

Sure Footed Walk

Anyone who attends church has undoubtedly heard the story of Peter walking on water. It has multiple great teaching points. In the story, Jesus and His disciples had just finished the feeding of the 5,000. Jesus sent his disciples ahead across Lake Galilee as He went to pray. On Lake Galilee they encountered a storm. It was nearly dawn and the disciples were afraid. Then they saw something walking across the water towards them. They thought it was a ghost. As we know, it was Jesus. Jesus told them: *“Take courage! It is I. Don’t be afraid.”* Peter was particularly amazed and still seemed to doubt when he said, *“Lord, if it’s you, tell me to come to you on the water.”* Jesus told Peter to come, so he jumped out of the boat and began walking on the water towards Jesus. Peter looked down and realized that he had been doing the impossible -- walking on the water in the middle of Lake Galilee. As soon as he took his eyes off Jesus he began to sink. In response to Peter’s call for help Jesus reached out His hand to catch Peter. And then when Jesus entered the boat the storm subsided. The disciples in the boat realized what they had just seen and said, *“Truly you are the Son of God.”*



I do a fair amount of walking in the neighborhood. While I am walking I look at people’s walking style as they pass me. Some people’s eyes are glued to their feet as they navigate their way across the pavement. Others are looking all around to view the scenery on their walk. Those, myself included, who are constantly looking downward, are trying to make sure they don’t stumble. Yet science tells us that watching your feet as you walk can throw your equilibrium off. If you want to stay balanced, keep your eyes focused on what is ahead of you.

Even though the biblical story is about walking on water and the neighborhood walk is on solid ground the common theme is to fix your eyes ahead to stay balanced in life. Fix your eyes on Jesus, the One who said, “Follow Me.” When we look elsewhere we can lose our balance and stumble.

There are several other key points from the story of Peter walking on water. We often overlook other teaching points that would deepen our understanding of the more complete picture:

- (1) **The disciples didn’t initially recognize the Lord.** They were more worried about the storms raging around their boat. The same could be true of us. While we are afraid when the storms of life are raging all around us, we might not recognize His presence too. But he is there.
- (2) Not only is Jesus present for but **He is waiting for us to call out to Him.** When we recognize His presence and focus our attention on Him and His guidance for our life we can overcome the adversity, because He will be with us.
- (3) Peter was OK until he had a lapse in thought. As humans we will have lapses in judgement but, if we call to Him, **Jesus will reach out his hand to restore us.**
- (4) Let Jesus come into your boat and **calm the storms of your life.**

Seek the way of life that Jesus demonstrated with His life and His teachings. Walk in His path and keep your eyes fixed on Him and His Word. Franklin Graham summarized it well when he said, “If you are walking in His steps, your eyes will be fixed on the One who said, ‘Follow Me.’” Then you will have a sure-footed walk.

Immediately Jesus made the disciples get into the boat and go on ahead of him to the other side, while he dismissed the crowd. After he had dismissed them, he went up on a mountainside by himself to pray. Later that night, he was there alone, and the boat was already a considerable distance from land, buffeted by the waves because the wind was against it. Shortly before dawn Jesus went out to them, walking on the lake. When the disciples saw him walking on the lake, they were terrified. “It’s a ghost,” they said, and cried out in fear. But Jesus immediately said to them: “Take courage! It is I. Don’t be afraid.” “Lord, if it’s you,” Peter replied, “tell me to come to you on the water.” “Come,” he said. Then Peter got down out of the boat, walked on the water and came toward Jesus. But when he saw the wind, he was afraid and, beginning to sink, cried out, “Lord, save me!” Immediately Jesus reached out his hand and caught him. “You of little faith,” he said, “why did you doubt?” And when they climbed into the boat, the wind died down. Then those who were in the boat worshiped him, saying, “Truly you are the Son of God.” (Matthew 14:22-33)