

WHEN WE STEP OUT, GOD STEPS IN (4)

Read Matthew 14:22-33

1. If we're going over, we can't go under! (22-24)

- Jesus told the disciples to go over to the other side, not to go out in the middle and sink.
- Even though they were buffeted by the waves they were still going over.
- There will always be obstacles and difficulties (John 16:33; Phil 1:29; 2 Timothy 3:12) but if God calls us, he will see us through.

2. Even in the darkest hour, Jesus is with us (25)

- Jesus came to them at the darkest hour (3am—6am).
- He always does!

3. Don't let the glasses of fear blind the eyes of faith (26)

- The disciples were so fearful they did not recognise Jesus
- Fear and faith are incompatible

4. God's Word dispels fear (27)

Jesus gave them three encouraging statements--

- 'Take courage.' See Joshua 1:7-9
- 'It is I.' Literally: 'I AM' which indicated his deity (Exodus 3:14; John 8:58; 14:6)
- 'Don't be afraid.' It is said that this phrase occurs 365 times in Scripture.

5. When We Step Out, God Steps in (28, 29)

- Peter acted on the Lord's word: 'Come.'
- Jesus did not help Peter out of the boat: he had to do this himself.
- When he stepped out (in faith), God stepped in (with power).
- When God calls us, we obey by faith.
- Like Peter we can tread on the very thing we previously feared.
- Eg College students who train not knowing where it will lead

6. Fear Is Faith in the Wrong Thing (30).

- We are always believing something
- We can choose whether to believe in the power of God or the power of the storm.
- Note the sequence: Peter—
 - saw the wind
 - became afraid
 - began to sink.

7. Fear Is Faith in the Wrong Thing (30).

We can look to the left or to the right—

Problem	Promise
Darkness	Light
Devil	God
Destruction	Deliverance
Sadness	Joy
Sickness	Health
Bitterness	Forgiveness
Temptation	Triumph
World	Word
Failure	Success
SELF	CHRIST

8. Jesus is always the Saviour! (31-33)

- Fear is a major obstacle to serving God.
- We need to conquer it by faith in God's Word and step out to serve the Lord.

SOMETHING TO THINK OR TALK ABOUT

Remember: You don't have to answer all the questions. First do those that seem most helpful to you.

Read Matthew 14:22-33

Biblical

1. Jesus told the disciples to go over to the other side (22). When the storm arose, how should they have felt?
2. Why do you think they thought Jesus was a ghost? (26) What does this tell us about human nature?
3. Note the three things Jesus said to them (27). What is the connection between them?
4. When Jesus said, 'It is I' (literally, 'I am') he was using a similar phrase to that given to Moses in Exodus 3:14. What was the significance of his doing this at this time? (ie in the midst of a storm).
5. What Peter asked (28) was really rather foolish, but Jesus accepted it. What can we learn from this?
6. If you were Jesus, and you saw Peter do such a daring and courageous thing, what would you have said to him? After all, the other eleven stayed safely in the boat. He was the only one to step out. So what do we learn from what Jesus actually said? (31). Compare Matthew 8:26; 17:17; Luke 24:25.

Personal and practical

7. Why did Peter start to sink? (30). Can you think of similar situations in your own life? It could be helpful to talk about these with the group.
8. Note that when Peter went to Jesus, the Lord did not help him to climb out of the boat (29). Think about how this applies to areas such as the exercise of spiritual gifts. To what extent does the Lord expect us to take the initiative? (You might consider other 'miracle' stories here – like those in 2 Kings chapters 4-7.)
9. Think about areas in your own life right now where you could step out in faith. What would this mean in practice for you?

Memorise verse 27.

Hint for memorising: You can do this as a group by repeating phrase by phrase aloud together until you can say the whole text in one hit. Don't forget to learn the reference as well.

About Dr Barry Chant

Barry Chant is Senior Pastor of the Wesley International Congregation in Sydney, Australia. He is a regular speaker at church services, seminars, conferences and conventions. Hundreds of thousands of his books have been sold around the world. He has degrees in arts, theology and ministry, a diploma in education and a PhD in history. He was the initiator and former president of Tabor College, Australia.

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