

"Walk on water"

Shortly after the holy days of Lent and Passover, a priest, a minister, and a rabbi went off together on a fishing trip. They tried every kind of bait they could think of, but the fish weren't biting. So the priest got out of the boat and walked across the water to another spot. Then the rabbi got out of the boat and walked across the water.

The minister got out of the boat, too-and started to sink. He floundered around, climbed back into the boat, and tried again. Once again he sank into the water. He clambered back into the boat, and tried once more, this time almost drowning. Finally the priest said to the rabbi, "Do you think we should tell him where the rocks are?"

One of the most exciting things I like to do but wished I could do better is to swim. And I know that most people like swimming especially children. But there are those who don't like swimming because they can't swim and what they tend to use is what we call a float.

And there are many different types of floats; we can use a simple foam float, rubber rings or even a rubber ring. Do you need help swimming or can you stay on top of the water all by yourself? For those of you who can swim well without these things have you ever wondered what keeps you a float?

Because if we don't know how to swim it can be scary to be in the water and it's helpful to have someone there to keep us from sinking. Do you kids know what this is? (Show the inner tube) This helps you float so you don't go under the water, so you don't get into trouble. Sometimes it can even save your life.

But what's inside this plastic tube? Air! Now we all know that air is all around us, it doesn't cost us anything, and it works really well inside this inner tube (our body) to keep you floating.

What would happen if I replaced the air in this inner tube with something else? What if we decided to put Coke, or sugar, or sand, or melted chocolate inside this tube? What would happen if I did that?

That's right the inner tube would sink and wouldn't work the way it's suppose to. It wouldn't be able to help us. This inner tube is like our bodies and our minds, they work well when we fill them with some good things. And what we fail to realise is that some of those good things are all around us and they don't really cost us anything.

For example one of those things is love. When we are loved and cared for we live better. The love you get from your mom or dad, grandparents church family etc helps you to grow well, helps keep you safe.

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Another thing that's good for our insides is **learning about God** and **how he wants us to live**. Living the way God wants us to live actually can help us from sinking into trouble; it helps us stay on top of the water.

A third thing that's good for us is **prayer**. Prayer helps us to know that God is always there for us. He is ready to save us from all sorts of trouble. Prayer helps to keep us floating on top of the water.

So when you go swimming again, and you see an inner tube, or a float of some sort, you can think about the things that are inside of you that help to keep you from sinking, things like, **love, God and Prayer**.

And the fourth thing we need to help us stay a float but again we can't see it is **faith**. You see guys were all on what we could call the sea of life. And on this sea of life there are two sets of people, there are floaters and there are sinkers.

The question is **which one will you choose to be?** Now I'm going to show you guys some pictures on the screen and I want you all quietly within yourself to figure out whether the object will sink or float.

Now here is a picture of a tub of water and the first item we want to put on that water is this. **Are you ready?** Here is a picture of a **wooden building block**. Now quietly within your own mind you decide whether it will sink or float.

I think most of you would have got that right, because the block of wood would float on the water. Here is the second item, it's **a metal spoon**. **Will it will float or will it sink?** Well again I think most of you would have got that right, it would sink.

This is a piece of **heavy duty foil** used for cooking. **Will it float or sink?** I think most of you would have got this right too, I believe it would float. And one more item, here is a picture of Yemi, **would she sink or swim?** Truest me Yemi can't swim she would defiantly sink.

What about you, are you a floater or a sinker? Well were about to find out because I think we can find the answer in the Bible.

Do you remember the story in Matthew 14 when Jesus fed five thousand people with just five loaves of bread and two fish? After Jesus had fed the 5,000, he told the disciples to get into the boat and go on ahead of him to the other side. Then he went up on a mountainside by himself to pray. By evening, the boat had sailed a great distance from the land.

Matthew 14:24 tells us that **"While the disciples were going to the other side of the lake in their boat, the wind came up and the water began to get rough."** The sea became so rough that some of the disciples were becoming seasick!

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The disciples were so afraid they thought that their boat would sink and they would be drowned. They looked out at the sea and **guess what they saw?** They saw Jesus walking toward them on the water!

Matthew 14:26 says, "Then they looked, and they saw Jesus coming toward them and he was walking on the water". Now let's just pause and think about this for a moment.

Jesus is walking on water, now I don't know about you but this is nothing less than a miracle, **isn't it?** Now you might be thinking I don't really believe that Jesus actually did walk on the water.

You see if you believe **Genesis 1:1** where the Bible says, that "God created the heavens and the earth and everything in them" then you shouldn't have any problem believing this miracle.

If God can create the whole world and everything in out of nothing, then **why can't the One who created the water in the first place be able to walk on what He created?**

Why can't the One who created the sun, stop the sun from going down like we read about in Joshua 10? Why can't the One who created life, bring Lazarus back to life after he had been dead for four days like we read about in John 11?

My point is Jesus walked on water so that means that Jesus is definitely a floater. Now seeing anyone walking on water would be enough to frighten me.

And it frightened the disciples too because the Bible says in **Matthew 14:27**, **When they saw him, they were terrified and cried out in fear, "It's a ghost!"** And so knowing their fear Jesus reassures them and says, **"Don't be afraid, it is I."**

And so Jesus is walking on the water and the storm is still raging and according to **Matthew 14:28** when Peter saw Jesus, he became excited and he said to him, **"Lord, if that's really you, let me walk to you on the water."** Then Jesus answered Peter and said, **"Come."** Well Peter climbed over the side of the boat and started walking on the water to Jesus.

Now loved ones, this is a big lesson we all need to learn from time to time. **When was the last time we stepped out in faith like Peter did?** You see it's easy to stay in the boat where everything is nice and safe. **But when was the last time we got out of the boat and started to trust God like Peter did?**

Let me put it this way, **when was the last time we asked someone if they would like to study the Bible but were afraid of the waves of criticism we might receive?**

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When was the last time we invited someone to come to church but were afraid of the storms that might come because they might think that were weird? When was the last time we rebuked someone for their sinful behaviour with love but were afraid of the winds of being too strict?

You see were all nice and cosy and safe when we come to our little boat every first day of the week. But there are times loved ones when we need to get out of the boat to reach the lost. There are times when we need to stretch our faith muscles.

There's a strange truth about the shark. If you put a baby shark into a six foot aquarium it will grow in proportion to that fish tank. In other words it will grow to **six inches** long and will be fully developed. But if you put that same baby shark into the sea, he will grow to **15 feet long** and be fully developed.

Now sometimes when I look at the Lord's church I see all these tiny baby sharks swimming along quite happily. These are the Christians who never step out in faith, Christians who never share their faith.

But loved ones, the Bible calls us to grow and the only way for us to grow into our spiritual potential is to get out there into the world and share our faith. Now this is amazing **isn't it?** Peter didn't create the water so **how did he manage to walk on the water?**

Well he had a little of what we all need as Christians, he had one of those things we can't see, he had **faith**. And his faith was great, until according to **Matthew 14:30** he began to look around, he felt the strong winds and saw the waves and he became afraid and started to sink.

He had great faith until he took his eyes off of Jesus, and it was then that he cried out to Jesus, **"Help, save me!"** Now I want to raise an important point right here, sometimes in life we find ourselves drowning in all sorts of things.

Adults drown in the waters of bereavement, sorrow and worries. Adults drown in the waters of debt, family pressures and broken relationships. Children drown in the waters of peer-pressure, unloving parents, and having no good role models in their lives. Children drown in the waters of neglect, abuse and lack of support.

Now all these things can drown anyone and sometimes they do and although Peter started off with great faith and even though his faith achieved a great thing like walking on water, he took his eye off the creator of the water and begun to drown.

Now here is my point, Jesus didn't just leave him to drown. **Matthew 14:31** says that Jesus reached out his hand and saved Peter and he said to him, **"Oh, you of little faith, why did you doubt?"**

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You see loved ones, there are times when life is great and we feel like we are walking on water. But there are other times when life isn't so great and we begin to drown in the waters of life. But there is hope; you don't have to drown **why?** Well simply because Jesus has His arm outstretched and He is trying to save you. But you need to take hold of His hand.

I love that story about the man who is drowning at sea after his boat sank after hitting some rocks. He prayed 'God help me' and just then a small fishing boat came passes and threw him a life line, but the man says 'no God will save me.'

And he prayed again 'God save me' and a few minutes later a cruiser ship came passed and threw him a life line but again he said, 'no God will save me'. And so he prayed again, 'God help me', this time the coastguard came by in their helicopter, and they too dropped him a life line but he says 'No God will save me'.

The man finally drowned around an hour later and he gets the pearly gates of heaven and says to God, 'God why didn't you save me?' to which God replied, 'I sent you a fishing boat, a cruiser ship and an helicopter what more did you want?'

You see guys when life gets tough even at school don't go complaining and moaning to God that you're drowning if you're not willing to take Jesus by the hand to let him help you.

Now that help may come in ways that you don't recognise, it may come through a friend or family member. It might come when you start reading the Bible or praying regularly to God.

The point is anyone who points you to Jesus might be Jesus' way of saving you. You see, as long as Peter kept his eyes on Jesus, he was walking on the water, but when he took his eyes off of Jesus, he began to sink.

And as we go through life, there will be some storms; all of us will encounter some pretty rough water. And what Jesus is trying to tell us is that as long as we keep our eyes upon Him and put our trust in Him, we will be okay.

But when we take our eyes off of Jesus and put our confidence in our own ability, then we will surely sink. We face many storms in our daily life. If we keep our eyes on Jesus, we can weather the storm.

And so the question is **will you be a floater or a sinker? Because do you know what will happen when you allow Jesus to save you when your drowning?**

Matthew 14:32 "And when they had climbed back into the boat, the sea became calm." When you take Jesus by the hand and let him lead you, you will be back on dry ground and the storms of life will settle down again.

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In other words, it's good to tell people you go to church; it's good to tell people you go to KBC and youth days. But it's also vitally important that you come back into the boat once a week for a rest.

In the film **Madagascar 2** New York Zoo animals, Alex the Lion, Marty the Zebra, Melman the Giraffe and Gloria the Hippo, King Julien, Maurice and the penguins and the chimps find themselves marooned on the distant shores of **Madagascar**.

And in the face of this obstacle, the **New Yorkers** have hatched a plan so crazy it just might work. With military precision, the penguins have repaired an old crashed plane, well sort of.

And once aloft, this unlikely crew stays airborne just long enough to make it to the wildest place of all, the vast plains of Africa, where the members of our zoo-raised crew encounter something very interesting.

Can you remember who they meet? They meet species of their own kind for the very first time. And as you know they quickly discover they're in their ancestral home and they all begin to learn a whole lot about themselves and who they are.

You see guys; we all need to come to church regularly to remind ourselves of where we come from and who we are as a people. And when Jesus says '**come**' we need to ask ourselves '**am I willing to do what He asks?**'

I hope and pray that you will, I hope God gives you the strength to step out in the waters of life with faith to tell people about Him. I hope and pray that God will give you the courage to step out in faith one day to enter the waters of baptism to become a Christian.