

GULF SHORES CHURCH OF CHRIST

Sermon by Ray Reynolds

Man Overboard: Five Reasons Not To Abandon Ship!

Text : **Matthew 14:22-33**

Introduction : The phrase "walking on water" has become synonymous with perfection. While Peter was far from perfect we can see a child-like side of Peter's faith in Jesus and a human frailty in the process. Most of us have read this story and admired Peter's courage. Just stepping out of that boat took a great deal of strength. You can call it courage ... faith ... reckless ... ignorance or whatever. But I want to look at Peter's walk on the wild side from a little different angle, if I may. I believe God wanted them to stay inside the boat. And I want to share with you five reasons for Peter not to abandon ship.

Discussion :

I. Jesus Put Them In The Boat (v.22)

- A. He was urgent about it. {"Straightway" or "Immediately"}
- B. He was emphatic about it. {He "constrained" them or "made" them}
- C. He was forceful about it. {He knew danger awaited them on the land}

II. They Had Experienced Storms Before (vs.22-23)

- A. Many of these men were fishermen.
- B. They were used to boats and storms.
- C. Jesus was constantly testing their faith.

III. Storms Awaited Them On Land & Sea (v.23)

- A. This storm came because they were obedient in God's Will.
- B. There are two kinds of storms that God sends upon us.
 - 1. Storms of Correction.
 - 2. Storms of Perfection.

IV. Jesus Had Not Forgotten Them (vs.23-24)

- A. In fact, Jesus was praying for them.
- B. Jesus saw them and knew their need.

V. Jesus Went To Them Quickly (vs.25-26)

- A. Jesus had a habit of praying all night long.
- B. Jesus was probably tired (3-6:00 in the morning).
- C. Jesus saved them.

Conclusion : *What did Peter do? With all these reasons to stay on the boat, PETER ABANDONED SHIP (v.28)!!! Peter's response was spawned by doubt and fear, rather than faith. Notice his words . . . Faith doesn't say, "if"; faith says because. Remember that one of the thieves on the cross said, "If you are the Christ, save yourself and us, too." The other said, "Lord, remember me." Peter was abandoning Jesus' initial command to get on the boat and go to the other side. Jesus allowed Peter to leave the ship to teach him a very valuable lesson. If Peter's faith had not wavered, if his eyes hadn't wandered, he could have made it. But, when you abandon ship, the odds are against you. Come to Jesus! Jesus is waiting. . . .