

# YOU CAN'T WALK ON WATER IF YOU DON'T GET OUT OF THE BOAT

(Matthew 14:22-33)

Intro: You can't walk on water if you don't get out of the boat.

## I. But Maybe We Don't Want To Get Out Of The Boat.

### A. Didn't God Put Us In The Boat?

1. Jesus' disciples.
  - a. In the boat.
    - Because Jesus made them get into the boat.
    - #Matthew 14:22.
  - b. While he went up a mountain.
    - By himself.
    - To pray.
    - #Perhaps still trying to grieve the death of John the Baptizer.
    - \*Matthew 14:3-12.
    - #Which he hadn't yet had time to do.
    - \*Because of the feeding of the multitudes.
    - +Matthew 14:13-21.
  - c. Jesus' disciples were exactly where he wanted them to be.
    - In the boat.
2. What about us?
  - a. Isn't this where we're supposed to be?
  - b. This part of a church building is sometimes called the nave.
    - From the Latin work for "ship."
    - #Think "navy."
    - Church is sometimes depicted as a ship.
    - #With all of the God's people.
    - \*Faithfully sailing along.
    - +Inside the ship.
    - Isn't this where we're supposed to be?

### B. But Sometimes The Sailing Gets Rough.

1. Jesus' disciples.
  - a. Exactly where Jesus wanted them to be.
  - b. But that didn't mean.
    - There would be no storm.
    - They would be able to safely sail themselves.
    - #Through the rough seas.

2. What about us?

- a. If there is a place I might rather be.
  - Than in Oklahoma.
  - #During July and August.
  - \*When it is:
    - +100°.
    - +110°.
    - +113°.
  - It might be on one of the Great Lakes.
- b. Two summers ago.
  - I went up to Lake Superior.
  - #I cruised around the Apostle Islands.
  - \*Out of Bayfield, Wisconsin.
  - #I took a National Park Service boat.
  - \*From Copper Harbor, Michigan.
  - \*Out to Isle Royale National Park.
  - +Closer to Canada.
  - =Than to the United States.
  - Both were delightful excursions.
- c. Last summer I took the car ferry.
  - SS *Badger*.
  - Across Lake Michigan.
  - #From Manitowoc, Wisconsin.
  - #To Ludington, Michigan.
  - It was a delightful afternoon to be on the lake.
- d. But it isn't always so.
  - One of my uncles was a captain on a Great Lakes freighter.
  - #*Harry L. Findlay*.
  - \*I never got to sail with him.
  - +But we visited him once.
  - =When I was a kid.
  - =When he was in port.
  - In Manitowoc, Wisconsin.
  - +We toured the wheel house.
  - +We dined at the captain's table.
  - \*It was a delightful visit.
  - +While the ship was in port.
  - #But sometimes the seas could become rough.
  - \*One of my cousins.
  - +My uncle's son.
  - \*Once showed me a picture of the *Harry L. Findlay*.
  - +After it had been in an ice storm.
  - =On Lake Michigan.
  - +Fortunate to make harbor in Milwaukee or Chicago.

- You might have heard about the *Edmund Fitzgerald*.
  - #Ore carrier that went down in Lake Superior.
    - \*During an early winter storm.
    - \*November 10, 1975.
  - #There is at least one life boat from the *Edmund Fitzgerald*.
    - \*In a maritime museum.
      - +Sault Sainte Marie, Michigan.
  - #There is a whole museum devoted to shipwrecks.
    - \*Whitefish Point Shipwreck Museum.
      - +Whitefish Point, Michigan.
  - #Gordon Lightfoot.
    - \*Singer.
    - \*Song writer.
      - +Wrote a song commemorating the event.
        - =*The Wreck of the Edmund Fitzgerald*.
      - +Couple of lines from that song:
        - =“Does anyone know where the love of God goes
        - =“When the waves turn the minutes to hours?”
- e. Even when we’re in the boat where we’re supposed to be.
  - Seas can become rough.
  - God can seem to be absent.
- f. Elijah was seemingly:
  - Where he was supposed to be.
  - Doing what he was supposed to be doing.
    - \*Had defeated the prophets of Baal.
      - +In a dual.
      - +At Mount Carmel.
        - =To demonstrate whose God was the true God.
        - =1 Kings 18:20-40.
    - \*Two altars had been built.
      - +One by Elijah.
      - +One by the prophets of Baal.
    - \*Two sacrifices had been placed on the altars.
      - +One by Elijah.
      - +One by the prophets of Baal.
    - \*Each in turn called on their God.
      - +To send down fire.
      - +To burn up the sacrifice.
        - =Prophets of Baal went first.
          - They prayed.
          - They mutilated themselves.
          - They threw themselves on the ground.

- Elijah taunted them:
  - # "Pray louder."
  - # "Maybe your god is:"
    - \* "Asleep."
    - \* "On vacation."
    - \* "Going to the bathroom."
- For three hours.
  - # They called on Baal.
  - # Nothing happened.
- =Then it was Elijah's turn.
  - But first:
    - # He had a trench dug around his altar.
    - # He had his sacrifice drenched with water.
      - \* Three times.
      - \* Until the trench was filled with water.
  - When he called upon the name of the Lord God.
    - # God sent down fire:
      - \* Consumed the sacrifice.
      - \* Lapped up every drop of water in the trench.
- \*Bystanders:
  - +Saw that Elijah's God was the true God.
  - +Joined Elijah in putting to death all the prophets of Baal.
- \*Just when it looked like Elijah had smooth sailing.
  - +Seas turned rough.
- =Jezebel.
  - Phoenician princess.
    - # Who had married King Ahab of Israel.
    - # Who had introduced the worship of Baal.
      - \* Into Israelite culture.
  - Wanted revenge.
    - # She wanted Elijah's head.
- =Elijah.
  - Had run to Mount Horeb.
    - # To have a talk with God.
  - Believed the Israelites.
    - # Forsaken God's covenant.
    - # Thrown down his altars.
    - # Killed God's prophets.
    - # Elijah was the only one left.
      - \* Now his life was on the line.
        - +1 Kings 19:9-18.

-God seemed to be missing in action.

#Not in:

\*Wind.

\*Earthquake.

\*Fire.

-Staying in the boat did not seem like an option.

#You can't walk on water if you don't get out of the boat.

## II. You Can't Walk On Water If You Don't Stay Focused On Jesus.

### A. Getting Out Of The Boat Is Risky Business.

#### 1. Jesus appeared to the disciples.

a. In the boat.

b. In the middle of the storm.

c. In the middle of the night.

-3 A.M. – 6 A.M.

d. When:

-They were going nowhere fast.

-They were scared out of their wits.

#### 2. Jesus said:

a. "Take heart."

b. "It is I."

-εγώ εἰμι (ego eimi).

-Echo of Exodus 3:14.

#"I AM WHO I AM."

-Foreshadowing of:

#"I AM the Bread of Life."

\*John 6:31-58.

#"I AM the Light of the World."

\*John 8:12.

\*John 9:5.

#"I AM the Gate."

\*John 10:7, 9.

#"I AM the Good Shepherd."

\*John 10:11, 14.

#"I AM the Resurrection and the Life."

\*John 11:25.

#"I AM the Way, the Truth, and the Life."

\*John 14:6.

#"I AM the Vine."

\*John 15:1, 5.

#"Before Abraham was, I AM."

\*John 8:58.

3. Peter.
  - a. Kind of believed.
  - b. Kind of didn't believe.
    - Even after Jesus had fed the multitudes with:
      - #5 loaves of bread.
      - #2 fish.
    - \*Matthew 14:13-21.
  - c. Said:
    - “Lord, if it is really you,”
    - “Command me to come to you on the water.”
4. Jesus said:
  - a. “Okay.”
  - b. “Come on.”
5. Peter.
  - a. Got out of the boat.
  - b. Began to walk on water.
    - You can't walk on water if you don't get out of the boat.
    - You can't walk on water if you don't stay focused on Jesus.

B. Getting Out Of The Boat Is An Act of Faith.

1. Acrobat.
  - a. Strung a high wire across a raging water fall.
  - b. Asked a bystander if he believed:
    - He could push a wheelbarrow across the high wire.
  - c. Bystander said:
    - “Sure, you can do it.”
  - d. Acrobat said:
    - “Okay, get in!”
2. Our faith:
  - a. Not in an acrobat.
  - b. Not simply in one who:
    - Feeds the hungry multitudes.
    - Walks on water.
  - c. But in the one who saves:
    - Peter.
      - #Rock from sinking like a rock.
    - Us.
      - #When we are like Elijah.
        - \*Feeling like we are all alone in the world.
        - \*Failing to see:
          - +Not only our God.
            - =In the silence.                    =On the mountain.
          - +But the 7,000 faithful folks.
            - =With whom God surrounds us.

#When we are like Jesus' disciples.

\*With:

+Wind.

+Waves.

=Threatening to take us under.

#When we are like Peter.

\*Of little faith.

\*More focused on:

+Wind.

+Waves.

=Rather than our Lord.

#With:

\*Cross.

+Empty tomb.

\*Water.

+Word.

\*Bread.

+Wine.

-All who call on the name of the Lord.

#Romans 10:13.

-Even Otto Bryan.

Concl: Otto Bryan painted this painting.

-I bought this for my parents.

#On the occasion of:

\*My dad's retirement.

\*Their moving into the only house.

+They ever owned.

-For many years it hung:

#In their dining room.

#In my dad's living room.

\*After he moved to Milwaukee.

-Now it hangs in my dining room.

#I have a smaller version.

\*In my office downstairs.

Otto has known some storms.

-Committing more than one murder.

-Being imprisoned for life.

But I think Otto also knows what it means to walk on water.

- To get out of the boat.
- To stay focused on Jesus.
  - With his art.
  - With his life.

You can't walk on water.

- If you don't get out of the boat.
- If you don't stay focused on Jesus.