

July 11, 2021



Oaks Early Risers Bible Class

The Oaks Baptist Church
Grand Prairie, Texas

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Rescued from Doubt (Cont.) Matt 14:22-33

Lesson Background and Introduction

Matthew, Mark, and John place the account of today's text (absent from Luke) after the account of the feeding of the 5,000. (Mark 6:45-52 and John 6:16-21 are the parallel accounts of today's text.) Jesus' power was very much on display in that feeding, but so was the disciples' limitation in their thinking (Matthew 14:15-17)—even though it was by then the third year of Jesus' public ministry. The 12 disciples were witnesses to these events, which should have inspired confidence in Jesus. Peter sometimes said and did impressive things. Today's text shows Peter doing something remarkable during a crisis of faith. When he began to doubt, he almost snatched defeat from the jaws of victory! Peter had a problem with consistency. But Peter is not the most important character in this story. Jesus is. Jesus' power was greater than Peter's doubt, just as it is greater than our doubts. Trusting the Lord, whom we do not see, is hard to maintain when the negative things we do see test our faith. The resulting doubt is the proof that our faith is being tested. Is doubt, then, a symptom of inconsistent faith? It can be if it is never resolved, if it leads us to abandon our hope and trust in Christ. But if doubt prompts us to call out to the Lord for help, then doubt is a seeking faith—faith that seeks understanding, faith that seeks the divine word of peace in the middle of fear. When you experienced doubt, did you call out to the Lord? Perhaps you are crying out for help right now. You can know that the Lord hears you and that the certainty of his faithfulness is more important than the size of your faith. Or maybe your boat is sailing smoothly right now, and you barely think about the Lord's not being in the boat with you. Realize that a time will come when the winds will blow against you all night. And though it may seem that you are alone on the waves, the Lord knows your distress and will come to you if you bid him do so. Remember: he is with you right now as well. He is always with his people, to the end of the age.

(Adapted from the NIV Standard Lesson Commentary)

Another Storm - Jesus had multiplied one little boy's humble lunch and fed over 5,000 people. After the astounding miracle, the disciples picked up 12 baskets full of leftovers. Jesus then commanded them to board a boat and cross the Sea of Galilee to Bethsaida. He, instead, climbed up a mountain away from the people to spend time alone with His heavenly Father. Very early the next morning, the men found themselves in the middle of the lake in a violent storm. Important lessons were about to be learned: keep your focus on God instead of circumstances. Previously, Jesus had been in the boat when a sudden storm arose on the sea. The Master had stood up and simply spoken the wind and waves into a calm sea. But now the men and the boat were about three miles from the shore—without the Savior in the boat. As the men desperately fought the strong winds, they suddenly they looked up and thought they saw Jesus walking on water—about to pass by the boat! Were they seeing a spirit? The sound of Jesus' voice answered their question: "It is I."

A Bold Disciple - Peter boldly trusted the Lord. If it was Him, Peter would walk on the sea to Jesus. Jesus beckoned Peter, and Peter climbed out of the human-made boat and placed his feet on a God-made body of water. He made his way toward Jesus with his eyes fixed on the Lord. Yet, Peter soon doubted. He focused on the rough waves all around, and they appeared more powerful than Jesus. Peter then began to sink, but he cried out for the Master to save him. Jesus quickly reached out and kept him from drowning, Why did Peter doubt? Jesus asked. Why did his focus become the raging sea? When the two of them climbed into the boat, the wind died down, and the disciples worshiped Jesus. Truly He is the Son of God!

When the Storms Rage - Peter's failure to continue his walk on the water gives us an excellent object lesson. When life gets challenging, where do we place our focus: on the troubling situation, or a faithful, never-failing God?

(Adapted from the Echoes Commentary)

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK:
Remembering God's goodness is a good cure for doubt

POEM FOR THE WEEK:
When faith grows weak and doubts arise Recall God's love and tender care; Remind yourself of all He's done And of those times He answered prayer.
—D. De Haan

SCRIPTURE FOR THE WEEK:
I will remember the works of the Lord; Surely I will remember Your wonders of old
(Ps 77:11 NKJV)
(from "Our Daily Bread", Jan 04, 2002)

New Series: Confident Hope

UNIT 1: Jesus Teaches About Faith

NEXT WEEK
Attitude of Gratitude
(Luke 17:11-19)

NOTES AND CROSS-REFERENCES

Prayer in Solitude (Matt 14:22-24)

Solitude from people (22-23)

- In solitude God will hear secret things (Matt 6:6)
- In solitude God can explain things better (Mark 4:34)
- In solitude but God is always with us (John 16:32)
- In solitude to be alone with God (Matt 14:23)

Solitude from distractions (24)

- No distraction to have time of communion with God (Mark 1:35)
- No distraction to come to terms with sin and its indignation (Isa 26:20)
- No distraction to wait on God's answer in patient expectation (Ps 5:3)
- No distraction by getting rid of anything that hinders (Heb 12:1)
- No distraction by putting off corrupt conduct (Eph 4:22)
- No distraction by putting off things of the old nature (Col 3:8-11)

Jesus Comes to His Disciples (Matt 14:25-27)

Jesus can come at night (25)

- Jesus can come while praying at night (Ps 55:16-17)
- Jesus can come at night so keep watch (Isa 62:6-7)
- Jesus can come when we wait patiently (James 5:7-8)

Jesus' coming can be unexpected (26)

- Unexpected because of not knowing the day He will come (Matt 24:42)
- Unexpected like a thief in the night (1 Thess 5:2-3)
- Unexpected because He could come in a twinkling of an eye (1 Cor 15:52)

Jesus comes to bring courage (27)

- Encouragement during affliction (Ps 10:17-18)
- Encouragement that leads to unity (Rom 15:5)
- Encouragement from being united with Jesus (Phil 2:1)
- Encouragement that is eternal (2 Thess 2:16)

Peter's Faith, Doubt and Rescue (Matt 14:28-33)

Faith requested and given to come to Jesus (28-29)

- Faith requested to overcome unbelief (Mark 9:24)
- Faith requested so that it will be increased (Luke 17:5-6)
- Faith given because of being a child of God (Luke 11:13)
- Faith given because God gave His Son (Rom 8:32)

Doubt because of fear (30)

- Doubt because human limitations (Gen 17:15-19)
- Doubt, but with God all things are possible (Matt 19:26)
- Doubt that should be turned into perseverance (James 1:4-6)
- Doubt that should be helped (Jude 1:22)
- Doubt that should turn into reliance on God (Mark 11:22-24)

Rescue results in deliverance and worship (31-33)

- Rescued because God knows how to rescue godly people (2 Peter 2:9)
- Rescued because He can rescue from all harm (Job 5:19)
- Rescued because He promises it to the righteous (Ps 34:15-17)
- Rescued because He is faithful (1 Cor 10:13)