

Matthew 14 v 22-33

22 Immediately he made the disciples get into the boat and go before him to the other side, while he dismissed the crowds. 23 And after he had dismissed the crowds, he went up on the mountain by himself to pray. When evening came, he was there alone, 24 but the boat by this time was a long way from the land, beaten by the waves, for the wind was against them. 25 And in the fourth watch of the night he came to them, walking on the sea. 26 But when the disciples saw him walking on the sea, they were terrified, and said, "It is a ghost!" and they cried out in fear. 27 But immediately Jesus spoke to them, saying, "Take heart; it is I. Do not be afraid." 28 And Peter answered him, "Lord, if it is you, command me to come to you on the water." 29 He said, "Come." So Peter got out of the boat and walked on the water and came to Jesus. 30 But when he saw the wind, he was afraid, and beginning to sink he cried out, "Lord, save me." 31 Jesus immediately reached out his hand and took hold of him, saying to him, "O you of little faith, why did you doubt?" 32 And when they got into the boat, the wind ceased. 33 And those in the boat worshiped him, saying, "Truly you are the Son of God."

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These questions relate to the morning services' sermon on Sunday 17 July 2022 which is available on the church website. Over the summer, we are continuing our week by week journey through Matthew's Gospel. Feel free to select questions according to your group's preferred study and discussion style, and time available. Do not feel you must look at all of them.

1. Miracles.

This story of Jesus walking on water (v22-26) is recorded in Matthew, Mark and John's Gospels, and always in a straightforward, matter of fact way.

- i. How do you personally respond to miracle stories like this?
- ii. How do you respond to people who say such things can't or don't happen?

3. Prioritising God.

Jesus takes time out to go up a mountain to pray (v23). He never seems to be in hurry and always prioritises his relationship with his Father.

- i. How do you seek to spend time with God?

ii. What helps and hinders?

iii. How might you change your daily rhythm so you can spend more time with God?

4. Our expectation of Jesus.

Jesus waits till the storm at its peak and the disciples are really struggling with the waves and wind before going out to them. And when they see Him, they think he is a ghost (v26).

i. Why do you think Jesus waits?

ii. Why do you think they don't expect and don't recognise him?

iii. What blocks you from expecting Jesus to act in a situation?

iv. How could your faith level be raised?

5. Stepping out and following through.

Peter obediently steps out when told by Jesus to come. But then falters and starts to sink when he starts to focus on the storm rather than they stay focused on Jesus (v28-30).

i. What types of fears and doubts hold you back from following Jesus, either from stepping out in the first place or then following through? Think of some examples in your life.

ii. How might you seek to keep your eyes more fixed on Jesus and strengthen your faith to conquer your fears and doubts?

6. Jesus' care and compassion.

Jesus seeks to show the disciples he is there for them. He immediately seeks to reassure the disciples when they cried out in fear (v27). And immediately reached out his hand to catch Peter when he started to sink (v31).

i. To what extent do you think Jesus is watching over you personally?

ii. To what extent do you cry out for Jesus' help when in difficulty Vs trying to resolve things in your own strength?

iii. What holds you back from crying out?

iv. What is your experience when you do cry out?

7. Doing the Impossible for God.

Jesus is teaching the disciples through this experience that he is the Son of God in control of everything (v33). And they can accomplish things which

they hitherto thought were impossible if they seek to act in line with His will.

- i. What examples are there in your life of accomplishing things for God that you previously could not imagine?
- ii. What encouraged you to do them?
- iii. How might you be encouraged to do more?