

Walking on Water to Jesus

From: Overcoming the Overwhelming:
A 40-Day Journey toward Rediscovering Faith in God

Taken from Day 23: Walking on Water
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Young adult children can be really difficult. I say this because I was actually surprised by how hard it was to watch as they figured out adulthood for themselves. I had wisdom to give them, but for the most part, they weren't as interested in hearing it as I would have liked. Plus, my husband and I wanted them to become confident and independent, and we knew that if we intervened too often, we'd rob them of the joy of figuring things out. The only times we became insistent that they listen to us were when we felt their safety was at risk. Did they like this meddling? No, but as their friends and parents, we risked rejection to protect them from harm. For the most part, we stayed out of their way and prayed for God's best.

Something I learned from "raising" young adult children and that my young adult children had to accept is that I cannot turn off "Mom" and that my heart would always care for their well-being. It was one storm after another during those years. My inclination in the face of each storm was to cast myself quite dramatically on my bed and begin to mourn and weep and wail and "intercede" for them. "Oh, God, speak to his heart. Keep her from danger." After my weeping session, I'd get up, but it seemed nothing ever changed.

It was during one of these praying sessions that I "heard" the Lord speak very clearly to me. "I want you to walk on water for your son." Suddenly, I saw clearly that I didn't need to go through all this drama.

"Okay, Jesus. I walk on water to You for my child. I trust You to take care of him. I will keep my eyes on You when the next storm comes up."

Many storms did come up after this time, but something rose up in me, and instead of freaking out, I would pray,

"Jesus, I walk on water to You for my son." By doing this, my mind was freed up to think rationally and walk in grace.

One example stands out so wonderfully in my mind. Our son was planning to go with his friend to some faux hippy-style weekend event. Of course, I felt uneasy about him going and, in fact, did not want him to go, but instead of voicing my objections, I chose to walk on water. So sweetly, the Lord spoke to my spirit, "Help him pack his ice chest." Again, without all the turmoil I usually put myself through, I was able to hear God more precisely.

"Okay, Lord," I said, and David and I helped him pack an ice chest. As he and his friend drove off for the festival and we waved our good-byes, my husband and I prayed, "Lord, we ask that they will not enjoy this weekend at all. Let them see how stupid this thing is."

What was supposed to be a weekend was just one night, for they returned the next day because, in their words, "It was really stupid." What I didn't learn about that night until years later was that both my son and his friend independently of each other had an experience which spoke to them of God in a miraculous way.

Some time later, as my son was driving one day, he prayed, "Jesus, I want You to come into my heart," and the Lord answered him, "I'm already here." From that day forward, he has never wavered in his faith.

I share this precious story with you because I know that we all face storms in this life, and many times the ones we face are caused by others. Yes, we can go to God in prayer, and He doesn't despise our tears or turn His back on us when we pour our hearts out to Him, but I want you to know there is a higher road, that of walking in faith, keeping our eyes on Jesus.

When we focus on the storm that is fomenting about us, we will logically begin to fear. Our senses are feeding us information, and our minds are translating this into emotions. The emotions then cause our bodies to respond with panic. Everything in us will scream that all is lost and that no one can help us.

The world will tell us, "When the going gets tough, the tough get going," but when our bodies are racing with fight-or-flight chemicals, we might be tempted to think we are all alone in the boat. "Going" isn't even an option when one feels paralyzed with fear. We see our only options as to sink or swim, but God has a higher road for us.

Matthew 14:22-29

Immediately Jesus made His disciples get into the boat and go before Him to the other side, while He sent the multitudes away. ²³And when He had sent the multitudes away, He went up on the mountain by Himself to pray. Now when evening came, He was alone there. ²⁴But the boat was now in the middle of the sea, tossed by the waves, for the wind was contrary.

²⁵Now in the fourth watch of the night Jesus went to them, walking on the sea. ²⁶And when the disciples saw Him walking on the sea, they were troubled, saying, "It is a ghost!" And they cried out for fear.

²⁷But immediately Jesus spoke to them, saying, "Be of good cheer! It is I; do not be afraid."

²⁸And Peter answered Him and said, "Lord, if it is You, command me to come to You on the water."

²⁹So He said, "Come." And when Peter had come down out of the boat, he walked on the water to go to Jesus.

Imagine the thrill Peter experienced actually walking on water to Jesus. I wonder what it felt like to feel the cold water touching his toes. Did the water give way slightly like walking on the wet shore, or did it feel like walking on air? The disciples must have had a variety of emotions and thoughts as they witnessed this miracle. Was Peter out of his mind? Would he sink? Why wasn't he sinking? "Oh, my Lord, he is walking on water!" Then something happened. He began to sink! But why?

Matthew 14:30-33

*But when he saw that the wind was boisterous, he was **afraid**; and beginning to sink he cried out, saying, "Lord, save me!"*

*³¹And **immediately** Jesus stretched out His hand and caught him, and said to him, "O you of little **faith**, why did you **doubt**?" ³²And when they got into the boat, the wind ceased.*

³³Then those who were in the boat came and worshiped Him, saying, "Truly You are the Son of God."

When we walk on water to Jesus, whether it is for our own situation or for someone else, we are amazed at the peace we experience even while the storm blows on. What a miracle this is, but then for just a moment we get our eyes off of Jesus and begin to focus on the wind and waves. How can we not? The wind is cold, and the waves are wet; that is to say, what we are experiencing is *real*. If you are in the middle of a medical procedure to discover if you have a certain disease or your own child is cursing you to your face, or the bank is threatening to repossess your property, or you are in emotional or physical pain, you are going to feel these things. If you focus on the winds and waves, you will begin to sink, but you don't have to. Do as Peter did. Call out to Him,

"Lord, save me," and then keep your eyes on Him and walk on water again with Him until the storm subsides.

This is a perfect illustration of walking by faith and not by sight. Let me walk you through this again. A sudden storm happens. You have a choice—will you have faith in Him or will you fear? Will you keep your eyes on Him or will you only focus on your circumstances? I hope you will choose faith over fear. Remember, God doesn't expect you to ignore your troubles. They are real. Putting a blinder on your eyes won't make them go away, but will you have faith and hope, or will you fold in the face of this storm?

"God, I trust You right now. I'm in a storm. You know that. You are right here with me in my boat. You are not asleep. You do care. I choose to trust You. I choose to walk by faith and not by my senses which are currently being overloaded by the wind and waves. Thank You for being here. Thank-You for caring. I choose to walk on water to You in this situation (or for this person I'm dealing with). I am keeping my eyes on You right now, Lord. In the name of Jesus, I speak to this storm to be still! I command any evil influencing this situation to be still. I know that my decision to have faith in You right now in this storm pleases You. You are smiling at me right now in this situation. You are taking this overwhelming situation. I cast this upon You, knowing You care for me. You are my wisdom, Lord. Guide my words. Guide my steps. I refuse to be anxious. I am letting my requests be made known to You. You will

bring peace. I praise You. I worship You. I will sing songs to You in my affliction because I know You will deliver me.”

The sweetest name I know Is Jesus.

The sweetest name I know Is the Lord's.

The sweetest name I know Can calm

A raging storm within My heart.

The sweetest name I know,

Most awesome name I know,

The sweetest name I know Is Jesus.¹

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¹ A song I wrote during a painful storm in my life, C. D. Hildebrand

² A song written during a moment of peace in the midst of storms, C. D. Hildebrand