

GracePoint: A Weekly Sermon Discussion

45 – Walking on Water

Announcements:

10/10 @6:30 -

Men's Discipleship

- *Chapter 23*

10/12 @7:00 -

Prayer

10/13 @6:30 -

Grace Group

10/16 @8:30 -

Sunday School

ICE BREAKER: Would you rather live by the ocean or in the mountains? Why?

READ: Matthew 14:22-33

Last week in the sermon I mentioned that the feeding of the 5,000 was a “classic Sunday School Story”, but Jesus walking on the water might be even moreso. I still remember making little crafts where you would color in the sheet and cut a slit in one of the waves so that Peter could fall through the water. This is probably because it is stunning to think about this miracle and there is something rather emotive about Jesus walking on water. But today I would like to ask a question: Is there something in particular that is important about Jesus walking on water? Another way to ask this: What is it that walking on water communicates specifically?

One of the things that we have talked about with what feels like every miracle in Matthew is that these miracles communicate the power and the authority of Jesus. What we might not realize is how much that is specifically true when thinking about walking on water. If we are being honest we might get what a pastor friend of mine called “miracle fatigue”. We might think: how is walking on water more amazing than healing the sick, causing the blind to see, or even raising a little girl from the dead? I mean, c'mon Matthew, we get it! But a better understanding of the Old Testament can really help us out. For example, let's turn our attention to the book of Job. Towards the beginning of Job, Job is responding to his friends who tell him he needs to repent. In talking about who God is (and more to the point how God knows everything, including Job's innocence) Job asks a revealing question: “who alone stretched out the heavens and *trampled the waves of the sea?*” (Job 9:8). The answer to Job is that only God stretched out the heavens and only God can trample the sea. But here is Jesus not figuratively trampling out the sea (which is most likely how Job meant it) but literally trampling on the sea! Combined with the “I am” statement of Jesus and the fact that the disciples worship him (both talked about on Sunday), this might be the miracle that above all others points to the divinity of Christ!

DISCUSS: Why is the divinity of Christ such an important topic? How should it impact your life?

We can gain even more from this miracle, though, in contemplating that he is *WALKING* on the *WATER*. Culturally speaking, the sea was known as a place of chaos and disorder, the seas are always changing, always in a state of upheaval, there is no peace, no true calm in the sea. The depths of the sea are synonymous with darkness, mystery, and even death. And it is over this chaos and disorder that Christ comes walking in. It is worthwhile to note, he is not running in, not stumbling in, just walking. This miracle paints for us a picture of calm within the chaos and disorder of life. As we noted on Sunday, the nature of life is that we will face storms, not everything will always go right and, in my experience things never really go as planned. But Jesus, our Lord and savior, walks on the water! It is a tangible reminder that he is above these things, in control of these things. Even the wind and seas lie under his feet (literally and figuratively!), so we can trust him. In other words, we can have peace *within* the chaos if we know our savior!

DISCUSS: Why is peace *within* the chaos so important to understand (as opposed to peace *instead of* chaos)? Can you think of some times in your life where you have seen this to be true?