

## **Sermon Notes | 18<sup>th</sup> January 2026 | The well community church – Indian Service**

Greetings in the name of the LORD and savior Jesus Christ!

FAITH THAT LIVES UNDER THE LORDSHIP OF JESUS CHRIST

### **Matthew 14:22–33**

#### **INTRODUCTION — WHY THIS TEXT IS ABOUT JESUS, NOT US**

Church, when we speak about faith, we must begin by correcting a misunderstanding that often settles quietly into the hearts of believers over time. Faith is not a personal resource that we learn to manage better as we mature. Faith is not spiritual bravery. Faith is not emotional confidence. Faith is not the ability to remain calm in difficulty. According to Scripture, faith is a response to the revelation of who Jesus Christ truly is.

This matters deeply, especially for mature believers. Over time, we can accumulate biblical knowledge, ministry experience, and spiritual vocabulary, and yet still subtly shift the focus of faith away from Christ and toward ourselves. We begin to measure faith by how strong we feel, how consistent we perform, or how well we endure. But Scripture never defines faith by the strength of the believer; Scripture defines faith by the sufficiency of Christ.

The account of Jesus walking on the water and Peter stepping out of the boat is one of the most familiar stories in the Gospels. Familiarity, however, can be dangerous. When a text becomes familiar, we stop listening carefully. When that happens, we often reduce the story to a moral lesson about courage rather than receiving it as a revelation of Christ.

Matthew does not give us this story so that we admire Peter. Matthew gives us this story so that we confess, along with the disciples at the end, "**Truly You are the Son of God.**" That confession is the goal of the passage. Faith exists to bring us to that conclusion.

Jesus has just fed the five thousand. The disciples have witnessed undeniable power. Yet understanding lags behind experience. Power does not automatically produce clarity. So Jesus sends them into a storm, not to punish them, but to reveal Himself more fully.

Verse 22 says, "*Immediately Jesus made the disciples get into the boat.*" The word "made" is deliberate. Jesus exercises authority here. He does not suggest. He commands. This tells us something foundational: the storm that follows is not accidental; it is purposeful. Mature believers must embrace this truth without resentment. Not every storm is rebuke. Some storms are classrooms.

Jesus then goes up the mountain to pray. This moment reveals Christ's priestly ministry. While the disciples strain against the wind, Jesus communes with the Father. This reminds us that the success of our faith does not depend on our awareness of Jesus, but on His faithfulness toward us. Even when unseen, Christ is active.

The boat is far from land. The wind is against them. They are tired. Their strength is nearly spent. And then, in the darkest part of the night, Jesus comes walking on the water. He does not eliminate chaos; He stands above it. He does not rush; He approaches with authority and calm.

This is where faith begins—not when the storm ends, but when Jesus reveals Himself as Lord in the midst of it.

## **1: REVELATION- FAITH BEGINS WITH THE SELF-REVELATION OF JESUS AS LORD**

When the disciples see Jesus, fear overwhelms them. They cry out, "It is a ghost." This reaction exposes a spiritual reality: fear distorts perception. When fear governs the heart, even the presence of Christ can be misinterpreted. **The disciples do not recognize Jesus because the storm has shaped their expectations.**

But Jesus immediately speaks. He does not wait for their fear to subside. His word creates the possibility of faith. He says, "*Take courage. It is I. Do not be afraid.*" These words are not encouragement alone; they are revelation. "It is I" echoes the divine self-disclosure of God. Jesus is not simply saying, "It's me." He is saying, "The I AM is here."

Faith is never self-generated. Faith is awakened by revelation. When Jesus reveals who He is, faith becomes possible.

Peter responds, "*Lord, if it is You, command me to come to You on the water.*" This is not uncertainty; it is submission. Peter does not ask for safety. He asks for a command. This is crucial for mature believers to understand. Faith does not ask Jesus to make circumstances manageable; faith asks Jesus to speak authoritatively.

Jesus responds with one word: "Come." He offers no explanation. He gives no strategy. He does not calm the storm first. Why? Because faith does not rest on explanations; faith rests on Christ Himself.

Peter steps out of the boat. This moment must be interpreted correctly. Peter is not demonstrating courage; he is demonstrating obedience. Faith is not initiative; faith is response. Peter does not move toward an idea, a feeling, or a principle. He moves toward a Person.

The miracle here is not Peter's faith; it is Jesus' sustaining presence. Peter walks because Jesus holds reality together beneath him. Faith never magnifies the believer; faith magnifies Christ.

For mature believers, this is a sobering reminder. Experience can quietly replace dependence. Knowledge can dull attentiveness. Routine can silence responsiveness. Yet faith always begins the same way: Jesus reveals Himself, and the believer responds in obedience.

## **2: FOCUS - FAITH IS SUSTAINED BY FIXATION ON JESUS, NOT BY FAVORABLE CONDITIONS**

Scripture says, *"But when he saw the wind, he was afraid."* Nothing external changes. The storm does not intensify. The waves do not grow taller. What changes is Peter's focus. Faith does not fail because storms exist; faith falters when Christ is displaced from the center of attention.

Fear is not simply emotional instability, Fear assigns greater authority to circumstances than to Christ. When Peter gives interpretive power to the storm, fear begins to rule.

The text says Peter "began to sink." Faith erosion is often gradual. Rarely do mature believers abandon faith suddenly. Instead, faith weakens through divided attention, neglected prayer, diminished worship, reliance on past experiences, and quiet self-confidence.

Yet Peter cries out, *"Lord, save me!"* This prayer reveals the essence of faith. It is short. It is urgent. It is theologically precise. Peter acknowledges Jesus as Lord and Savior. Even weakened faith is real faith when it turns toward Christ.

The Scripture says, *"Immediately Jesus reached out His hand and caught him."* Immediately. This word is full of grace. Jesus does not hesitate. He does not evaluate Peter's performance. He saves first. Correction comes later. This reveals the heart of Christ: our security lies not in the consistency of our faith, but in the constancy of our Savior.

Jesus then asks, "Why did you doubt?" This is not condemnation; it is formation. Doubt is not the absence of belief; it is divided trust. Jesus is teaching Peter that faith must remain centered on Him alone.

When Jesus and Peter enter the boat, the storm ceases. The storm does not end when Peter walks; it ends when Jesus is fully recognized. The proper response follows immediately: worship. "*Truly You are the Son of God.*"

Faith reaches its maturity not in success, but in worship.

### **3: FORMATION - FAITH IS FORMED THROUGH OBEDIENCE, FAILURE, AND THE GRACE OF JESUS**

This passage teaches mature believers a vital truth: faith is not linear. Peter walks and sinks. He trusts and doubts. He obeys and fears. Yet through it all, Jesus remains unchanged.

Jesus does not reject Peter for sinking. He does not remove him from discipleship. In fact, Peter becomes a foundational leader in the early church. This reveals that failure, when met with grace, becomes formation.

Faith is not proven by uninterrupted success. Faith is proven by persistent dependence. Jesus does not expect flawless faith; He sustains growing faith.

Throughout the passage, Jesus remains central. Jesus sends the disciples. Jesus prays. Jesus comes. Jesus speaks. Jesus saves. Jesus receives worship. Faith exists because Jesus is faithful.

Mature believers must resist the temptation to evaluate faith by outcomes. Faith is not measured by how calm the sea becomes, but by how clearly Christ is seen.

### **4: WORSHIP - FAITH FINDS ITS REST IN THE WORSHIP OF JESUS, THE SON OF GOD**

The story ends not with relief, but with worship. The disciples do not say, "The storm is over." They say, "*Truly You are the Son of God.*" This is the goal of faith.

Faith exists to reveal Jesus rightly. Faith rests not in calm circumstances, but in the unchanging lordship of Christ. The storm becomes the setting in which Jesus is known more deeply.

So the question for mature believers is not, "How strong is my faith?" The question is, "How clearly do I see Jesus?"

Jesus still comes in storms.

Jesus still speaks.

Jesus still saves.

Jesus is still Lord.

*"Fixing our eyes on Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith."*

