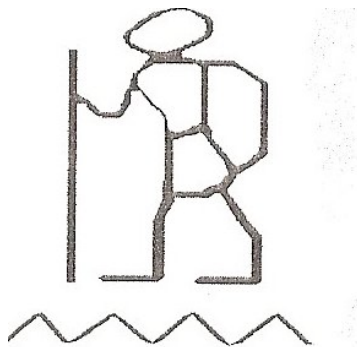


## Peter and His Epistles

### Lesson 2: Walking on Water

- I. Introduction** – there was a previous incident on the Sea of Galilee (Mark 4:37) but on that occasion Jesus was already in the boat. This second occasion takes place on the day of the feeding of the 5,000 at the Sea of Galilee (4 miles wide, 600 ft. below sea level, famous for serious storms).
- II. The circumstances (see Matt. 14:22-23, Mark 6:45-52 and John 6:16-21)**
- A. The Command: Jesus “compelled” them to sail for Capernum
  - B. The boat: was “distressed” literally, being put to the test
  - C. The disciples: were distressed in rowing. John says they only go out 20-25 stadia, about 3 miles out
  - D. The timing: during the 4<sup>th</sup> watch: 3-6 am
  - E. Peter sees Jesus walking along [Mark (along with Peter as the eyewitness) gives us the detail that Jesus was about to pass them by]. Peter asks his question “Lord, if it is you, bid me to come unto you on the water.” Jesus says come. Peter walks on the water until he takes his eyes off Jesus, who saves him and then climbs in the boat. The wind stops and the disciples begin to worship Him, declaring “Thou art the Son of God.”
  - F. It is a demonstration of Job 9:8 “He alone stretches out the heavens and treads on the waves of the sea.”

See also Ps. 107:23-29



*The Egyptian hieroglyphic  
for “impossible.”*

### III. The characteristics of a Water Walker

#### A. They recognize God's presence

In Mark's version, He came walking on the sea and would have passed them by...it was very late, his presence on the sea was not expected...no one was likely to see Him.

#### B. They can tell the difference between faith and foolishness

"If it is you, tell me to come..." It was primarily a step of obedience, not risk taking. This is extreme discipleship not because it is dangerous, but because it requires obedience.

#### C. They get out of the boat! (as John Ortberg might say, "they are not boat potatoes!")

Test yourself to see if you are a BOAT POTATO with three questions:

1. What is your calling? If you had to name the one thing that you believe you were set on this earth to do, what would it be?

Esther 4:14 "Who know whether you have come to the kingdom for such a time as this!!"

Special Note: The account in Mark does not include a mention of Peter walking on the water. Is he avoiding an explanation of his failure or is he exercising humility?

2. What exactly is your "boat?"

It is whatever represents safety and security to you apart from God Himself. What are you tempted to put your trust in, especially when life gets a little stormy?

What keeps you COMFORTABLE that you do not want to give up even if it's keeping you from joining Jesus on the waves?

- a. A position: remember Nebuchadnezzar Dan 4. "...Babylon the great which I myself have built...."
- b. Success itself: Job 31:24 "If I have put my confidence in gold and called gold my trust, if I have gloated because my wealth was great. And my heart became secretly enticed...that too would have been an iniquity calling for judgment, for I would have denied God above."

- c. A relationship: Isa. 2:22 “Cursed is the man who trusts in mankind and makes flesh his strength and whose heart turns away from the Lord...”
- 3. What are you afraid of?
  - a. There appears to be 366 “Fear Not” verses in our bible, one for everyday of the year, including leap year!
  - b. Ps. 118:6 “The Lord is for me, I will not fear, what can man do to me?”
  - c. Isa. 12:2 “Behold, God is my salvation, I will trust and not be afraid, for the Lord God is my strength and song, and He has become my salvation.”
  - d. Remember that when fear becomes habitual, it is worry and worry is like a rocking chair...plenty of activity, but it won’t get you anywhere! It is assuming responsibilities that God never intended for you to have!”
  - e. So get out of the boat!
- D. The fourth characteristic of water walkers...they expect problems!
  - 1. We always whine with “Why this, why now, why me? Well, why not?”
  - 2. Job is full of such phrases as “man is born unto trouble, he has few days and is full of trouble, his flesh shall have pain” etc.
- E. They are responsible for the first step, God takes it from there.
  - 1. Truthfully, Peter was actually just a water toddler. He just took the first step. And that step always starts with obedience. It is an act of our will, not an act of certainty.
  - 2. Such a step will always expand our spiritual comfort zones.
  - 3. Matt 25:23 “Well done...you have been faithful over a few things, enter the joy of our Lord.”
- F. They know where to turn when they fall

Water walkers understand that failure is a normal part of the Christian experience. No one is perfect. Jesus’ gentle rebuke was meant to be a stepping stone for Peter...to increase his faith.

#### **IV. So, are you a water walker or boat potato?**

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##### **Discussion Questions**

1. Why do you think Jesus intended to walk on by? What is the lesson to be learned?
2. Do you consider yourself to be a “boat potato?” Can you identify your own “boat?” What will it take to get you out of the “boat?”
3. What part does fear play in your life?