

Confidence to Walk with Jesus on water like Peter Walked

“Lord, if it’s you,” Peter replied, “tell me to come to you on the water.”

“Come,” he said. Then Peter got down out of the boat, walked on the water and came toward Jesus. But when he saw the wind, he was afraid and, beginning to sink, cried out, “Lord, save me!” Matthew 14: 31-33

The three year Brent had been so excited because I had promised to teach him to swim. That day in the shallow water at the edge of a small Florida lake, I showed him how to use his arms and legs to swim forward in the water. Then we went out into deeper water. I said, “Swim to me and keep your eyes on me.” Brent began to swim toward his me, but when a boat came roaring by, he turned his head to look at it. Waves splashed over him, and he began to sink under the swirling water. But I was there lifting him up and telling him he was safe.

Our Bible story today is about Jesus’s walking on water. Have you ever seen a person walking on water? No? Well, I haven’t either. Remember, though, that Jesus could do many things that you and I can’t do. Here’s what happened: Jesus sent his disciples off in a boat. He sent them because he wanted to have time alone to pray to his Heavenly Father, God. When he finished praying it was early in the morning and the disciples were far out on the lake. Wind blew. Waves swished this way and that.

When they saw someone walking on the water toward their boat, the disciples were frightened. One of the men called out, “It’s a ghost!” Jesus said, **“Don’t be afraid, it is I.”** There was Jesus, walking on top of the water! Peter called back, “If it is really you, let me come to you on the water.” Jesus agreed and Peter climbed out of the boat and started toward Jesus. The wind blew and the water splashed around, and Peter looked away from Jesus at the waves. When he did, Peter began to sink and called out to Jesus, “Help me!”

The scripture tells us Jesus reached down and caught Peter’s hand. Then, together, the two walked to the boat. Now, all that time the other disciples were watching. Try to imagine their anxious moments. Like Peter, they had always seen Jesus as their friend to. He was their teacher, even their leader, but at that moment they all realized that Jesus was more than that. When Peter and Jesus climbed into the boat, Jesus’s disciples said, “You are truly the Son of God.”

Like Brent, who forgot to keep his eyes on his dad as he learned to swim, Peter was distracted by the wind and waves and took his eyes off Jesus. And he began to sink! That can happen to us too unless we keep our eyes on the Lord. And that is where the disciples find themselves... wet and cold, frightened and alone. Jesus is giving them a dose of some tough love. It was a lesson in faith that will last their lifetimes and resound down through the centuries. In this gospel Jesus is telling us that when we are struggling, when we are adrift and far from shore, when the wind is against us... he is with us. Have faith. We are never alone.

Peace always,

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