

Text: Matthew 14:22-33

Theme: How to Walk on Water

August 13, 2017

If you looked at the message title in the bulletin this morning, it may have piqued your curiosity a bit, but I have a question for you, "How many people, besides Jesus, have been able to walk on water?" Only Peter has had the ominous privilege of walking on water. None of us can walk on water, but if God wanted it to happen, you could walk on water. Likewise, the impossible is impossible for us, unless God steps onto the scene. So as we focus on our text, we take a few moments to consider how the impossible can become possible for us.

I. With God, it's possible to do the impossible, even to walk on water. A. Yet we find ourselves sinking. 1. We sink because of doubt. Jesus said to Peter and to us, "Why did you doubt?" Who allows doubt to cripple us, cause us to run when we should stand firm? We want to play the blame game. We want it to be caused by someone else, something else. We don't care what, but we don't want to be responsible. Yet who is the subject of the question, "Why did you doubt?" Who is the doer? It doesn't say, "Why did the wind create doubt?" or "why did the waves cause you to doubt?" It says it like it is, "Why did you doubt," because we are responsible.

2. We sink because we are afraid. What were Jesus' first words to His disciples? "Do not be afraid." As Peter began to sink, it says, "But when he saw the wind, he was afraid." As we hear those two statements, we wonder, "How could it happen? What was Peter's problem?" Less than five minutes earlier, Jesus said, "Do not be afraid," and what does Peter do? It wasn't another disciple who spoke. This was God speaking and Peter not listening. How often are we like Peter? How often do we know the facts but fail to apply them to our situation when we need them most? Fear and doubt - those are the two great things that cripple God's people.

3. We find ourselves sinking because we lack faith. Which disciple possessed the greatest faith, gave evidence of an exemplary faith? The obvious choice is Peter. But look at what Jesus says, "O you of little faith." If you had been Peter, wouldn't you have wanted to hide under a blanket or something at that moment? How humiliating! It's no different today. The only advantage we have is that Jesus doesn't speak out loud. As we face situation after situation where we lack faith, and they occur more frequently than we care to admit, Jesus is speaking to our hearts, "O you of little faith. You still don't possess the faith needed to face life!"

B. Although we find ourselves sinking, how do we walk on water? How do we do the impossible? 1. We do the impossible by drowning our doubts. How many people in that boat needed to drown their doubts? One or all twelve? We drown our doubts by filling our life-boat with trust. When trusting is what we do, doubt has no room to interfere. We sing it, "I am trusting, Thee, Lord Jesus, trusting only Thee." But our challenge is to put those words into action in every situation. When doubts climb into our life-boat, we need trust so we can sweep doubt back into the water. We, too, could walk on water if we could only learn how to trust in every situation.

2. We do the impossible by conquering our fears. Why does Jesus say, "Fear not," more than any other phrase throughout His ministry? Why is that statement used over a hundred times in Scripture? Fear? No. Faith? Yes. That needs to be

our motto. With Christ at our side, with Him beside us in our life-boat, with Him offering guidance every moment of every day, we have all we need. When fears arise, Jesus says, "Where is your faith? Put it into practice. Focus on faith. Fix your eyes on faith and you will overcome and win the victory." With an immovable faith, we can do the impossible as we watch fear sink out of sight.

3. We do the impossible by fixing our eyes on Jesus. Hebrews 12 says, "Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith." As Peter boldly stepped out of the boat, where were his eyes? Moments later, where did his eyes turn? If Peter had kept his eyes on Jesus, would he have begun to sink? So what's the faith-lesson for us? As we fix our eyes on Jesus, on His Word, on His promises, and refuse to look anywhere else for any reason, God will supply the power to do what looked impossible. Focused on the target, remaining unmoved regardless of the circumstances - that's how we walk on water. That's how people, like us, do the impossible.

4. We do the impossible by passionately growing our faith. When someone is passionate about a particular cause, are they showing up on occasion or always there when something is happening? Are they committed or uncommitted, dedicated or it really doesn't matter? The impossible occurs when people of passionate faith step out on a God-directed mission. Imagine for a moment that everyone in this church was faith-passionate for the next month? What changes would we see? We can talk about what has changed that we don't like, but it's far better to put our passionate faith into action and watch what God will do next through us.

5. We do the impossible by believing Jesus can do it. How many of the disciples believed Jesus could walk on water, could feed 5,000 people, could raise people from the dead? If Jesus could do it then, can't He do it today? If God is for us, which He is, won't God do whatever we need done? Peter walked on water because he first believed that Jesus could walk on water. Then, using simple logic, he concluded that if Jesus could do it, Jesus could enable him to do it. Whatever we believe Jesus can do, we likewise believe Jesus can do for us and in us. Since nothing is impossible with God, nothing is impossible when we believe God is with us.

6. We do the impossible by getting out of the boat. How many disciples were in the boat that night? How many asked Jesus to invite them to come on the water? How many never moved from their spot in that boat? It's easy to play it safe, to let someone else be brave, bold, and courageous. Yet to walk on our water, to do the impossible, we must get out of the boat. We must be those who say from the heart, "Here I am, send me!" As we step out of the boat, as we think outside the box and function outside that comfortable box of what we've always done, that's when we see the miraculous occur in our lives. That's when we see God speak and God move through us. That's when we know God has deliberately directed our next move, and that's when we realize that we have just walked on water. Amen.