

People Jesus Met, part 25 – The Disciples in the Boat (Keeping Our Eyes on the Lord)

“Immediately, Jesus made the disciples get into the boat and go ahead of Him to the other side of the Sea while He dismissed the crowd.” Matthew 14:22

“And after He had sent the crowd away, Jesus went up on the mountainside by Himself to pray. And when it was evening, Jesus was there alone.” Matthew 14:23

“But the boat was already a considerable distance from land and was being battered by the waves because the wind was against it.” Matthew 14:24

“And in the fourth watch of the night (3:00–6:00 am), Jesus came out to them, walking on the Sea.”

Matthew 14:25

“By Him (Jesus), all things were created . . .” Colossians 1:16

“And when the disciples saw Him walking on the Sea, they were terrified and cried out in fear: ‘It’s a ghost.’” Matthew 14:26

“But Jesus immediately said to them, ‘Take courage! It is I. Do not be afraid.’” Matthew 14:27

“Then Peter said, ‘Lord, if it is really You, then command me to come to you on the water.’” Matthew 14:28

“So Jesus said to Peter, ‘Come!’ Then Peter climbed out of the boat and walked on the water and came toward Jesus.” Matthew 14:29

“But when he saw the wind, Peter became afraid and began to sink . . .” Matthew 14:30

Everything was going fine until Peter took his eyes off Jesus and put them on the circumstances around him!

“ . . . he began to sink . . .” Matthew 14:30

“And immediately, Jesus stretched out His hand and took hold of Peter and said to him, ‘O you of little faith, why did you doubt?’” Matthew 14:31

“And when Peter and Jesus climbed in the boat, the wind stopped.” Matthew 14:32

“Then those who were in the boat worshipped Jesus and said, ‘Truly, You are the Son of God!’”

Matthew 14:33

So What?

#1 – “Do you ever get tired of going?”

#2 – “What is your favorite spot, personally?”

“Then call on the name of your god, and I will call on the name of the LORD – and the God who answers by fire from heaven, He is God.” 1 Kings 18:24

“Elijah prayed, O LORD, God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, today let it be known that You are God in Israel. Answer me, O LORD, answer me, so these people will know that You, O LORD, are God!”

1 Kings 18:36, 37

“Then the fire of the LORD fell from heaven and consumed the sacrifice and the wood and the stones and the soil and also licked up all the water in the trench around it!” 1 Kings 18:38

“Then Jezebel sent a messenger to Elijah saying, ‘May the gods deal with me severely if, by this time tomorrow, I do not do to you what you did to those prophets.’” 1 Kings 19:2

“And Elijah was afraid and arose and ran for his life from Jezebel.” 1 Kings 19:3
Elijah lost his spiritual focus – he took his eyes off the Lord and put them on Jezebel.

“. . . encouraging ourselves in the Lord our God.” 1 Samuel 30:6

“A preacher is no good unless he tells you ‘so what?’ and ‘how?’”

“Exactly how do I encourage myself in the Lord and restore my spiritual focus on Him?”

Step #1 – Rest in the sovereignty of God

“Whatever the LORD pleases, He does – in the heavens, on the earth, in the seas, and in all their depths.”

Psalms 135:6

“Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? And yet, not one of them falls to the ground apart from the will of your heavenly Father.” Matthew 10:29

There is not one minute detail in the entire universe that God doesn’t have under His utter, sovereign control.

This means – that every situation we’re facing is in our life for one reason only: because the Almighty God of the universe put it there!

“The mind of man plans his way, but the LORD directs his steps.” Proverbs 16:9

Step #1 – Rest in the sovereignty of God

“Be still and know that I am God.” Psalm 46:10

Step #2 – Remember that God’s plan for our life is perfect

“Before I formed you in the womb, I knew you. And before you were born, I set you apart and appointed you as a prophet to the nations.” Jeremiah 1:5

“All the days that were ordained for me were written in Your book before even one of them came to be (here on earth).” Psalm 139:16

“‘For I know the plans I have for you,’ says the LORD, ‘plans for good and not for evil; plans to give you a future and a hope.’” Jeremiah 29:11

- Every piece of my life has been carefully scripted out

- There is a divine and eternal significance to every event in my life
- Everything is running right on schedule whether I understand that schedule or not!

Step #1 - Rest in the sovereignty of God

Step #2 - Remember that God's plan for our life is perfect

Step #3 - Remind ourselves that God's promises are unbreakable

"God has given us His great and precious promises." 2 Peter 1:4

"God causes all things to work together for good for those who love God." Romans 8:28

"I will never leave you nor will I ever forsake you." Hebrews 13:5

"God is not a man that He should lie. If He says it, He will do it. If He promises it, He will make good on it."

Numbers 23:19

"We have these promises as an anchor for our souls, firm and secure." Hebrews 6:19

God's promises are a "spiritual anchor" that keeps our souls from being tossed around by the winds and waves of life.

Step #1 - Rest in the sovereignty of God

Step #2 - Remember that God's plan for our life is perfect

Step #3 - Remind ourselves that God's promises are unbreakable

Step #4 - Recall that God's power is greater than any problem we face

"Behold, I am the LORD, the God of all flesh - is anything too hard for Me?" Jeremiah 32:27

"For nothing is impossible with God." Luke 1:37

"The things that are impossible with men are possible with God." Luke 18:27

That night walking on the Sea of Galilee, Peter's problems all started when he forgot that God's power was greater than the winds and waves.

Message of the rock pile: If God's power was greater than any obstacle you faced then, it's also greater than any obstacle you face now!

People who are walking with their eyes on the Lord know the obstacles are there.

It's just that they also know that God is bigger than the obstacles.

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Step #4 - Recall that God's power is greater than any problem we face

I am convinced that there are no waves in life so high that we cannot "walk on top of them" - so long as we keep our eyes on the Lord!

Conversely, I am just as convinced that, when our eyes are not on the Lord, even the tiniest problems in life will overwhelm us.

“Let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith.” Hebrews 12:1, 2

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