

# **HOPE FOR THE FEARFUL**

## **Matthew 14:22-34**

- **Everyone deals with fears at various times in their lives.**
- In a 2020 survey, 62% of respondents reported experiencing some degree of anxiety. (SingleCare, 2020)
- **Fear is no respecter of time or place or person; it can happen at any time or anywhere to anyone.**
- *“About 5,000 men were fed that day, in addition to all the women and children! Immediately after this...”* (Matthew 14:21-22a)
- **We can experience fear even on the heels of incredible experiences with the Lord.**
- *“For God has not given us a spirit of fear and timidity, but of power, love, and self-discipline.”* (2 Timothy 1:7)
- **Fear can keep us from experiencing God’s best while affecting our physical, emotional/mental, and spiritual health.**
- *“Don’t worry about anything; instead, pray about everything. Tell God what you need, and thank him for all He has done. Then you will experience God’s peace, which exceeds anything we can understand. His peace will guard your hearts and minds as you live in Christ Jesus.”* (Philippians 4:6-7)
- **God’s best is experienced by those willing to live by faith rather than fear.**
- ***What fears are keeping you from living a life of faith and how can we overcome fearfulness in our lives?***

**To Overcome Fear And Live A Life Of Faith We Must:**

### **TRUST IN THE LORD’S PURPOSES**

- *“Immediately after this, Jesus insisted that His disciples get back into the boat and cross to the other side of the lake, while He sent the people home.”* (Matthew 14:22)
- **While we may want to know every detail God has for our lives, He will send us into situations that are out of our comfort zone to grow us.**
- *“The LORD directs the steps of the godly. He delights in every detail of their lives.”* (Psalm 37:23)
- **All throughout the Scriptures we see men and women that are told to go forward without a definitive end.**
- The Lord to Abram - *“Leave your native country, your relatives, and your father’s family, and go to the land that I will show you.”* (Genesis 12:1)
- **If we want to experience the Lord's blessings, we will most often find them in the "going" rather than in the "staying" times of life.**
- The Lord - *“...Go to the land that I will show you. I will make you into a great nation. I will bless you...”* (Genesis 12:1b-2a)
- ***What is God telling you to do that you need to step out in faith to accomplish?***

**To Overcome Fear and Live A Life Of Faith We Must:**

### **CONNECT TO THE LORD IN PRAYER**

- *“After sending them home, He (Jesus) went up into the hills by Himself to pray. Night fell while He was there alone.”* (Matthew 14:23)
- **Like Jesus, prayer must be an active part of our lives.**
- **Prayer is designed to adjust us to GOD'S will, Not to adjust GOD to our will.**
- *“Never stop praying.”* (1 Thessalonians 5:17)
- *“Jesus’ disciples asked Him, ‘Why couldn’t we cast out that evil spirit?’ Jesus replied, ‘This kind can be cast out only by prayer.’”* (Mark 9:28-29)
- **We cannot overcome and accomplish anything if our prayer life is weak.**
- *“Give all your worries and cares to God, for He cares about you.”* (1 Peter 5:7)
- **Prayer allows us to cast every concern to the Lord so that fear does not have the upper hand.**
- *“Keep watch and pray, so that you will not give in to temptation. For the spirit is willing, but the body is weak!”* (Matthew 26:41)
- **How would you describe your prayer life?**

**To Overcome Fear and Live A Life Of Faith We Must:**

**FOCUS ON THE PERSON OF JESUS**

- *“Meanwhile, the disciples were in trouble far away from land, for a strong wind had risen, and they were fighting heavy waves. About three o’clock in the morning Jesus came toward them, walking on the water. When the disciples saw Him walking on the water, they were terrified. In their fear, they cried out, ‘It’s a ghost!’”* (Matthew 14:24-26)
- **Fear can cause us to see what is not there and can blind us from the reality of Jesus.**
- *“Yes, come,” Jesus said. So Peter went over the side of the boat and walked on the water toward Jesus.”* (Matthew 14:29)
- **Like Peter we have to keep our focus on Jesus to overcome our fears in this life.**
- *“But when he saw the strong wind and the waves, he was terrified and began to sink. ‘Save me, Lord!’ he shouted. Jesus immediately reached out and grabbed him. ‘You have so little faith,’ Jesus said. ‘Why did you doubt Me?’”* (Matthew 14:30-31)
- **Just like Peter, we often do well in our lives until we take our eyes off Jesus.**
- **It’s impossible to live by faith if our focus is anywhere else other than on Jesus.**
- *“Do not love this world nor the things it offers you, for when you love the world, you do not have the love of the Father in you. For the world offers only a craving for physical pleasure, a craving for everything we see, and pride in our achievements and possessions. These are not from the Father, but are from this world.”* (1 John 2:15-16)
- **The world around us will always give us things to bring our focus off of Jesus.**
- Jesus - *“Seek the Kingdom of God above all else, and live righteously, and He will give you everything you need.”* (Matthew 6:33)
- **We focus on Jesus by studying the word of God, praying, worshiping the Lord, and spending time with other believers.**
- **What area in your life is taking your focus away from Jesus?**

**To Overcome Fear And Live A Life Of Faith We Must:**

**DEPEND ON THE PRESENCE OF JESUS**

- *“But Jesus spoke to them at once. ‘Don’t be afraid,’” He said. ‘Take courage. I am here!’ Then Peter called to Him, “Lord, if it’s really you, tell me to come to you, walking on the water.” (Matthew 14:27-28)*
- **Like Peter we all need reassurance that we are not alone at some point in our lives.**
- *“1 in 3 people fear being alone.” (TODAY and AOL Survey 2017)*
- *The Lord - “This is My command - be strong and courageous! Do not be afraid or discouraged. For the LORD your God is with you wherever you go.” (Joshua 1:9)*
- **The reality of Jesus’s presence is not based on how we feel but rather based on the truth that has been stated in the Scriptures.**
- *Jesus - “Go and make disciples of all the nations...And be sure of this: I am with you always, even to the end of the age.” (Matthew 28:19-20)*
- **As followers of Jesus, there is never a time that we are alone.**
- ***In what ways can you see and sense Jesus’ presence in your life?***
- *“When they climbed back into the boat, the wind stopped. Then the disciples worshiped Him. ‘You really are the Son of God!’ they exclaimed. After they had crossed the lake, they landed at Gennesaret.” (Matthew 14:32-34)*
- **It is easy to say we have faith when things are good, but real faith is demonstrated when we are challenged and we can still bless the Lord.**
- *“I will praise the LORD at all times. I will constantly speak His praises.” (Psalm 34:1)*
- **Life will always have its uncertainties but every uncertainty is an opportunity.**
- **We have one of two choices; allow fear to control us or faith to deliver us.**
- **While we may know an overall direction from the Lord, it is impossible for us to know what awaits us in our lives.**
- **It is only by living in faith that we get to experience great things with the Lord.**
- ***What step do you need to take right now to help you overcome your fear?***