

Walking Series

Confidence to Walk with Jesus... on Water?

In the fourth watch of the night, Jesus came to them, walking on the sea. When the disciples saw him walking on the sea, they were troubled, saying, "It's a ghost!" and they cried out for fear. But immediately Jesus spoke to them, saying, "Cheer up! It is I! Don't be afraid."

Matthew 14: 25-27

On the Sea of Galilee is a place where Jesus walked! The Matthew story is arguably one of His most famous walks. You can see the story in its entirety described in the Gospel of Matthew 14:22-34.

Near the shores of the lake Jesus called His first disciples and performed miracles. By its shores He often spoke of the Kingdom of God and fed thousands. By the lake Jesus shared His most recognized teaching, later named Sermon on the Mount.

It seems like Jesus enjoyed spending time both on the shores of the lake and on its waters. Judging by the amount of time He was near it; Jesus seems to have really enjoyed the sea even when its waters were troubled by storms. He legendarily silenced one of those storms after being awakened as he slept through the winds and waves. In this story, he walks through a storm in route to the boat.

Jesus' desire to be on and by the water is understandable. He often rested on board a boat when He needed to escape the crowds that followed Him. Our sailboat, *OK Bye*, is my source to escape from all the crazy things that are happening in the chaotic world around us. Even a storm could not steal His peace away. I pray for the day you and I can find our places to steal away in peace.

The Sea of Galilee continues to be a source of fish and drinking water to the residents of Israel and is as beautiful as ever. If we were there, we could go swimming, sailing and even kayaking on the lake/sea. People enjoy the peace and quiet in, on, or near the water.

I chose the scripture for this talk because of a query asking me the methods used by seamen to name the various "watches" when on guard duty. The questioner knew I served in the US Navy, and he assumed I would know when "the fourth watch" would have occurred in Jesus' time. I'm sure there are Navy sailors who know the rules of being on watch at sea or in port much better than me, the dry land sailor. Four years in Orlando Florida without ever seeing a navy ship describes my tour of duty.

The query centered on what time Jesus would have been walking toward the Disciples on board the boat. Aboard a ship, one bell signifies a half-hour, so eight bells denote the half-hours in a four-hour watch. You may have heard the phrase "Eight Bells and all is well!" For sailors on duty when a vessel is at sea, particularly those on the bridge, the 'watches' are four-hours duration. Based on this information and assuming the current but traditional system was in place 2000 years ago, my best guess would "The Morning Watch" between 4:00 am and 8:00 am. Assuming that to be true, Jesus would have been awake for a long time before deciding to walk on water to his Talmidim.

Nothing theological intended here, just me having fun. Hope you enjoyed.

Peace Always,
Ted