

Step Toward the Savior

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Matthew 14:22-33
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Sermon Theme

Faith does not mean never being afraid; it means learning where to look when the wind rises.

Big Idea

The disciples obey Jesus and still meet a storm. Jesus comes to them through the darkness, speaks courage into their fear, and calls Peter toward Him. Peter begins to sink when the wind becomes the center of his attention, but Jesus immediately reaches out and catches him. Our hope is not perfect faith. Our hope is the faithful Savior who never loses sight of us.

What the Passage Shows Us

After feeding the crowd, Jesus sends the disciples across the lake while He goes alone to pray. During the night, the boat is battered by waves and the disciples make little progress. Jesus sees their struggle and walks toward them on the water.

At first, fear keeps them from recognizing Him. Jesus tells them to take courage because He is present. Peter answers His call, steps out of the boat, and walks toward Him. When fear takes over, Peter cries for help. Jesus catches him, enters the boat, and receives the disciples' worship as the Son of God.

Obedience Does Not Prevent Storms

The disciples are not in trouble because they ignored Jesus. They are in the boat because He sent them. Following Christ does not guarantee calm water. A difficult season is not always proof that we have missed God's will.

We may be faithful and still face illness, grief, strained relationships, financial pressure, or uncertainty. The storm does not mean Jesus has forgotten us. He sees where we are, even when darkness keeps us from seeing Him.

Jesus Comes Through the Darkness

The disciples cannot reach Jesus, so Jesus comes to them. He walks over the water that threatens them. What feels uncontrollable to them remains beneath His authority. Their help is already moving toward them before they understand what is happening.

Fear makes His approach look like another danger. We can also give the worst meaning to what we cannot explain. Jesus answers fear with His presence before He changes the circumstances: "Take courage! It is I. Don't be afraid."

Where We Look Matters

Peter steps out because Jesus says, "Come." He is not walking by his own power. Grace is sustaining the step Christ called him to take. Faith is not confidence in ourselves. It is trust in the One who calls us. The wind was already blowing, but Peter begins to sink when it becomes the center of his vision. Faith does not deny the wind. It refuses to let the storm have the final word. We can acknowledge what is frightening while continuing to look toward Jesus.

Lord, Save Me

Peter's prayer is brief because his need is urgent. He has no polished words, only trust that Jesus can save him. Some of our most honest prayers are just as simple: "Jesus, help me," "Lord, hold me," or "I cannot do this alone."

Jesus immediately reaches for Peter. He does not require stronger faith before offering mercy. Grace comes before correction. Jesus holds Peter while teaching him where fear overtook trust.

Step Toward the Savior

Peter's faith is imperfect, but it is real. He fails while moving toward Jesus, and his failure is not the end of the story. The safest place is not always where life feels most controlled. The safest place is wherever Christ is calling us to follow.

We do not step out to prove ourselves. We respond when Jesus says, "Come." The next step may be asking for help, telling the truth, forgiving someone, beginning again, or showing up when we would rather hide. Christ's presence makes courage possible.

Key Truths

Obedience does not make us immune to storms.

Jesus sees us even when we cannot see Him clearly.

Courage rests in Christ's presence, not in calm circumstances.

Faith is confidence in Jesus, not confidence in ourselves.

Fear grows when the storm becomes the center of our vision.

A short, honest prayer can still reach a faithful Savior.

Grace catches us before Christ corrects and teaches us.

Our hope is not perfect faith but the perfect faithfulness of Jesus.

Questions for Reflection

Where does the wind seem to be against me right now?

Have I mistaken a difficult season for evidence that God has left me?

What usually pulls my attention away from Jesus and toward fear?

What step might Christ be asking me to take toward Him?

When have I experienced Jesus holding me when my faith faltered?

Who near me needs a hand, a word of hope, or a place to be honest?

What simple prayer do I need to offer today?

Takeaway

Matthew 14:22-33 does not promise that faithful people will avoid rough water. It promises that Jesus does not leave His people alone in it. He sees us in the darkness, comes through what frightens us, and speaks courage before the storm has stopped.

Faith does not mean never being afraid. It means learning where to look when the wind rises. We look toward the One who calls us, cry out when we begin to sink, and trust the hand that never lets us go.

When Jesus says, "Come," we take the next step toward the Savior.

Key Verse

"But Jesus immediately said to them: 'Take courage! It is I. Don't be afraid.'"

Matthew 14:27