

Trusting During the Storm - Part 2

HALF-HEARTED TRUST Matthew 14:22-33

STIMULATE

** In our last study we began to learn the importance of trusting the Lord during the storms of our life. Do you recall the similarities that our storms have with the one that the disciples had to endure in Matthew, chapter eight?

It was very real!
It came out of nowhere and very suddenly.
It covered their boats or seemed overwhelming.
It seemed to be life threatening.
It caused them to mis-trust the Lord.

** What was the one thing that the disciples had going for them, the one thing that proves to be the most notable characteristic of a true believer?

They "followed Him".
We too, should always follow the lifestyle and instruction of our Lord Jesus.

MOTIVATE

** Today we are going to see "**Half-hearted Trust**" as we watch yet another storm in the life of the disciples. Our challenge is going to be to learn the secret of continued obedience, while avoiding the temptation to give up. Please join me again in Matthew's gospel, this time chapter 14, verses 22-33.

Read passage (V. 22-25) (V. 26-29) (V. 30-33)

Opening Prayer

Half-hearted Trust

INVESTIGATE

** In our passage we are going to see five demonstrations, or proofs, of the deity of Jesus Christ. That is why the disciples proclaim in verse 33, "You are certainly God's Son".

We shall see His divine; 1) **Authority** 2) **Knowledge** 3) **Protection** 4) **Love** and 5) **Power**.

** Like last time, there has been a supernatural demonstration by the Lord just prior to this event taking place. Do you recall what that was?

Jesus fed the multitudes from just five loaves and two fish. Some twenty to twenty-five thousand people, when you include the women and children!

HIS DIVINE AUTHORITY

V.22 ** What took place "immediately" after the disciples had gathered up the twelve full baskets of left over food?

Jesus "made the disciples get into the boat, and go ahead of Him to the other side".

** Where is this "other side"?

They were to go to Capernaum. (cf. John 6:17,24 with Mark 6:45 - Bethsaida, a small fishing village outside of Capernaum)

cf. John 1:44 (Bethsaida) with Mark 1:29 (Capernaum)

** Why would Jesus have to use His divine authority and "make" the disciples leave?

After two years with Jesus, at this point, and after just witnessing the supernatural creation of food to feed so many, there was no way that the disciples wanted to leave the side of Jesus.

** Who else was to obey the authority of Jesus?

The multitudes! One ordinary man is not likely to disperse a crowd of some twenty-five thousand who liked getting free food and wanted to make Him their new king (even by force)!
cf. John 6:15

V.23 ** Even though Jesus Christ has all divine authority, what pattern does He give us to follow after He had sent the multitudes away?

"...He went up to the mountain by Himself to pray"

** What do you think He was praying about?

Perhaps; the welfare of His disciples, the lostness of the multitudes, the need for restored fellowship with His Father, or possibly just to avoid the temptation of becoming their king.
cf. Luke 4:6-8,13

** How long had these guys been "straining at the oars", as Mark puts it? (Mark 6:48)

From the first watch to the fourth, some 9 hours!

They were exhausted, and now seeing someone walking on the water, in the middle of the stormy sea, was more than could handle.

V.27 ** What does Jesus do to protect them from their fear- stricken minds?

He "immediately" instructed them to take courage and to not be afraid because "it is I" was here.

** How are we to feel when our storms are raging around us or even in us, like it was in the fearful hearts of the disciples?

We need to remember that the Lord is always there, and that He will never leave us or forsake us, but will instead protect us from our fears!

Deuteronomy 31:6 - "Be strong and courageous...He will not fail you or forsake you"

Joshua 1:5 - "Just as I have been with Moses, I will be with you; I will not fail you or forsake you."

Matthew 28:19-20 - "Go therefore and make disciples ...I am with you always, even to the end of the age".

Psalms 118:6 - "The Lord is for me; I will not fear; What can man do to me?"

HIS DIVINE LOVE

V.28 ** How does Peter's answer, in the middle of this very unusual situation, display his love for the Jesus?

All Peter wanted to do was to be with Christ. As impossible as it may seem, he would even walk on water to get next to Him, if that was the Lord's will.

V.29 ** What is the loving response given to Peter by Jesus?

Come! Not only did Peter's love for Jesus compel him to ask for the impossible, but the divine love of Jesus Christ for His disciple granted it!

The love of God is always calling us to come to Him!

cf. 1John 4:10, 19; John 15:16; Matthew 11:28

** At this point Peter displays not only his love for Jesus, but has an amazing amount of trust in Him; what does he do?

He got out of the boat and "walked on water" toward his Lord.

V.30 ** Because of his trust in Jesus, Peter initializes this supernatural feat. But what causes his trust to become "**Half-hearted Trust**"?

He took his eyes off of Jesus, and looked around at the raging storm.

** Was Peter afraid when he got out of the boat and started to walk on the water, back in verse 29?

No, Matthew says he "became afraid" when he took his eyes off of the Lord.

V.31 ** How did Christ further manifest His divine love?

He "stretched out His hand and took hold of him"...

** Jesus now lovingly asks Peter a question designed to expose the number one enemy of trust, what is it?

Doubting! We must live our life as Christians with this constant reminder at our side, "Never doubt what the Lord can do for you"! All see - James 1:2-8

HIS DIVINE POWER

V.32 ** What miraculous event took place when Jesus got into their boat?

"...the wind stopped..."

Further, in John 6:21, the Holy Spirit adds that the boat was miraculously transported to their point of destination. They went from 3-4 miles out at sea to the shoreline in a moment.

** What is different about the ending of this storm and the one that we saw last time?

Last time the Lord rebuked the wind and said to the sea, "Hush, be still". Here, He merely gets into the boat and because He was through teaching them this lesson, the wind stopped and the boat is transported to shore, all at the direction of His will.

V.33 ** What is the reaction of those who were in the boat throughout this amazing experience?

They worshipped Him! Remember, only God alone is worthy of our worship. These men all new that it would be blasphemy to worship a mere man.

** How is that response different from the one of the crowd who was fed the day before?

They wanted to take Jesus by force and make Him be their king so that He would heal their illnesses and provide the proverbial free lunch!

** To what conclusion does this bring the disciples?

"You are certainly God's Son!" This is true worship! Even the enemies of Christ knew that this meant equality with God. cf. John 5:18

EXTRICATE

** What were the five divine attributes of Jesus Christ that serve as reminders for us to always trust Him?

His divine; 1) **Authority** 2) **Knowledge** 3) **Protection** 4) **Love** and 5) **Power**.

DELINEATE

** From those attributes, what would you say is the secret of continued obedience in the area of trusting the Lord?

We can always trust Him because of who He is, not because of who we are!

** What practice must be stopped in order to avoid the temptation to give up?

The practice of doubting!

EVALUATE

** How easily does doubt creep into your heart? Does it take a major storm or just a slight ill wind to shake you from a residing trust in the Lord?

ACTIVATE

** When we were just looking at James 1:2-8 together, we saw that wisdom is a free gift from God anytime that we encounter storms or trials. Will you make the commitment to trust the Lord for that wisdom?

Closing Prayer