

# Day 14, Matthew 14

by David Servant

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*David Servant's sermon emphasizes the importance of faith and trust in God during trials and uncertainties, illustrated through the events in Matthew 14.*

**Scripture:** Matthew 14:13-14, Matthew 14:25, Matthew 14:31, Romans 8:39

**Topics:** "Faith And Trust", "Gods Mercy"

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## Description

David Servant reflects on the emotional impact of John the Baptist's death on Jesus, highlighting how even Jesus, in His humanity, needed time alone to process grief and questions. Despite not having all the answers, Jesus showed compassion and healed the sick, demonstrating His unwavering love and power. The story of Jesus walking on water reveals the importance of faith and trusting God even in the midst of trials and contrary winds. Peter's experience on the water serves as a reminder that doubts can hinder us from fully experiencing God's will, but His mercy is always there to rescue us when we falter.

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## Transcript

Once again, evil had triumphed over good. Herodias, who had divorced Herod's brother to marry him, and her dazzling dancing daughter, succeeding in silencing John by having him beheaded. When John's friend, relative, and ministry associate, Jesus, learned of the tragic news, He "withdrew from there in a boat, to a lonely place by Himself" (14:13). If I'm reading that correctly, John's death affected Jesus emotionally, and He reacted emotionally, needing some time to Himself. I wonder if He wondered why His all-powerful Father hadn't prevented John's martyrdom. Why, once again, had the bad guys succeeded when they could have been stopped? Had John's life been preserved, would he not have been enabled to lead more people to repentance?

I think it is quite possible that Jesus, who obviously stripped Himself of omniscience when He took on human flesh, and who was tempted in every way as we have been tempted (Heb. 4:15), did not have the answers to those questions, just as we don't have the answers to so many similar questions. Perhaps He could only trust, just as we must do at times. One of the best pieces of advice I've ever heard is this: When you face something that you don't understand, fall back on what you do understand. Nothing can happen to us that changes the fact that Jesus died for us. Nothing can separate us from the love of God (Rom. 8:39).

Jesus' retreat on the water was apparently short-lived, as He found a "great multitude" who had traveled from surrounding cities waiting for Him at a desolate spot along the shore. He "felt compassion for them,

and healed their sick" (14:14). If you had been sick and had been among that multitude, Jesus would have felt compassion for you and healed you. If He would have healed you 2,000 years ago, why would He not heal you now? Has His compassion or power waned? No! Have faith! (And look for the same lesson in 14:34-36.)

Speaking of having faith, Jesus expected it of His disciples, and today we read a classic faith story. Surely God the Father knew that a contrary wind would descend on the Sea of Galilee the evening that the disciples would try to row to the other side. But He didn't prevent their fateful trial. Troubles may come even when we are in the center of God's perfect will. They are opportunities to trust Him and persevere.

Jesus sent the twelve on their crossing before evening (14:22-23), and He came walking to them on the water during the "fourth watch of the night" (14:25), between 3 and 6 AM. He apparently left them in their predicament to row against the wind for quite a few hours. Finally He came to them, walking on the water, a very unusual sight indeed.

I have never understood Peter's logic when He said, "Lord, if it is You, command me to come to You on the water" (14:28). A ghost could have commanded him to come just as easily as Jesus! Good thing it was Jesus, and Peter proceeded to walk on the water---until he looked around and doubted. Keep in mind that Jesus didn't say to Peter, "Walk part way and sink!" No, it was clearly Jesus' will for Peter to stay on top of the water. No one can debate that it wasn't Peter's doubts that were the reason for his sinking. I wonder how Jesus would have reacted had He heard Peter, back in the boat, say to the other disciples, "Obviously it was God's will that I only make it so far across the water."

This is a good lesson for us to learn. God's will does not always come to pass apart from our faith. We shouldn't blame Him for failures that are actually the result of our own doubts. So trust Him and keep on trusting Him. I'm so glad that even when we doubt, however, God's mercy is still there to rescue us, just as it was for Peter.

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