

## 9/8/20 Trinity 8

Matthew 14:22-33

### Jesus Walks on the Water

22 Immediately he made the disciples get into the boat and go on ahead to the other side, while he dismissed the crowds. 23 And after he had dismissed the crowds, he went up the mountain by himself to pray. When evening came, he was there alone, 24 but by this time the boat, battered by the waves, was far from the land,<sup>[a]</sup> for the wind was against them. 25 And early in the morning he came walking toward them on the sea. 26 But when the disciples saw him walking on the sea, they were terrified, saying, "It is a ghost!" And they cried out in fear. 27 But immediately Jesus spoke to them and said, "Take heart, it is I; do not be afraid."

28 Peter answered him, "Lord, if it is you, command me to come to you on the water." 29 He said, "Come." So Peter got out of the boat, started walking on the water, and came toward Jesus. 30 But when he noticed the strong wind,<sup>[b]</sup> he became frightened, and beginning to sink, he cried out, "Lord, save me!" 31 Jesus immediately reached out his hand and caught him, saying to him, "You of little faith, why did you doubt?" 32 When they got into the boat, the wind ceased. 33 And those in the boat worshiped him, saying, "Truly you are the Son of God."

Thinking about this passage we see Jesus again looking to find some peace and quiet by going up the hill to pray. He was by himself, but as the night went on, the sea became rough and the boat he'd sent the disciples off in was getting battered by the waves and they had been blown quite a way out to sea. Jesus no doubt knew that they would be frightened and probably saying "If Jesus was with us now." So early in the morning Jesus came to them, and as there was no other way of getting to the boat, he walked across the water to reach them. On seeing him walking on the waves at first they thought it was a ghost and were obviously afraid. Jesus told them not to be but Peter wanted proof as to who it was and if it was really Jesus, he said, "Command me to come to you on the water." So, Jesus did just that and Peter got out of the boat and walked on the water towards Jesus. It all started well but when he became aware of the wind whipping around him, he became scared, took his eyes off Jesus and began to

sink beneath the waves and called out “Lord save me.” And, of course, Jesus reached out his hand and caught him, lifting him out of the water.

This passage has always resonated with me because it’s the story of life isn’t it? When the storms of life swirl around us, we all need a saviour to help us out but we don’t always trust that we can be saved. Jesus said to Peter, “You of little faith, why did you doubt?” and it was only when they were back in the boat and the wind dropped did they truly believe Jesus was the Son of God.

Peter had been fine in the beginning. He focussed on Jesus then the strong wind around him took his concentration away and down he went. Life can throw some difficult situations and at the moment in the midst of Coronavirus, it can feel as if we are in the midst of a storm and find it hard to keep our heads above the water. Some people are coping with it really well and for others it is a real challenge. And in those times it’s hard to trust in someone we can’t see, a physical presence we can hold on to. But at other times we pray to God, to Jesus every day and he is the Saviour we profess to be ours who will uphold us and never let us down. Yet when the bad times come, it’s easy to forget. When Jesus said, “You of little faith, why did you doubt?” We take our eyes off Jesus as Peter did and let life overwhelm us. I have done many a time and it’s when we shout out ‘Lord, help me, help us’, that we remember that Jesus is there, is always there and never leaves our side.

I’ve read this passage a number of times and as I’ve thought about it, it’s particularly that line “How little faith, why did you doubt?” What would we say to Jesus in answer to that? The thing that came to mind then was that I would never want Jesus to ask me, “Why didn’t you trust me?” Of course, it happens but keeping our faith and our focus on Jesus, gives us hope and helps us never to doubt for a moment that He is with us and is always ready to catch us before we drown in the turmoil of life’s stormy seas.

Amen