



STOP WATCHING THE WIND!

Matthew 14:22-33

22 And straightway Jesus constrained his disciples to get into a ship, and to go before him unto the other side, while he sent the multitudes away. 23 And when he had sent the multitudes away, he went up into a mountain apart to pray: and when the evening was come, he was there alone. 24 But the ship was now in the midst of the sea, tossed with waves: for the wind was contrary. 25 And in the fourth watch of the night Jesus went unto them, walking on the sea. 26 And when the disciples saw him walking on the sea, they were troubled, saying, It is a spirit; and they cried out for fear. 27 But straightway Jesus spake unto them, saying, Be of good cheer; it is I; be not afraid. 28 And Peter answered him and said, Lord, if it be thou, bid me come unto thee on the water. 29 And he said, Come. And when Peter was come down out of the ship he walked on the water, to go to Jesus. 30 But when he saw the wind boisterous, he was afraid; and beginning to sink, he cried, saying, Lord, save me. 31 And immediately Jesus stretched forth *his* hand, and caught him, and said unto him, O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt? 32 And when they were come into the ship, the wind ceased. 33 Then they that were in the ship came and worshipped him, saying, Of a truth thou art the Son of God.

We are out of our comfort zones, we are out of the safe area, and we are moving in new territory, and I just want to caution us concerning some natural temptations that will come against us!

There are different things that we can focus on, and depending on what we look at will determine our failure or success in the Spirit!

Let me say, that whether we continue on in our journey of faith, or sink into an ocean of failure depends on what we are watching!

I) I WOULD LIKE YOU TO NOTICE SOME THINGS IN THIS STORY, AND THEN I WILL RELATE THEM TO OUR PRESENT SITUATION AS A CHURCH.

a.) The disciples had settled themselves into a comfortable structure, a sea-worthy boat.

This ship was designed to withstand the storm, it was designed to ride through heavy winds and high waves.

Not only were they in a safe place, they were there with many friends. Many people who could encourage them, give them a hand, keep them on the straight and narrow.

They looked out and saw the storm, and may have even commented on the storm, but yet, the Bible doesn't record that in this instance they were even the least bit worried by these inclement conditions.

b.) But, as they sat in the boat, safe and sound, imagine their shock when they look outside the four walls of their ship and find that Jesus is walking on the water!

They were so shocked to see Him outside of their boat, that they thought it was a ghost! They misinterpreted the vision, and thought that it was an apparition coming toward them and grew fearful.

But, soon they realized that it was Jesus. And their fears were allayed.

But, out of this group, there was one man who truly understood the message that Jesus was trying to convey to His disciples.

I believe that Jesus was giving them an object lesson. And that is, their idea of movement, their idea of safety, their method of transportation up to that point was in a boat.

But, Jesus was saying to them, “I am not going to be confined to a wooden structure, and if you are going to be in my will and in my presence, you are going to have to get out here in the wild, blue yonder!”

c.) *And in a great burst of faith, Peter jumps up and says, “Lord, I am tired of sitting in this boat, I am ready to come out where you are!”*

And, Jesus bids him come. Even though he had never been there before, he jumped out of the boat, and said, “Okay, Jesus, I have never been in this place before, this goes against every thing that I have been taught, but at thy word, I will come.”

d.) *Now, Peter was in a new place in the spirit, a place he had never been before.*

He had left the confines of the boat, the confines of movement by committee, and popular opinion.

He had left his comfort zone, his safety net, the walls that protected him, and he was now moving in the elements that Jesus had already mastered.

He was walking on water that wasn’t calm! It was not an idyllic setting, a calm, glassy, beautiful blue marble top, it was an ocean with waves whipped up and driven by contrary winds!

But, yet it was Jesus who had called him, and he had to go.

There was anointing that Peter had never experienced, this was a miracle that he had never enjoyed. He was definitely moving in faith, moving in a realm of the spirit that those in the boat could not understand.

And, yet there were critics sitting in the boat probably trying to talk him out of leaving the safety net, the comfort zone.

“Your crazy Peter, you can’t walk on water!” Are you nuts?

However, Peter’s eyes were on one thing, and one thing alone: JESUS!

And, as long as he kept his eyes on Jesus, he was alright!

But, something distracted him:

- *Maybe it was the continued criticism from well meaning ship mates.*
- *Maybe it was the howl of the wind that began to break through his euphoria.*
- *Maybe it was a dousing of water from a rebel wave that caused his steady gaze to falter.*

But, something happened to destroy his focus on the Master, and suddenly as though for the first time, he began to watch the storm, he saw the wind.

And, when his focus was turned from the Master of the storm to the storm itself, he began to sink!

- **Peter, if you are going to walk on water, you can’t watch the wind! You must Jesus!**
- **Peter, if you are going to move in a new realm of the Spirit, you can’t listen to the critics!**
- **STOP WATCHING THE WIND, AND GET YOUR EYES BACK ON JESUS!**

II.) NOW, LET ME RELATE THIS TO WHERE I BELIEVE WE ARE AS A CHURCH.

a.) *We have lived safely inside these four walls for many years.*

Comforting one another, watching the storm rage outside, shaking our heads at the plight of the world.

Being so safe in the church that many times whether we said it or not, we didn’t really feel it was necessary to have Jesus even in the boat with us. We felt safe, and comfortable.

b.) But, now, imagine our surprise when we looked up and realized that Jesus is walking outside of these four walls!

He is moving in the world that is torn by sin and strife, torn by persecutions and Godlessness, beaten about with winds of destruction.

And, the Lord has spoken to us clearly and repeatedly that, “**If you want to be in my will, you must get out of the boat and come out here where the storm is raging!”**

c.) And, we have, in a great burst of faith, stood up, stepped over the side of the ship, and begun to make our journey to Jesus through the waves, the winds, and the storm.

And, now, we are walking on water! We are seeing miracles, seeing growth, watching God move like never before!

We are making bold statements that only those who are walking by faith can make!

But, here is where we are right now.

We are poised at a crossroads, a time of decision, a choosing of focus.

There will be many who will criticize our new found experience.

There will be many well-meaning people who will not want to see us hurt ourselves, or make fools of ourselves!

When we begin to move in the spirit, there will be those who will sit back and say, “**Well, we will see how long this lasts!”**

- ***You’re crazy preacher to declare that the church will double in a year!***
- ***You’re crazy to believe that God is going to provide a financial miracle for the church this year!***
- ***You’re crazy to think that you can help prisoners, and you are wasting your time going into coffeehouses, and restaurants teaching the Word!***
- ***Get back into the boat here where we were all comfortable, and we were all at the same level, and you weren’t making any of us feel guilty!***
- ***If you will just come back to reality, and understand that you can’t move out there where Jesus is, you will be alright!***
- ***Come on back in here where you don’t have to pray so much, and don’t have to fast, and don’t suffer the attack of the storm!***
- ***You know, the more you pray, the more the devil is going to fight you!***

And, the choice is now ours:

- **WE CAN WATCH THE WIND, WE CAN LISTEN TO THE DOUBTERS,**
- **OR, WE CAN KEEP LOOKING AT JESUS WHO CALLED US HERE IN THE FIRST PLACE!**

And, I stand in this pulpit tonight to tell you that, along with the Apostle Paul, “**I am looking unto Jesus, the author and the finisher of my faith...”**

- He called me out here, I didn’t come on my own!
- He started this and he will finish it!
- I am not going to let the wind distract me, I am not going to let the waves destroy me!
- Yes, I know they are there!

I know there is a storm, the sea is not peaceful!

I know I will have opposition when I come out of the boat, but I also know that the One who called me out here is the Master of the storm!

- The waves have to bow down when He speaks the word!
- The winds have to cease when He speaks the word!
- He brought me out here, and He didn't bring me out here to leave me!

My eyes are not on the storm, but my eyes are on Jesus!

III.) OUR HUMAN NATURE IS TO FOCUS ON, BELIEVE THE NEGATIVE.

2 Kings 20:1-10

In those days was Hezekiah sick unto death. And the prophet Isaiah the son of Amoz came to him, and said unto him, Thus saith the LORD, Set thine house in order; for thou shalt die, and not live. 2 Then he turned his face to the wall, and prayed unto the LORD, saying, 3 I beseech thee, O LORD, remember now how I have walked before thee in truth and with a perfect heart, and have done *that which is* good in thy sight. And Hezekiah wept sore. 4 And it came to pass, afore Isaiah was gone out into the middle court, that the word of the LORD came to him, saying, 5 Turn again, and tell Hezekiah the captain of my people, Thus saith the LORD, the God of David thy father, I have heard thy prayer, I have seen thy tears: behold, I will heal thee: on the third day thou shalt go up unto the house of the LORD. 6 And I will add unto thy days fifteen years; and I will deliver thee and this city out of the hand of the king of Assyria; and I will defend this city for mine own sake, and for my servant David's sake. 7 And Isaiah said, Take a lump of figs. And they took and laid it on the boil, and he recovered. 8 And Hezekiah said unto Isaiah, What *shall be* the sign that the LORD will heal me, and that I shall go up into the house of the LORD the third day? 9 And Isaiah said, This sign shalt thou have of the LORD, that the LORD will do the thing that he hath spoken: shall the shadow go forward ten degrees, or go back ten degrees? 10 And Hezekiah answered, It is a light thing for the shadow to go down ten degrees: nay, but let the shadow return backward ten degrees. [\[i\]](#)

Isn't it amazing that when Hezekiah was told he would die, he just accepted it with no questions asked!

But, when told that God had heard his prayer, he said, "***I don't believe it – give me a sign!***"

Oh, my, folks, let me tell you something tonight, we need to be careful of what we believe without question!

So many times we take the bad report and receive it without question, but when someone gives a good report, we say, "***Well, I am just gonna sit back and see what happens!***"

I have fellowshiped with preachers, and they will hear of another Pastor having troubles in the church, and just believe everything they hear, shake their heads, and then began to tell what they have heard!"

But, you let them hear that a church is having revival, and they say, "Well, I'd have to see it to believe it!"

The natural inclination is to look for the negative, but I am asking God to help me start majoring on the positive!

You can see what you are looking for!

PUSSY CAT, PUSSY CAT, WHERE HAVE YOU BEEN?

I'VE BEEN TO LONDON TO SEE THE QUEEN!

PUSSY CAT, PUSSY CAT, WHAT SAW YOU THERE?

I SAW A MOUSE UNDER HER CHAIR!

In the midst of the finery and royalty, the red carpets, and purple linens, the only thing this little cat could see was a mouse under the Queen's chair!

Simply because that is what the cat was looking for!

Oh, God, deliver us from negativism! Deliver us from cynicism! Deliver us from watching the wind, and help us to keep our eyes on You!

IV.) Closing:

Let me just tell you that you are not going to hear anything negative from this pulpit!

You aren't going to hear me talk about how the devil is fighting us, and the storm is raging, and how badly we are getting beaten up by the enemy!

You say, Pastor, you have your head stuck in the sand!

Just look around, the wind is howling, the waves are pounding, the sea is turbulent, we are in trouble!

- ***I know the storm is raging!***
- ***I know we are out in the middle of it!***
- ***I know there is adversity!***

But, I am choosing to focus on the One who is standing in the middle of the storm, reaching out to call us to Himself!

- I know the world is in worse shape than it's been in my lifetime, but I also know that: **Romans 5:20**

But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound: [\[ii\]](#)

- I know that Satan is fighting the church, but I also know that: **Romans 8:37** 37 Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. [\[iii\]](#)

- I know that our enemy in the world is strong, but I also know that:

1 John 4:4

4 Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them: because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world. [\[iv\]](#)

Let's let our focus not be on the wind, or the problems, but let's keep our focus on Jesus! He is the one who called us, and will protect and keep us in this world!

I am not denying that there is a storm, but that is not my focus! I serve the Master of the Storm!

I love what Paul said in **2 Corinthians 4:8-9**

8 We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; 9 Persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed; [\[i\]](#)

Paul said, "***I am not denying that there is adversity, but I am saying that I have overcome that adversity through Jesus Christ!***"

CONCLUSION:

Stop watching the wind and realize that you serve the God of the wind!

Stop worrying about the storm and realize that you serve the God of the storm!

LET'S KEEP WATCHING JESUS!

[\[1\]](#)The King James Version, (Cambridge: Cambridge) 1769.

[\[i\]](#)*The King James Version*, (Cambridge: Cambridge) 1769.

[\[ii\]](#)*The King James Version*, (Cambridge: Cambridge) 1769.

[\[iii\]](#)*The King James Version*, (Cambridge: Cambridge) 1769.

[\[iv\]](#)*The King James Version*, (Cambridge: Cambridge) 1769.