

# REFOCUS

## *Refocus on Jesus*

### *Matthew 14:22-33*

#### ***Faithful Obedience to Jesus***

***Matthew 14:22-23 (KJV)*** <sup>22</sup> ***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.*** <sup>23</sup> ***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.***

- Jesus has just miraculously fed 5,000 plus women and children
- Jesus immediately tells the disciples to get in their boat and go to the other side of sea of Galilee
- Jesus sends to the multitude of people away
- Jesus goes up into the mountains to pray
- The disciples are obedient and they are *focused* on the assignment Jesus gave them, get in their boat and go to the other side of the sea of Galilee
- As Christians, we are to be like the disciples and obediently follow Jesus' commands
- While the disciples are traveling to the other side of the sea, Jesus is spending time alone with God in prayer
- Jesus spent time alone with God in prayer, so should we
- We are merely human, the issues of life can wear us down, tempt us, pressure us, etc.
- But in those intense moments, Jesus got alone with God in prayer, so should we
- It's also good to know that while we are following Jesus, He is always praying for us

#### ***Distracted by Storms***

<sup>24</sup> ***But the ship was now in the midst of the sea, tossed with waves: for the wind was contrary.***  
<sup>25</sup> ***And in the fourth watch of the night Jesus went unto them, walking on the sea.*** <sup>26</sup> ***And when the disciples saw him walking on the sea, they were troubled, saying, It is a spirit; and they cried out for fear.*** <sup>27</sup> ***But straightway Jesus spake unto them, saying, Be of good cheer; it is I; be not afraid.***

- Jesus is in the mountains praying and disciples are in a boat trying to get to the other side of the sea of Galilee
- As they are sailing, a sudden storm arises
- What's important to note is that disciples were in God's *perfect will* and yet they found themselves in a storm
- They disciples are in the midst of the sea, the is fierce and the waves are high
- It is now the *fourth watch* of the night
- It's middle of the night and an *image* appears before them
- It's Jesus and He's walking **on** the sea
- The waves are high, the wind is fierce and it's Jesus calmly walking **on** the sea
- Jesus walks on water because He has *authority* over the forces of nature
- The disciples see Jesus and they are even more afraid because they think Jesus is a ghost
- Jesus says, Be of good cheer, It is I, do not be afraid
- Jesus says three important things to the disciples
  1. The first thing Jesus says to them is, "***be of good cheer***", which means to take courage; get a grip on yourself

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2. ***It is I***, which also means “I AM”, I AM God, the One who walks on water, I AM whatever you need me to be
  3. ***Don't be afraid***; don't allow fear to paralyze you
- Fear makes us *focus on the storm* and not Jesus, who is with us and is *walking on* and has *authority over* the very thing we fear
  - The key is to focus on Jesus' presence in the midst of your storm

#### ***Seeing Jesus in the Storm***

<sup>28</sup> ***And Peter answered him and said, Lord, if it be thou, bid me come unto thee on the water.***

<sup>29</sup> ***And he said, Come. And when Peter was come down out of the ship, he walked on the water, to go to Jesus.*** <sup>30</sup> ***But when he saw the wind boisterous, he was afraid; and beginning to sink, he cried, saying, Lord, save me.*** <sup>31</sup> ***And immediately Jesus stretched forth his hand, and caught him, and said unto him, O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?***

- Peter asks Jesus, “If it’s (a more accurate translation is “since it’s”) you bid me to come” to You “on the water”
- Peter was asking for Jesus' ***permission*** to walk on water
- Jesus said to Peter, “Come”
- Jesus gave Peter *permission* to do the impossible
- Peter gets out of the boat and walks *on* water to Jesus!
- Peter has the same authority over the forces of nature, just like Jesus
- Peter is walking on water; he is on his way to Jesus
- The wind is strong, the waves are high and Peter is walking on water in the midst of fearful circumstances
- This is a wonderful picture of Peter doing the miraculous as long as he was *focused* on Jesus
- Then Peter *sees* the wind and the waves and instead of focusing on Jesus, Peter begins to focus on his surroundings
- When Peter looked at the wind and waves and his ***fears***, not his ***faith*** took over
- Peter had taken his eyes off Jesus and began to focus on his situation
- Peter who has been walking on water is now *sinking*
- We sometimes do great things for God and we're doing fine until we start *looking at and listening* to our surroundings
- Peter walked on water, but he feared the wind and the waves
- Peter is sinking and calls on Jesus and says, “Lord, save me”
- Jesus immediately stretched forth his hand and caught Peter
- Jesus caught Peter by the hand and saved him
- Jesus said to Peter, ***O, thou of little faith, why did you doubt?***
- Jesus was asking Peter why did you allow the *fear* of the wind and the waves to overtake your *faith*?
- When Peter focused on the wind and waves instead of Jesus; *he doubted* that walking on water was really possible
- To walk on top of the issues that should sink us, and the issues that have sunk others in past, we must *maintain our focus* on Jesus

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#### **Seeing Jesus at a Deeper Level**

<sup>32</sup> **And when they were come into the ship, the wind ceased.** <sup>33</sup> **Then they that were in the ship came and worshipped him, saying, Of a truth thou art the Son of God.**

- Jesus and Peter **walked on the water** back to the boat
- Once Jesus and Peter got back to the boat, the storm ceased
- Wherever Jesus is, the fiercest storms become calm **Psalm 107:29-30 (NLT) 29 He calmed the storm to a whisper and stilled the waves. 30 What a blessing was that stillness as he brought them safely into harbor!**
- The disciples connected the dots, Jesus really is the Son of God
- Jesus walking on water and stilling the storm caused the disciples to know and understand who Jesus is at a deeper level
- Jesus used a fearful situation:
  - to cause the disciples to know Him *and* worship Him at a deeper level
  - to cause the see Jesus has all power, even over the forces of nature
  - to cause the disciples to realize when Jesus is *physically absent*, His *presence* is still with them to give the disciples a greater focus on Jesus as the Son of God
- The disciples also realized *the same* Jesus who *stilled* the storm also *allowed* the storm
- Why does the Lord allow believers to go through storms?
- Storms happen in our lives for two reasons:
  1. There are storms of *correction*
    - The Lord will use a storm to get us back where we need to be in Him
  2. There are storms of *perfection*
    - Storms of perfection develop us
    - The disciples were obeying Jesus command to get to the other side of the sea of Galilee when the storm came
- Our faith is developed in the storm
- Jesus wants our *faith and our focus* to be on Him no matter what we face in life
- Focusing on Jesus is believing, trusting and obeying Him despite the storms come your way

#### **Lessons from the Storm**

- *Often, God calls us to step into the unknown, trusting Him.*
  - We refocus on Jesus by obeying His call, even when the path seems unclear.
- *Life is filled with distractions – worries, ambitions, and busyness.*
  - We refocus on Jesus by intentionally filtering out distractions and keeping our eyes on Him.
- *Storms are inevitable, but Jesus remains our constant anchor.*
  - We refocus on Him by trusting His presence in the midst of life's challenges.
- *Peter's doubt didn't define him; it was a moment to learn.*
  - We refocus on Jesus by viewing moments of doubt as opportunities for growth.
- We refocus on Jesus through prayer, fasting, personal Bible study, being accountable to other believers, serving others, and gratitude