



Walking on Water

(Matthew 14:22-33)

BIBLE
BACKGROUND

About This Story

The story of Jesus walking on the water follows the miracle of the Feeding of the 5000 in three of the four Gospels—Matthew, Mark, and John. It encourages us to see Jesus as the promised Messiah and to put our trust in him.

The story has two parts. The first part puts Jesus' disciples in a boat during a storm. Jesus comes to them walking on the water. They think he is a ghost, but he reassures them with the words, "Take heart, it is I; do not be afraid." In Matthew's version, Peter then asks to walk on the water. He jumps from the boat and walks toward Jesus until fear overtakes him. When he starts to sink, he cries out to Jesus. Jesus offers his hand and pulls him from the choppy waves.

"You of little faith," says Jesus to Peter. "Why did you doubt?" At first, it sounds like a rebuke, but as we've seen before in Matthew, a little faith goes a long way. The disciples recognize Jesus for who he is. "Truly you are the Son of God!" they confess at the end of the story.

Why This Story Matters

It is one thing for Jesus to walk on water, but in this story Peter walks on water, too. As long as Peter trusts Jesus and keeps his attention on him, he is all right. But when he thinks about what he is doing and the wind around him, he starts to sink.

This is a story of trust, and of grace. It is Jesus who comes to us during the storm. It is Jesus who puts out his hand and pulls us from the choppy seas. Over and over, it is Jesus who calls, gathers, enlightens, and saves. When we trust Jesus, our response is like that of the disciples: "Truly you are the Son of God."

We can do nothing without God's help. Jesus promises that he will be with us always. Jesus patiently waits with a hand outstretched for us to believe and to follow. And we can trust that he will be there for us in every storm.