

## LESSON 4

June 27, 2021

Unit I. Jesus Teaches about Faith  
An Amazing Feat

**DEVOTIONAL READING:** Isaiah 38:16-20

**BACKGROUND SCRIPTURE:** Matthew 14:22-33

**PRINT PASSAGE:** Matthew 14:22-33

### KEY VERSE

**Immediately Jesus stretched forth his hand, and caught him, and said unto him, O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?** (Matthew 14:31, KJV)

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**Immediately Jesus reached out his hand and caught him. “You of little faith,” he said, “why did you doubt?”** (Matthew 14:31, NIV)

### Lesson Aims

As a result of experiencing this lesson, you should be able to do these things:

- Recall the amazing story of the storm at sea followed by Jesus’ appearance walking on the water.
- Repent of your failure to trust in God when caught up in a crisis.
- Develop habits of trust that enable you to overcome your doubt about God’s care.

### KEY TERMS

**Constrained (verse 22)**—Greek: *anagkazó* (an-ang-kad’-zo): necessitated; compelled; forced; urged; “made” (NIV).

**Fourth watch of the night (verse 25)**—Greek: *phulaké* (foo-lak-ay’): a watching, keeping guard; of the time (of night) during which guard was kept; “shortly before dawn” (NIV).

**Pray (verse 23)**—Greek: *proseuchomai* (pros-yoo’-khom-ahee): to pray to, pray for, offer prayer; to petition.

**Take courage (verse 27)**—Greek: *tharseó* (thar-seh’-o): to be of good courage; “be of good cheer” (KJV).

**Walking (verse 26)**—Greek: *peripateó* (per-ee-pat-eh’-o): to walk, tread; movement.

**Waves (verse 24)**—Greek: *kuma* (koo’-mah): surges; billows.

### INTRODUCTION

Last week, the nation celebrated fathers from every culture, community, and social rank. We honored fathers without regard for their repair skills, athleticism, looks, or professional

occupation. On Father's Day, we honor men for simply being good daddies. It would be amazing to have a feeling of accomplishment every day, validation that we have gotten it right. But, in reality, none of us get it totally right all of the time. Parenting is a journey that is often filled with doubt, mishaps, mistakes, and regret. Often, they shoot for the stars and land somewhere on the moon. The important thing is that despite their shortcomings and failures, they must trust and depend on God. Earthly fathers must set a daily goal to live in such a way to make our heavenly Father proud. This goal will help ensure that their children will have the makings of a good earthly father. Those who miss the mark must have the courage not only to seek forgiveness, but also to make a change for the better.

With God by your side, you can do anything. You can succeed in doing the impossible when you step out in faith and walk with the Savior. Follow His lead, and your path will be one of love, forgiveness, reconciliation, and hope.

## THE BIBLICAL CONTEXT

John the Baptist had just been beheaded and his disciples went to Jesus to take Him the news (Matthew 14:1-12). Upon hearing the news, Jesus withdrew to an isolated place, likely to spend time alone in reflection and grief over the loss of His cousin (verse 13a). When the crowds found out where Jesus was, they went to Him. Seeing them, He had compassion on them and began to heal them (verses 13b-14). Being sensitive to the crowd's spiritual and physical needs, Jesus multiplied five loaves and two fish and fed the large crowd until they were satisfied (verses 15-21). The storm rescue in Matthew 14 was the second time Jesus spared His disciples from a potential boating disaster on the Sea of Galilee (see Matthew 8:23-27). Defying natural law, Jesus went to the disciples walking on water. By faith, Peter was able to walk on water toward Jesus. He succeeded as long as he trusted Jesus that it was possible. When Peter allowed fear to override his faith, he began to sink. Jesus immediately rescued Peter but chided him for his wavering faith.

## ANALYSIS OF THE BIBLICAL TEXT

### Disaster Comes (*Matthew 14:22-24*)

#### KJV

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.

#### NIV

22 Immediately Jesus *made* the disciples get into the boat and go on ahead of him to the other side, while he dismissed the crowd.

23 After he had dismissed them, he went up on a mountainside by himself to *pray*. Later that night, he was there alone,

24 and the boat was already a considerable distance from land, buffeted by the *waves* because the wind was against it.

When Jesus finished ministering to the crowd (previous verses 18-21), He instructed His disciples to set sail for the other side of the sea where He would later meet them (verse 22). Apparently, the disciples did not question how Jesus would meet them on the other side. Perhaps, they assumed He would join another boater headed in the same direction. While the disciples were on their way, Jesus sent the multitude of people away and retreated to the mountain, by Himself, to pray (verse 23). Solitary prayer was a common routine for Jesus. As the disciples sailed across the sea, disaster came in the form of heavy waves and contrary winds that beat against the boat and made the journey difficult (verse 24). Matthew notes that the boat was a considerable distance from the land, which would have made it impractical to return to the point of origin.

### **What do you think?**

Have you ever had a “storm” to appear in your life just after having a miraculous experience with Jesus? Share.

### **Divinity Comes** (*Matthew 14:25-30*)

#### **KJV**

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.

#### **NIV**

25 *Shortly before dawn* Jesus went out to them, walking on the lake.  
26 When the disciples saw him *walking* on the lake, they were terrified. “It’s a ghost,” they said, and cried out in fear.  
27 But Jesus immediately said to them: “*Take courage!* It is I. Don’t be afraid.”  
28 “Lord, if it’s you,” Peter replied, “tell me to come to you on the water.”  
29 “Come,” he said. Then Peter got down out of the boat, walked on the water and came toward Jesus.  
30 But when he saw the wind, he was afraid and, beginning to sink, cried out, “Lord, save me!”

While the storm was troubling the disciples, Jesus, the Divine, headed toward them. He was walking on the water at one of the darkest moments in the night, just before the sunrise (verse 25). When the disciple saw Jesus, they did not recognize Him, and they became disturbed. They could not fathom anyone walking on water in a storm. Thinking that Jesus was a ghost, they began to panic and yell out in fear (verse 26). Noting the men’s fearful reaction, Jesus reassured them by

saying, “Take courage! It is I. Don’t be afraid” (verse 27, NIV). The voice of Jesus quieted the disciples’ panic. Peter yelled out a bold request. He dared to say to Jesus that if it were truly Him, then He would allow him to come to Him, walking on the water (verse 28). Peter’s request showed his faith in the power of Christ while also acknowledging his own limitations. Peter knew he could not go to Jesus in his own strength. He also knew that Jesus had the power to enable him to accomplish the feat. Jesus simply said “come” and Peter stepped out of the boat and walked on the water toward Him (verse 29). In verse 30, as Peter noticed the effects of the wind, he was distracted and lost focus on Jesus. In the boat, Peter’s full attention had been on Jesus. Peter teaches us that whether in or out of the boat, we must keep Jesus as the center of our faith and focus. Jesus honored Peter’s faith and granted him a supernatural, powerful experience like no other. When the concentration of faith was broken, Peter reverted to his natural state. Like Peter, when we lose focus on Jesus, we begin to sink in our circumstances.

### **What do you think?**

Sometimes, we do not recognize the Lord when He shows up to bless us. Share a time when you initially questioned or rejected what turned out to be a blessing in disguise.

### **Doubt Comes** (*Matthew 14:31-33*)

#### **KJV**

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.

#### **NIV**

31 Immediately Jesus reached out his hand and caught him. “You of little faith,” he said, “why did you doubt?”

32 And when they climbed into the boat, the wind died down.

33 Then those who were in the boat worshiped him, saying, “Truly you are the Son of God.”

At Peter’s cry, “Lord, save me” (verse 30), Jesus immediately reached out His hand to catch Peter and save him from drowning (verse 31a). Jesus’ response is immediate and definite. The Divine had come to Peter in the moment of his crisis. Instead of having a steadfast faith and focusing completely on Jesus, Peter lost focus by looking around at the winds around him. Such a distraction could have been fatal if not for the power of Jesus! After saving Peter, Jesus challenged his faith and asked Peter why he doubted (verse 31b). Jesus went from a mode of rescue to rebuke. Peter (and his fellow disciples) had been chastised before for having little faith (see Matthew 8:26) and would be chastised again (Matthew 16:8). Peter, though short-tempered and bold, needed occasional reminders of the importance of living by faith. He would have other moments of doubt as he endeavored to move from natural confidence to spiritual boldness in the Lord. He would have similar doubt during Jesus’ arrest (see Matthew 26:69-75) and shortly after Jesus’ resurrection (see Matthew 28:17). Peter demonstrates that doubt is detrimental to faith; it not only causes us to fail at our God-allowed tasks, but also displeases God. We may expect that our faith

will be tried during times of trouble. When Jesus and Peter climbed into the boat, the wind immediately died down (verse 32). This, too, was another reminder of Jesus' power over the elements of the earth. Peter was able to walk on water with Jesus. He walked on water to Jesus and he walked on water with Jesus back to the boat. The winds were there during both occasions. His sinking only occurred during the moment when his focus on Jesus was broken. The disciples, having witnessed the incredible sight of water-walking and the calming of the winds, worshipped Jesus and said, "Truly you are the Son of God" (verse 33, NIV).

### **What do you think?**

When doubt hits (and it does and will), what do/will you do?

### **A CLOSING THOUGHT**

Doubt and fear are normal human emotions. If not kept in check, they can cause us to drown in the everyday issues of life. When we walk and remain in faith, we can accomplish amazing feats. We cannot allow distractions and discouragement to keep us from reaching our full potential and the goal and destiny God has for us. With faith, you can do great things. Stay faithful. Stay focused on Jesus.

### **YOUR LIFE**

This week, reflect on those things God has called you to do. Identify your greatest fears and present them to God. Develop a plan to stay focused on God's plan for your life. This may include consistent Bible readings, prayer time, and sharing with others.

### **YOUR WORLD!**

This week, identify someone who could use a word of encouragement or a pat on the back. Sometimes, people are hesitant to share their struggles. Without pushing or probing, reach out to strengthen someone with a gesture of kindness or an uplifting word. Instead of being preoccupied with your own needs and problems, step outside the box to encourage someone else.

### **CLOSING PRAYER**

Lord, help our unbelief. We have moments in our walk that tempt us to lose faith and focus. When we are weak, strengthen us. When we call for help, hear us. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

### **CONCLUSION**

(Preparing for Next Week's Lesson)

While reading the background Scripture, consider this thought: "How do you express gratitude?"

## **HOME DAILY BIBLE READINGS**

### **An Attitude of Gratitude**

**(June 28–July 4, 2021)**

MONDAY, June 28	“God Welcomes Foreigners”	(Isaiah 56:1-8)
TUESDAY, June 29	“Naomi’s Sorrow Turns to Joy”	(Ruth 4:3-6,13-15)
WEDNESDAY, June 30	“Symptoms and Treatment of Leprosy”	(Leviticus 13:1-8)
THURSDAY, July 1	“Lepers Share Their Good News”	(2 Kings 7:3-11)
FRIDAY, July 2	“Many Samaritans Believe in the Savior”	(John 4:39-42)
SATURDAY, July 3	“Doing What Needs to Be Done”	(Luke 17:1-10)
SUNDAY, July 4	“Cultivate Gratefulness for Acts of Healing”	(Leviticus 13:45-56; Luke 17:11-19)