

BELIEVING IN MIRACLES / Sunday, December 28, 2014

Unifying Topic: IN AWE OF CHRIST'S POWER

Lesson Text

I. **Jesus Walks On The Water** (Matthew 14:22-26)

II. **Jesus' Presence Brings Comfort And Hope** (Matthew 14:27-31)

III. **The Disciples Worshiped Jesus** (Matthew 14:32-36)

Lesson Text: And when they were come into the ship, the wind ceased. Then they that were in the ship came and worshipped him, saying, Of a truth thou art the Son of God., as it was told unto them. (Matthew 2:32-33, KJV).

Unifying Principle: Many things inspire awe in people. How do Christians know what is truly worth their reverence? Matthew tells about the times when Jesus miraculously walked on water to meet His Disciples in a boat, which led them to worship Him as truly the Son of God, and which Jesus healed the sick.

Lesson Aim: To review how different people responded to the miracles that Jesus performed.

Life Aim: To foster a greater appreciation for the power and love of Jesus after learning about the different kinds of miracles He performed.

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- 14:22 And straightway Jesus constrained his disciples to get into a ship, and to go before him unto the other side, while he sent the multitudes away.
- 14:23 And when he had sent the multitudes away, he went up into a mountain apart to pray: and when the evening was come, he was there alone.
- 14:24 But the ship was now in the midst of the sea, tossed with waves: for the wind was contrary.
- 14:25 And in the fourth watch of the night Jesus went unto them, walking on the sea.
- 14:26 And when the disciples saw him walking on the sea, they were troubled, saying, It is a spirit; and they cried out for fear.
- 14:27 But straightway Jesus spake unto them, saying, Be of good cheer; it is I; be not afraid.
- 14:28 And Peter answered him and said, Lord, if it be thou, bid me come unto thee on the water.
- 14:29 And he said, Come. And when Peter was come down out of the ship, he walked on the water, to go to Jesus.
- 14:30 But when he saw the wind boisterous, he was afraid; and beginning to sink, he cried, saying, Lord, save me.
- 14:31 And immediately Jesus stretched forth his hand, and caught him, and said unto him, O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?
- 14:32 And when they were come into the ship, the wind ceased.
- 14:33 Then they that were in the ship came and worshipped him, saying, Of a truth thou art the Son of God.
- 14:34 And when they were gone over, they came into the land of Gennesaret.
- 14:35 And when the men of that place had knowledge of him, they sent out into all that country round about, and brought unto him all that were diseased;
- 14:36 And besought him that they might only touch the hem of his garment: and as many as touched were made perfectly whole.

HISTORY:

Matthew 14:1-12 ¹When Herod heard about Jesus and His miraculous powers, he was sure that John the Baptist had risen from the dead (v.1-2). This was Herod Antipas who ruled over a fourth of Palestine. His father, Herod the great was the one who had ordered the Bethlehem babies killed (Matt.2:16). Herod Antipas was living with Herodias, his sister-in-law, the wife of his half-brother Philip, so this was an immoral relationship (v.3). Boldly, John the Baptist warned Herod and called him to repent (v.4). Instead of listening to God's servant and obeying God's Word, Herod arrested John and imprisoned him in the "fortress of Makers" (now called Massada) on a mountain about four miles east of the Dead Sea which was where one of Herod's palaces was located (v.5). He would have executed John, but he was afraid a riot would break out because of John's popularity. When Herod's birthday was celebrated, Herodias, one of the most wicked and perverse women mentioned in Scripture plotted to have her teen-age daughter perform a lewd dance before her stepfather, the king (vv.6-11). The king who was thought to be in a drunken stupor promised with an oath to give her whatever she wanted. She followed her mother's request and John the Baptist's head was brought to her on a platter. Now hearing about the marvelous work of Jesus, Herod was sure John had been raised from the dead. Jesus' disciples came and took up the body, and buried it, and went and told Jesus (v.12).

²When Jesus heard the news of John's murder He quickly withdrew from that area and went by ship to a lonely place

¹ <http://www.family-times.net/commentary/herod-antipas-false-assumption/>

² <http://www.family-times.net/commentary/steps-to-problem-solving/>
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(v.13). The people watched where Jesus and His disciples were going and a great crowd walked along the shore and met Him when He landed (v.14). Although Jesus desperately needed rest the multitudes touched His heart. When evening came the disciples wanted to send the crowds away because they were in a remote place and had nothing to feed so many people (v.15). Certainly they knew He was powerful enough to meet the need and yet they did not turn to Him for help. This is so much like many of God's people today. For some reason, it is never the right time or place for God to work. Note the steps that Jesus taught His disciples that we need to take in *solving problems* (14:16-19):

1. Start with what you have - Andrew found a lad who had a small lunch.
2. Give what you have to Jesus - The boy was willing to give up his lunch to Jesus.
3. Bless what's in your hands to give - Jesus took the five loaves and two fish; held it up to heaven and blessed it.
4. Obeys what He commands - The disciples had the people sit down and they took the pieces and distributed them. As His servants, we are "distributors", not "manufacturers".
5. Conserve the results - After the people were fed all they wanted, the left over pieces were carefully collected so that nothing was wasted.

The result: 5,000 men plus women and children were fed from the two fish and five loaves. Whatever's in your hands to do, God can multiply it! (14:20-21).

LESSON:

Matthew 14:22-26 Jesus Walks On The Water

14:22 And straightway Jesus constrained his disciples to get into a ship, and to go before him unto the other side, while he sent the multitudes away. As soon as the meal was finished, Jesus had to insist and really compel His disciples to leave the area; get into the boat to go to the other side; the other part of the lake or shore, while He dismissed the crowd that was there.

14:23 And when he had sent the multitudes away, he went up into a mountain apart to pray: and when the evening was come, he was there alone. It was necessary for all of them to leave, because it was necessary for Jesus to pray. Jesus shows us that we can't expect to receive anything if we don't pray. We have to get alone with the Father. We have to have alone time! Although God is fully God, He shows us what we will experience in human form; for He was fully man and fully God! He was in tune with the Father and the Spirit to receive what He needed! But in human form...

- He was "*physically*" exhausted being in human form. He had to be renewed and strengthened.
- He was "*mentally*" exhausted being in human form. He had to prepare Himself to have a clear perspective.
- He was "*spiritually*" exhausted being in human form. He had to be recharged with God's power.

He went up into a mountain and prayed in the evening, a time when He was able to view the occurrences of the earlier part of the day, and give thanks as He thought about the multitude and His disciples. He probably didn't sleep at all because of another task arose in the midst of the sea. Whatever time we spend with the Lord will always bring peace to give us more strength we didn't have. His presence is needed in our personal preparation.

14:24 But the ship was now in the midst of the sea, tossed with waves: for the wind was contrary. The disciples hadn't even gotten to the other side, for they were still in the midst of the sea being tossed by the ferocious waves and contrary wind. You know that song: "*The Lord Will Make A way Somehow*"; and it says "*battered by the angry sea*." It's amazing how we start off, and in the middle of things it's gone haywire. That's why we have to be stable in our minds at all times. A storm has arisen in the disciples lives to teach, to trust and be obedient. They were doing exactly what Christ told them to do—go to the other side. Many of us have given in and given up and complied to: and then say it's too hard. That's the lesson we have to learn—trust in God when it's too hard!

14:25 And in the fourth watch of the night Jesus went unto them, walking on the sea. The "*fourth watch*" was 3am-6a.m.

The Roman guards kept four night watches, each of three hours, from sunset to sunrise.

*The "**first watch**" was the evening (6pm-9p.m.); the "**second watch**" was the midnight (9pm-12midnight); the "**third watch**" was cock-crowing (12midnight-3a.m.); and the "**fourth watch**" was the morning watch (3am-6a.m.).*

So Jesus began to pray in the evening, and apparently continued to pray. But in the fourth watch He came to check on His disciples. Although a storm came to bring fear, Jesus came to bring peace. The storm did not stop Him, for He walked upon it, without fear of the contrariness of the wind; without anxiety of the waves.

14:26 And when the disciples saw him walking on the sea, they were troubled, saying, It is a spirit; and they cried out for fear. The disciples couldn't believe their eyes; either their eyes were playing tricks on them as they saw Jesus walking upon the sea. That really troubled them as they cried out in fear. They were already fearful of the storm and now they see

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Him walking upon this storm. Jesus is showing us that whatever storm you're going through—it's under your feet. They thought His figure to be a ghost; a spirit (something we would see in the movies). They had never seen anything like that before—a person walking on water, and yes you would be afraid too!

Matthew 14:27-31 Jesus' Presence Brings Comfort And Hope

14:27 But straightway Jesus spake unto them, saying, Be of good cheer; it is I; be not afraid. I like this! Jesus immediately reassures them not to be startled, but "*Be of good cheer*" for it was Him coming to them. He will always be our defense and protector in time of trouble—"a very present help!" He'll be in the storm with you!

14:28 And Peter answered him and said, Lord, if it be thou, bid me come unto thee on the water. I admire Peter for his ear and heart is attentive, The Lord is speaking and Peter answers the call, for he is a willing servant. Many of the others didn't say anything to the Lord. Peter asks if he can come where He is on the water. For a moment Peter had forgotten about the raging sea and had his eyes focused only upon Jesus. If only we can do that in times of trouble. Jesus' presence conquers fear!

14:29 And he said, Come. And when Peter was come down out of the ship, he walked on the water, to go to Jesus. The Lord is saying if you are willing, then come! Come on Peter, walk with me! At My Word Come! I can imagine many of the others thought he was crazy. Yes, he was crazy in love with Jesus and crazy enough to do it. I could imagine after Peter had seen the miracle feeding of the 5,000, this would be a piece of cake (so to speak). He stepped out of the boat in faith at Jesus' Word and was able to walk on the water toward Jesus. Can we have such faith?

14:30 But when he saw the wind boisterous, he was afraid; and beginning to sink, he cried, saying, Lord, save me. Well, the scripture started with a "*but!*" That was the end of that feat, the negative came. His focus was disturbed by the boisterous wind, and his faith vanished. That wind began to speak to his ears and his emotions till he began to sink—sink in fear; sink in despair; sink in discouragement... He was in panic mode and cried out to the Lord to save him—save him from this struggle he was in; save him from death. Jesus' presence stirs the hope of being saved! In this type of situation of drowning, your little faith would yell out help, save me!

14:31 And immediately Jesus stretched forth his hand, and caught him, and said unto him, O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?— Here we go again, Jesus immediately stretched out His hand and caught Peter, and pulled him up out of the water and they walked back to the boat. That song says: "*Love Lifted Me!*"; "*He's An On-Time God*"—never too early and never too late! Now the question comes to Peter about the faith he started out with. Although, it was little faith, doubt came into the little faith he had. Faith respond in two ways: Faith we see by sight naturally, and Faith that's unseen spiritually. Jesus' presence brought comfort and hope as Jesus stretched out His hand and caught Peter—sight faith. Jesus wants us to walk by—the unseen spiritual faith. "*But without faith it is impossible to please Him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him*" Heb.11:6.

Matthew 14:32-36 The Disciples Worshiped Jesus

14:32 And when they were come into the ship, the wind ceased. The moment Jesus and Peter get into the boat, the wind stopped! Jesus' presence conquers nature! When He's in your situation, peace comes wherever you are!

14:33 Then they that were in the ship came and worshipped him, saying, Of a truth thou art the Son of God. Jesus' presence changes our outlook! While they were afraid earlier of seeing Him walk on the water, they now began to worship Him; acknowledging Him as the true Son of God. Jesus' presence stirs confession of your belief, and you then can worship the One you confess about and believe in! Not to be complicated— "*say what you mean and mean what you say!*"

14:34 And when they were gone over, they came into the land of Gennesaret. When they finally crossed the sea, they came into the land of Gennesaret. They had landed in an unusually fertile plain on the northwest side of the Lake which stretched some 3 miles long and 1 mile wide, lying between Chorazin and Magdala. It was called "*paradise and was the garden of princes.*"

14:35 And when the men of that place had knowledge of him, they sent out into all that country round about, and brought unto him all that were diseased;— The men of that place became aware that Jesus was there and they began to send word to the surrounding regions, and brought all that were ill and diseased to Him.

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14:36 And besought him that they might only touch the hem of his garment: and as many as touched were made perfectly whole. They wanted to just touch the hem of His garment, "*and as many as touched were made perfectly whole!*" Jesus' presence brings healing! Get into His Presence!

SUMMARY:

After feeding 5,000 men and more, Jesus sends His disciples to the other side of the Lake and dismisses the multitude as He prepares to pray privately in the mountain. It was evening time; however, as the disciples were going to the other side, they encountered a mighty storm in the midst of the sea. While the disciples were distressed by the waves, they see Jesus walking upon the water in the hours of 3am-6a.m.—the fourth watch. They were fearful and thought they were seeing a ghost (vv.22-26).

Immediately Jesus called out to them to take courage for it was Him, and to not be afraid! Peter seeing Jesus, asked if he could come where he was, and Jesus bid him to come. Peter stepped out of the boat and made a couple of steps, but when he took his eyes off of Jesus and saw the raging storm, he became afraid and began to sink. Peter cried out to the Lord, save me, and immediately, Jesus stretched forth His hand and took hold of him; and asked Peter why did you doubt; why did your faith began to doubt? (vv.27-31).

Jesus and Peter were able to walk back into the boat, and the raging wind stopped blowing! As the disciples witnessed this, they began to worship Jesus as the Son of God! The boat finally landed at Gennesaret and the news of Jesus' arrival spread quickly throughout the city. People rushed and brought the sick to be healed, and as many as touched the hem of His garment were completely healed! (vv.32-36).

APPLICATION:

A miracle is a supernatural and unexplainable event that we cannot take credit for. They only come from God. And do you know we encounter many miracles in our lives everyday? We didn't wake ourselves up. We didn't create a mind to think, but we do get up by the grace of God; we do think, by the grace of God. He works those miracles in us everyday! And we need to thank Him! Another thing, when we are able to get back home safely and not have an accident, Or if we did get in one and we came out alive, those are miracles of God's presence! Jesus shows us the need to take time to get alone with God, and pray for others to experience those same miracles! Then worship Him, for He's already done it by your faith!