

THE MASTER'S TOUCH

Matthew 14:22-33

What would you guess is the most common command in Scripture? It is not for us to be more loving, even though that may be the core of God's desire for human. It is not about pride, even though that is the root of mankind's fallenness. It is not the command to guard sexual purity or to walk with integrity, even though they are extremely important. The single command in Scripture that appears more than any other - God's most frequent instruction - is found in two words: Fear Not! Lloyd Ogilvie says there are 366 "**fear not**" verses in the Bible. That is one for every day of the year, including one for leap year! Now, fear does not seem like the most serious vice in the world. No one ever receives church discipline for being afraid. It has never made the list of the Seven Deadly Sins. So why does God tell human beings to stop being afraid more often than He tells them anything else? I believe it is because fear is the number one reason humans lose their faith and commitment to God, and then stop doing what He wants them to do with their lives. It was fear that caused the Israelites to murmur and rebel in the wilderness. It was fear that caused eleven of the twelve spies who were sent to investigate the Promise Land to testify that they could not take the land. It was fear that turned away the Rich Young Ruler, fear that caused Peter to deny the Lord, and fear that caused the very people Jesus came to save to cry out "**Crucify Him, Crucify Him.**" Fear is serious business in the Spiritual World. Matthew 14 is a story about fear, but it is also about faith. (Read passage)

Today, let's draw two final lessons from this text.

I. THE LORD'S HAND IS A HELPING HAND

A. When Jesus said to Peter, "Come," Peter entered the classic struggle between faith and fear. His faith said, "Jump, Peter, go out to Jesus". But his fear said, "No, Peter, stay in the boat". And bless his heart, Peter chose faith over fear and that was when he found himself walking on the water with Jesus.

1. But his fear struck again. He saw the wind and the waves, and he became afraid. He lost his faith, his sense of confidence vanished, and he began to sink not only in the sea, but in his own anxiety and worry.

2. Thanks be to God that his faith came back to life. He cried out to Jesus, "Lord, save me!" He could have tried to swim back to the boat, after all he was a man of the sea, but he didn't. Peter lifted up his heart up to Jesus for help, and by his faith he got that help.

3. Scripture tells us that Jesus immediately reached out His hand and caught him. The Savior did not make Peter tread water for a while. He did not allow the waves to swallow him up nor any harm to come to him. Jesus rescued him at the moment he cried out.

B. We are a lot like Peter. As much as we would rather be more like Paul, we are not. We often find ourselves in situations where fear has quenched our faith. Our intentions were good, our actions were bold, but fear found a way to distract us. But, when that happens it is then time to apply more faith, just as did Peter.

1. How many times have you found yourself in situation where all you could say was, Lord, help me. Lord save me? Be honest with yourself. We each have had times where those are the only words we can utter. Yet as simple as they are, they work. They did with Peter.

2. Jesus heard his plea; he also hears ours. He feels the urgency of our plight. He sees our struggle with fear and faith. Yet, He does not wait for us to go under. He does not wait for us to figure it out for ourselves. When we call out to him, He immediately extends His hand to help, to rescue, and to save.

3. [Isaiah 41:10](#)

4. [Isaiah 59:1](#)

5. [Psalm 138:7](#)

6. [Hebrews 4:16](#)

C. The next time you find yourself in trouble, floundering in fear, call out to the Master. Use your faith to reach out to Him, and He will reach back.

II. WE CAN DO GREAT THINGS WHEN OUR HAND IS IN HIS HAND

A. What happens next in our story is a most amazing event. It caught me by surprise, and maybe it will surprise you as well. After Jesus had rescued Peter from sinking in the sea, Scripture tells us that they went back to the boat and got in. Think about that for just a moment.

1. They were some distance from the boat when Peter began to sink. It is implied that Jesus pulled him up out of the waves. But how did they get back to the boat? There are only two options. Either Jesus carried him, or they walked together on the water.

2. I am convinced that they walked on the water again. In fact it is stated as such when the text says they climbed into the boat. They, together, yet as individuals, stepped from the waves into the boat. Can you imagine this scene?

3. Here they are walking hand in hand across the storm-tossed waves, finishing the journey of faith together. And in so doing, Peter is given a second chance to experience the miraculous. This is the kind of thing that happens when one holds on to the hand of the Master.

A. Scripture tells us that He is the shepherd and we are the sheep. Being sheep we are in desperate need of direction and guidance for our lives. So, when we cling to Him, hold to His hand, He will lead us down the right path, His path, the path of righteousness.

1. It is His hand that gives us strength when we are weak, help when we are in trouble, assurance when we are worried, and peace when we are distraught. Our steps are made sure, our decisions are spiritually directed and most importantly our souls find safety.

2. [Psalm 23:1-3](#)

3. [Proverbs 3:5-6](#)

4. [Revelation 7:16-17](#)

There is an old song we sing on occasion and the chorus tells us to Hold to God's Unchanging Hand. That is sound, Biblical advice. God's hand is always there to help us in our times of need. He will never fail us, although we often fail Him. And when we do hold to His hand, He will lead us in the way we ought to go.