

Matthew 14:22-33

Jesus, the one to trust and worship

Introduction. This episode is closely linked with the preceding account of the miraculous feeding. Both episodes focus on the supernatural power of Jesus and on his teaching about the nature and privilege of discipleship. This is especially seen in the attempt of Peter to copy Jesus' act and the vivid lesson on the importance of faith in following Jesus.

Vv. 22-23. Jesus takes time out of his busy ministry of teaching and healing to pray.

Jesus taught his disciples to pray (Mt. 6); he prayed for his disciples (Jn. 17) and is recorded as praying at some key points in his ministry; his baptism (Lk. 3:21); and prior to going to the cross (Mt. 26:36).

Vv. 24-25. Matthew records in a matter of fact way that the disciples were in the boat on the lake and '**Jesus went out to them, walking on the water**'. Matthew has recorded Jesus stilling the storm (8:23ff), here Jesus comes in the storm. The ordinariness of the description of Jesus' extraordinary act emphasises that this is in keeping with who Jesus is.

V. 26. The response of fear from the disciples is both 'natural' but also a sign that they did not fully understand who Jesus was nor did they trust him.

Vv. 27-28. Jesus' response is not to rebuke but to encourage them. This emboldens Peter who seeks to emulate Jesus. **However, he needs Jesus' permission to come, to walk on the water, which Jesus gives.**

Vv. 29-30. Peter begins to walk on the water towards Jesus but he becomes fearful of the wind (the wind that Jesus had shown he controlled Mt. 8 and Jesus now calmly walked through). The story seems to imply that Peter shifted his focus from Jesus, who he initially trusted, to the wind and so began to sink. There is a comical element to the story as well as a vivid lesson about trusting in Jesus.

V. 31. In response to Peter's cry to be 'saved' from drowning Jesus immediately reached out his hand to rescue Peter. Jesus' words '**You of little faith, why did you doubt**' may initially sound harsh. However, his words are a stark reminder of the need to continue to trust him. Peter's actions are an example of true faith which did not survive the crisis.

V. 32. The arrival of Jesus in the boat leads to the calming of the wind – a further reminder of his power and authority over the forces of nature (see 8:27).

V. 33. The initial terrified response of the disciples as Jesus came to them on the water is replaced by worship. **Just as trust is the right response to Jesus so is worship.** The response of trust and worship depend on knowing who Jesus is; 'truly you are the Son of God', (see 16:16 and 28:9).

Reflection/Response. How do we show we trust Jesus even in a crisis? How do our lives show we know Jesus as our Lord and Saviour? How does our Sunday corporate worship reflect the daily worship of our lives? How do we celebrate and give thanks for God's gift of faith - see Ephesians 2:1-10.