful, and joyful prayer for us that Jesus prayed. And we should begin to understand that time alone with God in prayer helps us to know where, how and what to do. We need it!

POINT 2 - PROOF OF HIS DIVINE KNOWLEDGE (VS. 24-25)

Something for us to consider, Jesus sent them away, and He knew there was a storm coming. The translations render the boat “a long way” or “the midst” of the sea, but it is best understood they were about three or four miles away from the shore. Scripture interprets Scripture as well, John 6:19, **“Then, when they had rowed about three or four miles, they saw Jesus walking on the sea and drawing near to the boat; and they were frightened.”** This storm had carried them out further than normal.

The little boat was battered, carrying them further and further away from the sea towards disaster. In Mark's account he gives us this detail, **“Seeing them straining at the oars, for the wind was against them”** (Mark 6:46). The very fact that He knew there would be a storm and sent them into it, proves His sovereign power of all, and what He does has a purpose in it all, even in the storms.

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He came to them. Note this important, glorious hope. He came to them. Could He have come sooner? Could He have come to Lazarus sooner? In fact, He could have done miracles and not even been there. He did so with the centurions servant, **“Go; it shall be done for you as you have believed. And the servant was healed that very moment”** (Matthew 8:13). The storms batter some of you at times. The delays seems as if God is silent. But the storms and the delays aren’t without purpose. It seems He allowed Martha and Mary, and the disciples to reach a deep need before He intervened. It was John 11:32, **“Lord, if You had been here, my brother would not have died.”** Had you been there? Thinking if God had only been there something would or would not have happened. Furthermore, in John 11:39 when told to remove the stone, it was Martha who said that **“he stinks by now.”** What’s the point of this in our text? Jesus sent them away, into a storm, so He could be glorified. And God is going to be glorified in your storm, or trial or delay.

Don’t act as if God is unaware of what you are enduring. Exodus 3:7, **“The Lord said, I have surely seen the affliction of My people who are in Egypt, and have given heed to their cry because of their taskmasters, for I am aware of their sufferings.”** Furthermore, it was God who provided at the last moment a ram for Abraham. God’s not late. God’s not out of touch.

POINT 3 - PROOF OF HIS DIVINE PROTECTION (VS. 26-27)

Let’s define a few things about their response. It was about 3-6am. The Bible describes first they were terrified. The word mean “physically troubled.” Cried out means “to scream.” Fear means “dread, terrified.” And we know that fear is healthy when in respect to God. But this wasn’t a godly fear. There’s no doubt they terrified of one walking on the water. The fact is they didn’t really expect it to be Jesus.

Note: A lot of liberals think the boat was just a few feet from the shore. They assume the disciples were “seeing” things because they were tired. Scripture doesn’t even give credence to this. Clearly out in the sea, clearly they all saw the same thing.

Jesus spoke to them in the midst of the raging sea, the wind, and their fear stricken hearts, **“It is I.”** There’s one thing we know for sure, in the midst of storms we can know the Master’s voice. In the midst of the storm it wasn’t a time to ask why or for what reason, the hope is He was there.

Application: Jesus didn’t teach nor was it His purpose to teach them to walk on water, no one else ever did. He affirms He is there. He affirms He is protective. He affirms He is their God. We will never be in a place where God cannot find us. We will never be left alone. He will never leave nor forsake you, cf. Hebrews 13:5. There are times where we are anxious, times where we are pressured from life’s issues, but never should we doubt that God isn’t our hope, or He’s not around, remember these great comforting words, **“It is I.”**

POINT 4 - PROOF OF HIS LOVE (VS. 28-31)

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This account is one of the most popular texts where we look at the doubts of Peter. And while that remains true to some degree, no one else got out, and Peter was well aware of the dangers of the sea. This is why he said, “**command me to come.**” Jesus commanded him and he went. Peter didn’t ask to walk on water, he simply wanted to be with Jesus. The storm was still raging too.

Peter can be faulted for a lot of things. His love for Jesus was weak and imperfect, but it was real. He would deny Him three times. Peter assumed it was safer on the water than in the boat. He said to Him to in John 13:9, “**Not my feet only, but also my hands and my head.**” He was bold. He was off the wall quick to judge and act. But he loved Jesus, and followed Him closely.

A few thoughts about Jesus’ command to come. Jesus didn’t command Peter to do something sinful. His command was one of love for Peter, come to me! Don’t doubt. Don’t question. Come. But as with all of us, the jump from the boat was easy, but the waters and the wind began to be real in the water. The situation looked different from the water and not the boat.

Let’s be clear that Peter walked on water, literally. He wasn’t concerned with anything else. Many of us are like this. We are faithful to know and believe God’s word in the boat, but when we get in the middle of the storm, outside the safety of the boat, we sink. Let’s be clear about the text and what happened to Peter.

He took his eyes off Jesus for a moment. It doesn’t take long for faith to sink. Our weakest moments are when we look at our circumstances, and not God’s secure, steadfast, sound and solid word. It’s been said he had enough faith to get out but not enough to cross. I suppose we all fall into that category. James 1:12, “**Blessed is the man who preserves under trial.**” As we trust God in the faith we have, we discover it’s limitations, but it’s then when the faithfulness of God takes over, and we discover what it can become.

Let’s not forget this important point, when Peter’s faith “ran out” by looking at the wind, what did he do? He cried out to God. Is that faith? Of course it is. What was the response of Jesus? Immediately, Jesus stretched out His hand and took hold of him. Aren’t you glad and hopeful today that when you have exhausted your faith in human terms, that when you cry out, God reaches out His hand. Yes, Jesus said he had little faith. Was it a rebuke or just something to be made aware of? Peter had been rowing all night, it was stormy and as he departed the boat, he lost his sight, as we do. It is said that little faith is better than no faith. No one else got out of the boat.

Peter would later write, “**In this you greatly rejoice, even though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been distressed by various trials, so that the proof of your faith, being more precious than gold which is perishable, even though tested by fire, may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ**” (1 Peter 1:6-7).

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POINT 5 - PROOF OF HIS POWER (VS. 32-33)

Seems a worship time broke out when the wind stopped and they got in the boat. What brings about worship in us? Not just a few hours on Sunday morning, but when we recognize the power of God, what He has done in our lives, how He has strengthened our faith by His actions, we simply worship Him for who He is.

This action by Jesus and what they saw brought them to fully admit of His sovereign, deity of being the Son of God.

Has your faith reached its limit? Are you looking around at the storm? Have you cried out to the Lord? He is faithful even when we are not.