

**Holy Habits – Worship**

**Aim:** Worship the Lord your God

**Passage:** Matthew 14: 22-33

**Introduction:** The reason I have chosen this passage from scripture for this month's 'Walking the Way, living the life of Jesus today' is because it comes at a pivotal moment in the ministry of Jesus. It is also when the disciples suddenly realise just who Jesus really is.

The passage begins just after the feeding of the five thousand, when not only do all the people who have followed Jesus and listened to him all day are fed with five loaves and two fish, but the disciples experience the miracle and begin to realise just who their master is.

Matthew 14: 22 begins with Jesus sending the disciples ahead of him in a boat to the other side of the lake. The reason for this is because at that moment, just after the miracle, there was a real danger that the people who had been fed, wanted Jesus to become their king as they believed him to be a prophet and the one who had been promised from long ago. So Jesus dismissed the crowd and went up onto the mountainside to pray.

V24 tells us that the disciples who had been sent across the lake were some distance from land and there was a storm with big waves and they were rowing into the wind.

This is a moment in the sermon having painted the picture of the disciples struggling and Jesus alone in prayer where the lives of the congregation can be brought in. How many of them are rowing against the storm? How many feel that God is not there when they most need him? How many feel that they have been sent across to the other side by Jesus, only to be left to battle alone?

V25 makes us realise that Jesus was looking down on the disciples as they struggled and then went down to them. The point can be made that Jesus is

always looking down on us and will come to us when we are suffering in the storms of life.

As Jesus walked on the water seemingly oblivious to the huge waves and turbulence, the disciples saw him and immediately went into panic mode and thought they were being haunted by a ghost! Only when Jesus spoke did they recognise him.

Do we recognise our Lord when he comes to our aid? Do we allow panic to take over instead of waiting and listening for God's voice?

Peter the disciple then asks for permission to come out onto the water with Jesus and his request is granted. As Peter left the safety of the boat and started to walk to his master this seemingly reckless act began to work. But then Peter took his eyes off Jesus and began to look around him and he began to sink!

Have we had moments like this when our faith has deserted us and we have lost our focus and we begin to sink through our lack of faith?

V31 shows us the compassion of our Lord as he reached out his hand to catch Peter. We need to realise that just as Jesus on the mountain side was looking down on the boat and the disciples in trouble, he is always looking out for us.

If we stay focussed on him and keep our faith strong, even in our darkest moments, the hand of Jesus will be there and will reach out for us. We just have to keep our faith and our relationship with him strong.

In verse 32 -33, Jesus and Peter climb up into the boat and immediately the storm abated and all the disciples worshipped Jesus and said, 'Truly you are the Son of God.'

The worship of our God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit is vital to the Christian faith. You may worship in silence, in awe, during the experience of seeing God's beautiful creation. You may worship God in a small chapel or a grand cathedral. But how we worship or where we worship is not important. But coming before God and knowing him through his Son Jesus Christ our Saviour and realising that our God is our creator and our Lord and his love for us is unconditional, then his grace will set us free.

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