

Faith-Walking
(Matthew 14:22-32)
March 6, 2016
GFC

INTRODUCTION:

2 Corinthians 5:7 (NKJV)

For we walk by faith, not by sight.

- True Biblical Faith is NOT BLIND
- It is a MEANS of LIVING by being INFORMED of a GREATER REALITY
 - Natural Reality and SUPERNatural Reality
 - “Super” = overrides, exceeds

BACKDROP:

- Jesus had just fed the multitude of 5,000 men
- He INSTRUCTED the disciples to GO OVER TO THE OTHER SIDE OF THE LAKE
- He dismissed the crowd and went into the hills alone to pray
- It was just about evening when this happened

“FAITH-WALKING” = *HOW GOD CAN MAKE A “ROCK” FLOAT*

FIVE LESSONS FROM PETER’S EXPERIENCE:

I. NEGATIVE CIRCUMSTANCES DON’T CHANGE WHAT GOD HAS SPOKEN:

- Jesus had ALREADY INSTRUCTED THEM TO GO - God had spoken
 - They OBEYED: by NIGHTFALL, Jesus was on the mountain praying and the disciples were far from land IN TROUBLE (3am):

NOTE:

**TROUBLE ARISING IN THE MIDST OF YOUR OBEDIENCE TO GOD’S WORD
DOESN’T CHANGE THE FACT THAT GOD HAS SPOKEN!**

- It was on the heels of a MIGHTY MIRACLE (feeding 5,000)
- It may be that God spoke on the heels of a **GREAT SERVICE; RECEIVING A PROPHETIC WORD (CONFIRMED); SOME REVELATION OF THE SPIRIT IN PRAYER; ETC.**
- **WHAT GOD SAYS IN THE SUNLIGHT DOESN’T CHANGE WHEN NIGHTFALLS AND YOUR TOO FAR FROM LAND TO GO BACK!!**

II. THE STRESS OF OUR STRUGGLE OFTEN CAUSES US TO FAIL TO RECOGNIZE GOD WHEN HE SHOWS UP:

- When Jesus came WALKING ON THE WATER 8 hours later in a storm - they THOUGHT IT WAS A GHOST - (the CASPER EFFECT)
- **FEAR** - can cause us to fail to recognize HIM in the storm (DO WE PRESUME IF HE WERE THERE, THE STORM WOULDN'T BE THERE?)
- **FATIGUE** - When we fail to GET REST in our PHYSICAL NATURE, it can DISTORT our perception of SPIRITUAL things
- **GRIEF** - (any strong emotion) can also cause us to MISS GOD in the midst of it (Mary didn't recognize Jesus in the Garden at the Resurrection)

NOTE:

WE NEED TO LEARN TO DISCERN GOD'S VOICE IN THE MIDST OF A STORM!

WE NEED TO LEARN TO P.U.S.H. = PRAY UNTIL SOMETHING HAPPENS!

- A woman in CHILDBIRTH - "PUSH"
- **PUSH past negative circumstances, negative emotions, negative people**
- NO DOUBT the disciples were ***PRAYING VERY LOUD AND VERY SHORT PRAYERS IN THE STORM***
- ***KEEP DOING WHAT YOU KNOW TO DO IN THE STORM - DON'T STOP***
- ***PRAY, READ/MEDITATE ON WORD, HEAR GOD'S VOICE SAY, 'IT'S ME', I'M IN THIS WITH YOU!***

NOTE:

I'D RATHER BE WITH JESUS IN A STORM THAN WITHOUT HIM ON IN COMFORT!

III. FAITH DESIRES TO IMITATE JESUS!

- Has Peter LOST HIS MIND at this point?
- Did he shock the other disciples by what he said?
- Did they think he was being foolish, ridiculous? TOO SUPER SPIRITUAL?
- **HE SHOULD HAVE ASKED JESUS TO STOP THE STORM!**

John 14:12 (NLT)

I tell you the truth, anyone who believes in me ***will do the same works I have done***, and even greater works, because I am going to be with the Father.

- Did Peter FIND his mind or LOSE it? = ***"I WANT TO DO THAT!"***

NOTE:

JESUS' MINISTRY WAS, "DOING WHAT HE SAW THE FATHER DO AND SPEAKING WHAT HE HEARD THE FATHER SPEAK"

QUESTION:

DO YOU WANT TO DO WHAT YOU SEE JESUS DOING?

NOTE:

WHEN THAT'S YOUR DESIRE, THE *REALITY* OF THE WIND AND WAVES ARE OVERRIDDEN BY THE PRESENCE AND EXAMPLE OF JESUS CHRIST!!

THE NATURAL REALITY WAS OVERRIDDEN BY THE SUPERNATURAL REALITY!

"IF IT'S YOU, TELL ME TO COME" - SHORT PRAYER IS THE BEST PRAYER

IV. FAITH-WALKING MEANS LEARNING TO BE GOD-DEPENDENT:

- Peter had to **SHIFT HIS WEIGHT**
- He needed to **CHANGE HIS STANCE** from the foot **INSIDE** to the foot **OUTSIDE** the boat
- **INSIDE:** from the familiar, the known, the comfortable, self-reliance
- **OUTSIDE:** the unfamiliar, unknown, uncomfortable, **GOD-DEPENDENCE**

NOTE:

FAITH-WALKING MEANS MOVING OUT ON WHAT GOD IS SPEAKING AND DOING WHILE YOU MAY STILL NOT UNDERSTAND OR KNOW COMPLETELY, LEAVING THE RESULTS IN GOD'S HANDS.

ILLUSTRATION: TESTIMONY OF OUR FIRST NEW CAR

V. TURNING OUR "WHAT IFS" INTO "SO WHATS":

- The **THREAT** of **WINDS** and **WAVES** - **MUST BE MANAGED**
- **FIRST: BY KEEPING OUR EYES AND HEARTS FOCUSED ON JESUS**
 - **TWO RULES:**
 1. Don't let **YOUR CIRCUMSTANCES** (waves) force you into a bad decision
 2. Don't let **YOUR EMOTIONS** (winds) force you into a bad decision
- **SECOND: TURN YOUR "WHAT-IFS" INTO "SO-WHATS"**

- **WHAT IF I START TO SINK? SO WHAT, JESUS IS HERE TO RESCUE ME**
- **WHAT IF I DON'T MAKE IT ALL THE WAY? SO WHAT, JESUS WILL LIFT ME UP**
- **WHAT IF NOBODY ELSE JOINS WITH ME? SO WHAT, YOU WALKED ON WATER WITH JESUS**

EPILOGUE/CLOSE: (v32)

- **They climbed back into the boat together (Peter stepped out alone, walked back together)**
- **Jesus didn't get him this far to let him drown!**
- **He didn't let his struggle cancel out his progress!**
- **THEY WALKED BACK TO THE BOAT ON THE WATER!!**

LESSON:

WE'RE GOING TO MAKE IT! I MAY DO SO DRY OR SOAKING WET, BUT I'M GOING TO MAKE IT!

PRAYER: