



Choose Courage

Matthew 14:22-33

A person shows true courage, not because they never fall, but because when they fall they find a way to get back up.

Read Matthew 14:22-33

1. Notice that the disciples are caught on the sea again, in the dark, with the winds and winds beating against them. Matt. 14:25 tells us that this happened in the fourth watch of the night, sometime between three and six in the morning. They rowed hard for perhaps six to eight hours and had only come a little more than halfway across the lake. How does this boat trip compare to the story in Mark 4:35-41 (lesson #2 in our study)?

Why are the disciples afraid this time?

Read the context in Matthew 14:14-21. What should they have known about Jesus from their previous experiences?

Most of our danger from outward troubles arises from the occasion they give for inward trouble.
Matthew Henry

2. Matthew 14:27 What did Jesus say to the disciples? (what specifically did He tell them to do, and what not to do?)

I can think of several reasons that the disciples may have been afraid. They were most likely exhausted. I know that when I'm tired, things look much more difficult and scary. If you were on that boat, what would have made you feel afraid?

What are some specific things that stir up fear in your heart?

What do you do to overcome your fears?

What does 1 Timothy 1:7 tell us about fear and how to overcome it?

3. The disciples did not recognize Jesus at first. It was dark, so I can understand why; but verse 26 says "They were terrified, and said, 'It is a ghost!' And they cried out in fear." How does fear influence the way we view situations?

A personal story: *When my husband Rick had a heart attack in Taiwan he was in the hospital for 2 weeks. A dear friend sent me this note during that time. She said, "I was reading Matthew 14 and thought of you. Jesus says, 'Take courage. It is I. Don't be afraid.' Lots there including the idea that the "it" --scary mirage coming towards them that they assumed was a ghost--was actually Jesus! **Sometimes the thing we see as scary is really Jesus in disguise and we aren't able to see it until later but He wants us to know to not be afraid.**"*

Imagine that you are in a dark and terrifying situation. Have you had an experience like this? Contrast the difference of how you'd react if you think that Jesus is not around, compared to feeling confident that He is in the situation with you.

If I think Jesus is not in this situation:

If I think Jesus is in this situation:

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In Matthew 14: 27, Jesus starts by saying, "take heart." Some translations use the words "take courage", or "be of good cheer." In our first lesson, we looked at John 16:33 where Jesus also says these same words. What do these two verses tell us about the reason why can we face trouble with courage?

4. Matthew 14:28,29. Describe what Peter's faith looks like in these two verses.

Read verses 30,31. What happened to Peter's faith?

What did Peter do when he was beginning to sink?

Look at these verses. What can we do (or what must we do?!) to keep our faith strong during hard times?

Psalms 16:8

Psalms 94:17-19

Psalms 121:1,2

"Satan will endeavor to keep our eyes upon our sorrows that we may be discouraged.
May we firmly resolve that we will look out and look up;
for those who lift up their eyes to the eternal God shall soon have their hearts lifted up also."
Charles Spurgeon

5. Matthew 14:32,33. What good came out of this terrifying situation?

How do these Scriptures relate to this week's story?

Psa 33:18 AMP Behold, the eye of the LORD is upon those who fear Him [and worship Him with awe-inspired reverence and obedience], On those who hope [confidently] in His compassion and lovingkindness.

Isaiah 8:13 TLB Don't fear anything except the Lord of the armies of heaven! If you fear him, you need fear nothing else.

Psalms 50:15 NLT Then call on me when you are in trouble, and I will rescue you, and you will give me glory."

They who fear God need not fear anything else; let them fix their eye of faith on him,
and his eye of love will always rest upon them.

Charles Spurgeon

See and Share

*Peer--to look closely or intently at something that may be difficult to see

Pray—Psalm 119:18

Examine the context. Ask questions.

Evaluate how this applies to you.

Respond. Talk to God about what you've seen.

Share. Tell somebody!

As we have peered into this lesson, what have you seen? What will you hold on to from this lesson?
Who will you tell?