

# Looking Unto Jesus

by Don McClure

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*Jesus sends the disciples into a storm to teach them to trust in his power and provision, and to learn to see him as the solution to their problems.*

**Duration:** 36:38

**Scripture:** Matthew 6:33, Matthew 14:22-33

**Topics:** "Faith In Jesus", "Trials And Tribulations"

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## Description

In this sermon, the speaker discusses the story of Jesus sending his disciples into a stormy situation on the Sea of Galilee. The disciples had been struggling and rowing for hours, exhausted and fearful. The speaker emphasizes that even though we may not find ourselves in the same physical circumstances, we will all face battles and trials in life. The main message is that Jesus is sufficient for every situation and condition, and he teaches his disciples this truth by sending them into a challenging situation where they have to rely on him.

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## Transcript

This morning if you will turn with me to Matthew chapter 14 as we continue on through our studies through the Bible and this morning we get to chapter 14 and if you'll stand I'll read out of it. Matthew chapter 14 verse 22. And straightway Jesus constrained his disciples to get into a ship and to go before him unto the other side while he sent the multitudes away.

And when he had sent the multitudes away he went up unto a mountain apart to pray. And when evening was come he was there alone. But the ship was now in the midst of the sea tossed with waves for the wind was contrary.

And in the fourth watch of the night Jesus went into them walking on the sea. And when the disciples saw him walking on the sea they were troubled saying it is a spirit or a ghost and they cried aloud for fear. But straightway Jesus spake unto them saying be of good cheer it is I. Be not afraid.

And Peter answered him and said Lord if it be thou bid me come unto thee on the water. And he said come. And when Peter was come down out of the ship he walked on the water to go to Jesus.

But when he saw the wind boisterous he was afraid and beginning to sink he cried saying Lord save me. And immediately Jesus stretched forth his hand and caught him and he said unto him O thou of little faith

wherefore didst thou doubt. And when they were come to the ship the wind ceased.

And then they that were in the ship came and worshipped him saying of a truth thou art the Son of God. Father how we thank you for your word. How we thank you Lord for what you have to reveal to us of yourself.

Through your word in Lord when our ship is in the midst of the sea. What you want us to know. Not only about the sea and about ourselves but most of all about you.

We ask that as we look to your word this morning that you would feed us for we ask it in Jesus name. Amen. You may be seated.

Maybe just a little bit here to set I suppose the scene a little bit of what is happening here. Of course this is on the Sea of Galilee where this event here in chapter 14 takes place. So much of Jesus's ministry went on all around the cities all around the Sea of Galilee.

And so quite a bit of the time of ministry was spent there. And they were oftentimes on the sea and being fishermen as they were they're very acquainted with it as well. But the Sea of Galilee for those of you that have been with us to Israel you know this but it's at the base of a valley that basically comes down from the city of Jerusalem.

Now through this valley coming into it there are some rather significant mountains or high mountains on both sides of this valley. The result of it is that oftentimes winds will come down through that area. And because of the valley and the layout of the mountains in the side it can become almost like a wind tunnel coming down on the Sea of Galilee.

And by the time it hits the Sea of Galilee and particularly in the middle of it they can have some very sudden and powerful storms. It is not uncommon to have six-foot waves out in the middle of the sea. While at the side it may not even be hardly windy at all.

But here is the disciples they find themselves as well not only in the middle of this that we'll look at in a moment but I think it's also important just to reflect on what we'll see as we go through the overview of the chapter as well. But they had just come from the experience of the feeding of the 5,000. Just that day before this event Jesus had taken probably 12,000 maybe with men women and children and miraculously fed them.

They had listened to him all day long and they were on their way to go back home. They were hungry and they needed something to eat. And rather than having to make the journey hungry Jesus miraculously with five loaves and two fish had just fed them and just provided for them.

It says there Jesus having compassion upon them didn't want them to go home hungry. And right after that it then goes on here in verse 22 and it says in straightway Jesus constrained the disciples. In other words as soon really as this was over Jesus then after sending the 5,000 men plus women and children were on their way home he turned the disciples he said now I know you go on he says they're across to go before him under the other side while he sent the multitudes away.

Jesus said I'll take care of the rest of the crowd here you guys go on across and meet you on the other side you go before me over there. And here was something of course it tells us then there and one of the wonderful things as well that we have with the Bible that didn't have at the time I guess is hindsight is

always 20-20. We know some things there that were going on that somebody else wouldn't be aware of at the time but of course Jesus being omniscient knowing all things and omnipotent having all power knew full well that they were heading out into a storm that would be a tremendous storm and he deliberately sent them into it.

And as he sends them out into this obviously knowing you know with full knowledge where they're heading I'm convinced there that he did it once again out of his compassion out of his training he is you see Jesus has called these twelve to himself and he has just revealed a great power to them a great miracle there in the feeding of the five thousand but he also is very aware that he's soon going to be turning the whole ministry over to them and the things that he is doing the life that he is living the ministry is preaching the truths that he is sharing the power that he lives in and shares and knows is he's determined his disciples must know this power themselves for them to be those that he wants them to be they have got to enter into an awareness personally of his power not just

observers of it and watching him take five loaves and two fish and say boys that's something I mean anybody being there what a miracle but Jesus is not interested in me being an observer and what he can do it but as much as an experiencer of what he does that's what it's all about and here he wants to disciple his disciples he wants to train them and so in order to do that he's got to send them out into what they would think to be an impossible situation a hopeless situation so that they might discover did impossible hopeless dog if they're ever going to minister the gospel to the to the world ahead of them who also lives in impossible situations and hopeless situations they've got to have an empathy they've got to have a realization within them that he is sufficient for all things and so

deliberately Jesus taking those that he loved taking those that he is training and equipping he sends them deliberately right into the midst of the sea into the middle of a storm so that they would be ones that would know of his power personally that's interesting at the very beginning of it it tells us there that Jesus told them he constrained them to get into a ship to go before him unto the other side go before me another I'll meet you over there on the other side if they had merely listened as well to what he said what comfort it would have been through the middle of the storm through the midst of the sea and through all the chaos when everything is telling them oh no life is over it's done if they would have just remembered wait a minute Jesus said he was going to meet us on the

other side we can't die we can't perish he's gone and whatever God says if he says he's going to meet us on the other side therefore somehow or another we got to get on the other side to meet him we're going to be there but how easily we forget these things how easily we forget Jesus didn't say go out in the midst of the sea and then well well then you know I mean he just didn't just drop it he just didn't look there say go halfway and prepare to meet thy maker you know or something he told them go before me under the other side and here is Jesus what the comfort if we would merely learn to listen to all that he says when he sends us and when he calls us for here he had already guaranteed if they would have just learned to listen to him but something that they have got to learn that every

one of his children's got to learn in usually through the process of the same type of trials and we've got to go through them all as well that here if they're going to come to a place where they know of his power and they know of his word and they can rest in his word and they've got to learn to listen to it all themselves so to me we all have the same lesson don't we but here they also have to learn as well I think one of the greatest and fundamental lessons of all of life and that is that his word is more powerful than any condition any situation if he says something I don't care what the situation suggests I don't care what it would kind of

the circumstances of life would put me into if he has said something that let God be true in every man a liar the sea is going to lie to me if it's

going to suggest it's going to take me it's going to destroy me so here we have Jesus sending disciples who had called himself for you those who he is preparing to minister to others that God has God in heaven above and earth below and he's sending them into a situation where they will have to learn that he is sufficient for every situation in every condition and he's got to teach them the truth and so he sends them out deliberately into an event there where it tells us there that the ship would be in the midst of the sea tossed with waves then the wind was contrary and as he sends them into this look at this it seems as if everything is at its worst isn't it when you stop to think of it here first of all he sends them into a place there where it says they're there in the midst of the sea

now this is a huge sea and as they are in the midst of it first of all we're told here that no matter what direction they go they're equal distance from help the right in the middle of it there is no close easy simple way to kind of get out of this there's no close haven at all they're in the midst of the sea and as well as they're in the midst of the sea it says that they are tossed with waves the boat there in the middle of the storm taking on water being battered and beaten all around in the middle of this and and of course this is something that's not like being lost in the middle of a city while you're driving you know that's hectic enough for some of us there may be an unfamiliar territory but at least then you can pull over you can rest you can try to get your bearings you can get

off the road but you can't get out of it in the midst of the sea when you're tossed with waves there isn't any little kind of pull off place there isn't any little safe haven a resting place there isn't something there where you just hold it hold it hold it you know timeout there for a few minutes while I just get some some hold of my wits here no they're they're fighting it and fighting it it's relentless it isn't give up you don't have any time to kind of stop and to get your bearings and then it says in the wind was contrary and here in other words the direction that they ultimately knew that they were going to that they were supposed to be going was the most difficult to go the wind was against them fighting them pushing them back and they are fighting against the wind and they have

been fighting the hardest possible direction to head oh what a temptation to turn around and to go back at least you got the wind in your back at least you've got something else to help you try to fight it oh man I'm convinced that Jesus knew many times like this would happen in their lives as they happen in all people's lives that there's and all the people that these did that the disciples would ever minister to they would be in circumstances like this all the time in the middle of the sea tossed with waves the wind would be contrary and yet we're still it tells us there was the first for the fourth watch of the night somewhere between three and four or five in the morning in other words they had been out there somewhere between maybe nine to maybe 12 hours fighting rowing struggling

trying to get some place in here was something to the very darkest of the hour the night before when they before the Sun is started to rise and that there's any morning glow beginning to come the very darkest point and here they are they're totally exhausted they have been fighting with this all night long here it's something there in the fourth watch of the night in their energy is spent in their exhausted no longer now are you trying to think what is good or what's best or what is honorable or what is right or what is noble is now down to what is survival now they're down to where every muscle in their body every every breath that they take everything that they're trying to do and fight against this and get the water out and keep on going now they come to the awareness this isn't just

exhausting this is survival this is what do we got to do to carry on I know that maybe as you may sit here you may say well I don't think I'm ever going to Israel we may think I don't ever plan on being a boat in the middle of the Sea of Galilee let alone in the middle of the night in the midst of a storm three and five in the morning but I want to tell you there's not a one of us that won't be confronted with the truths and the principles of this battle there's not a human being that's going to be worth his salt in all of this life at all that isn't going to have to learn how to head into those and how to experience a greater life the issue in life is now to avoid storms the issue in life for a great person and a person that's mature isn't how I got out of them or how I ran from them

it's how did I triumph in them how did I get through them you see I don't know how many times in life I in ministry I've sat down with people where they frankly sat there and and will look at me and maybe even say you know I I had no other way to go I had to do what I had to do and I realized maybe the implications in my life I realized now maybe the implications for my marriage or when I walked away from my home and I gave up this or I what its effect may have been here or there but you don't understand at the time I did I was tossed with waves I was in the middle of it it was relentless it never gave up there was no way out I was tossed with waves I was fighting and my energy was long gone there was no other way to go maybe now all right the storm is over and I've you know floated in

onto the side of the shore and the Sun is out and the sea is calm and the weather is nice but it wasn't that way when I had to make the decisions I had to make it was tough and everything was gone and there was no hope and I had nowhere to go you see this is when being many people make the decisions in their life affect them profoundly and they're easily justified to our thinking I know it is because I've heard it and I've done it but here as we look at this so often we may say you know there was nothing else to do there was nothing else anybody could have done I did the best I could for as long as I could I didn't give up at midnight I didn't give up a one I didn't give up a two I didn't give up till it was absolutely the end but you see they could have seen Jesus it could have turned to

him that's what the disciples had to do and you say see Jesus I didn't see Jesus I didn't see him anywhere I couldn't see Jesus he wasn't there I'm sure he wasn't there he's nowhere to be found oh well the disciples didn't think they saw him either as a matter of fact when Jesus was there they were convinced he was a ghost his own disciples the one that he had revealed so much of himself to and only that day a miraculous revelation of himself only hours before he had revealed himself so wonderfully to him and yet there they didn't even think for a moment it might be him there to help rescue them rather than that they looked over and all they had was another problem another trial a ghost and they cried out with fear as if haven't we got enough now oh boy is this not life is this not how it

is so often how many times it is to where we're crying out with fear the world is against us tension is high it's in our home or it's in our family or in our marriage you can't go any farther I've done the noble thing I've tried to do the right thing I've tried to hang in there for a long time not an easy decision to make but yet then there along comes somebody that suggests God might be there to help and we kind of almost shake your head to say you know I've got another problems enough problems right now without getting theological without getting religious without you know having some sort of thing like this maybe when all of this is over in the in the storm is gone maybe then I can think a little bit about God but right now it's survival of the fittest give me a break got enough

problems later how many people it is that when they are in trouble and you even want to mention Christ they look at you to say you don't understand they cry out fear almost to it I'll tell you the wonderful thing is

if a person will merely listen for another moment if instead of turning away in their fear and going back to their own hopelessness of their own resources if they would just look and listen they would hear out in the midst of all the storm be of good cheer it is I be not afraid here is Jesus cries out he says to him be a good cheer in other words he says I'm not a problem I am NOT a trial I am NOT a difficulty I am one that if you will just but set your eyes upon me I guarantee you if ever there was a something your eyes would set upon that we would rejoice in

that year you would cheer about that you would stand just be in the stands that have a game and the greatest victory ever happened in the score in the last second just turn the game around be of good cheer if there's ever anything to stand and be thrilled about look what's happened in the final moments of my crisis victory has been seen be of good cheer be thrilled there's something there he says read it to say rejoice you know to them there is no one in all the world that knows your struggle better than Jesus he allowed you to go into it there is no one knows better than the difficulty in your home and lack of communication the inability to resolve it in the hopelessness of our own strength to get through it no matter how hard we try and how long we give ourselves to it and how much

energy we're willing to spend God has designed life that it is futile without him that the storms will absolutely destroy is the just trying to live on this planet you cannot succeed without him it'll be one storm or another that'll finally be your doing in but in the scheduled storms of life I'm convinced that those are the times above all else that Jesus is there not as a ghost not as another problem but as the absolute solution waiting in our eyes would catch him waiting that we would long to hear his voice waiting that that something may happen in such a way is that we would long to have something to cheer about and have a hope you know the I'm sure today some of you are in just such a storm it's there you're tossed with waves the wind is contrary there's voices within you that said

hey you've done what you can do you've given it your best no one could be expected to go on any farther you've gone and gone and gone but the amazing thing is at that time it also has an ability to produce a desperation within us a desperation there for some work of God within the hearts of some that instead of giving up if there was one offering that would come from heaven that could save them and help them their heart would leap they'd respond and there at that hour maybe you know had it been that Jesus come at another hour had he come when the storm these these are seasoned fishermen they can handle the waters they always had before but not these had they come when the waters were very handable to them who knows what they may have thought sometimes God has to wait for something to

happen that's desperate within us he's got to rate to let everything kind of come in all at one moment not to destroy us but to make us not to not to watch us drown but to see us breathe for life like we've never wanted a gas for it and here as he comes the wonderful thing is is that Peter sat in that boat and he was desperate he would be tossed by every wave that had knocked it and rocked it and he had fought it back and the big fisherman the great leader who had conquered many a sea before found what he couldn't conquer and as he sat there within and they're bailing the water and they're trying to get through there was something within him that realized I can't handle this one any longer and all of a sudden he looked in this massive fishermen saw what they first saw was a ghost and he

cried out with fear and then he heard him say be of good cheer it is I be not afraid something leapt from his heart uncontrollably a response that he couldn't even have the time to think about I'm sure for Peter cried out Lord if it be thou bid me come unto thee on the water I'm sick of this life beating me to death Lord if it is you bid me come unto thee on the water and to me what a request I'm convinced Peter didn't think about

this then that's one of Peter's greatest strengths to me was that he didn't think a lot if you ever noticed that about Peter he had a way of blurting things out without thinking that oftentimes was his undoing but oftentimes it was his doing as well it was his ability almost just to have this instantaneous thing that when there was something upon his heart he

could lurch at it and he found himself there Lord if it be thou bid me come unto thee on the water and I think Jesus before Peter could do any more calculating is in Jesus art had to leap with him and he says Peter come what a thrill it had to be for Jesus you know he was it is his prayer I think you've almost got to notice what his prayer wasn't his prayer wasn't Lord if it be thou calm the water Lord if it would be now stop the wind Lord if it would be thou you know get me over to the other side make everything better Lord if it be thou prove it to me by my changing the circumstances that are agreeable to me no he said Lord if it be thou bid me come unto thee on the water and there as Peter cried out not calm the storm but lift me up above the storm into the realm in which you obviously

are storm is affecting you at all as Jesus no doubt as they just saw him walk something there in it as their eyes set upon him they realized that what they were in the midst of and fighting with with every ounce of strength that they had to exist and he was an absolute rest and above it untouched by it and yet right there with them at the same time and rather than saying Jesus get in the boat get down here what are you doing we need you and start bailing calm things get us over there to shore get me out of this problem something greater happened within him Lord bring me into the realm in which you live bring me into a place of said strength and power and victory not get into my ship but get me into yours get me into your world how often I believe that we find ourself praying and we're in

trouble and God fixes and fixes God if you love me you'll do this and we got her list I think the Lord does nothing he said if I love you I'll do nothing we'll let the storm go on but if you love me you'll come to be with me it's much nicer where I am than where you are a much greater world that's what I want to teach you you see Jesus has no desire to create an absence of storms he uses the storms to create within us a desire for him he uses the events in life that are way beyond anything human he uses the things in life that just seem so desperate to bring you and I to the place where we would individually as well say Lord if it be thou bid me come unto thee the water I want to learn how do I live where you live and I'll tell you as soon as you and I would begin to ask that without

question Jesus turns he's just come it's the whole message of the gospel heaven on earth Christ in you the hope of glory that his life is dynamic his being his person lifting as far above all of the events of life and to me the most amazing thing is is that Jesus when he said to him come the next thing you know Peter steps out of the boat and you've got to be kidding but you look at this all the guys you know it's one thing for Jesus to walk on why do we expect that but when all of a sudden Peter the biggest idiot the old joint commonly mean hey you know I believe he Peters walking on the water what does he think he is doing and there is Peter what had controlled him only a few minutes ago and knocked his life from one side to the other and rattled everything within him all of a sudden it

was beneath his feet and he's above it storm didn't cease wind and seas waves hadn't quiet everything was the same and yet everything was different you see Jesus is teaching Peter he knows that this man is going to preach at Pentecost he knows what the Sanhedrin is going to do to him he knows the havoc following him he knows the future that Peter is going to go through the issue isn't to calm the storms it's how to live above them it's how to go through the difficulties in the trials and yet be able to look at every one of them and say you have nothing in me I don't have to calm you and I don't have to get away from

you because I can live above you I can live beyond you I know of another world you know nothing of and oh what a glorious thing it was it for Peter there for those moments

there it says there were it says Peter was come down on the ship and he walked in the water to go to Jesus but verse 30 says when he saw the wind boisterous he was afraid and beginning to think he cried saying Lord save me as long as he kept his eyes in the Lord it was wonderful but then all of a sudden reality seemed to come back to him as he presumed reality to be he looked around me he sees there and I don't know how you see wind boisterous it's got to be a pretty usually don't see wind but perhaps if it's filled with water and it's blowing in your face there's something you see the wind and the waves are all over you next thing you know he looks back at all of a sudden he says wait a minute I can't walk on water what am I doing I am an idiot and just that quick down he went where

Jesus once again had to teach him the greatest truth again you're right Peter you can't have a walk on water you'll never be able to walk on water only I can walk on water if your eyes on me I can make you walk on water you keep your eyes on me but if you look back at the trial again you look at me for a moment I'll lift you up above but you and and you rest in me and and how easy it is for us to come in here together and take a journey out in the sea and for you and I as we study his word to see his face and to hear his word and to rest in it and his efficiency and his power but the problem is you see we got to get out of here in a few minutes and the doors are gonna open you're gonna get your car and you're gonna go back into the wind and you're going to go back into where all around

you are the waves again in the midst of it to keep your eyes on the one that we so easily see now and to say Lord step by step into there to need his power to need his love and to need his efficiency you see when we can learn this and there Peters he cried out I love Peters prayers this has got to be one of his best Lord save me he's going down I imagine it's more like oh I'm saving you know I think probably wasn't anything like you know Oh thou great Jehovah I don't think you had time for him or anything he was going down and he simply cried but his eyes as soon as he saw himself going down wonderfully enough he looked right back and his face set upon him once again and as soon as his face you know I'm so glad this happened to Peter I'm glad the guy didn't walk and keep walking gives me

hope how many times he can lift me up and I can take a few step but I look at me you know the next thing I know girl girl girl girl you know and I'm down again but of learning Jesus had to let Peter go down you see he's looking at this man who he's going to send in the world he says you've got to tell them who I am but you've got to learn and I'd be desperate for him but the Christianity isn't a theological issue it's an experiential thing it's coming to a place where I'd need him and I long for him with all my heart and here I don't know today what it is for you I don't know your storm I know there's some of you you are in the midst of the sea tossed with waves the wind is contrary it's the fourth watch of the night humanly you're at the end but are you willing when Jesus would say be of

good cheer are you desperate or are you one that hey I've got it out I'm a I'm a I'm seaworthy I've been through many a storms and none of them got me yet you know sort of a thing you know you're an old salt you are by hook or by crook I'll get through it or is it perhaps one that you realize I've been through storms before and they've taken their toll and I've paid a price I'm tired Jesus looks he says come tell you if you can learn this you learn the greatest lessons because one of the things I guarantee you is that there are storms and many times in life the Lord does wonderfully calm the sea wonderfully many times we say God please help and he helps Lord take the wind away calm it and he does and sometimes he does it even at a word as we grow so often he is a you get out of the ship

you're in that's throwing you all around this plain havoc with your emotions and your heart and your strength let me give you a strength for the most part the Lord always to you and I is telling us go over and I'll meet you at the other side but there will always be storms and the issue isn't to get to the other side as much as it is to get where he is because I tell you the day will come that he will most assuredly say to you go into the storm and of this one there is no other side rise with me this storm we're going home together and if you have been through the lesser storms if he you if you have let him prove yourself to you in the daily ones and in the issues at home when people watch you walk into that final storm and yet you are above it and they see in you a life and a dynamic

that lives when you won't there is a disciple there is what God wants you to be today though he says won't you come your father how we thank you for your word how we thank you dear Lord that you are not a God who is merely a situational one that hears our prayers and answers them as we request so many times you let the storm go on you let it rage you let the wind you let our strength be sapped you let us come to the end that we might truly come to the beginning of a greater understanding and that is life is not an issue of how do I run from or get away but how do I head into something and yet live above it Jesus that we know a rest in his strength and a glory that is beyond all others and I pray Lord today for any that are here that are in the storms they're in the midst of their sea

they're tossed with waves and crying out God save me Lord calm the storm I can't go on may they hear you as you say be of good cheer it is I and the issue is not getting me into your boat it's time for you to get out of yours and to walk with me above it I may calm it quickly I may not but I'll calm you as quickly as you'll come and Jesus I just pray that today our hearts would just respond to you and Lord maybe there's some here that are contemplating just jumping ship they just can't go on Lord I pray that they're in such a wonderful place before they jump may they just turn and see that the ghost that they're afraid of is the Lord who died for them and says be of good cheer it is me don't be afraid and Lord that you will comfort them and give them the ability to set their eyes upon

Jesus and walk above it now set them free from its power and give them a renewed strength how we praise you and thank you father in Jesus name amen

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