

TITLE AND NUMBER: 146. Do not be afraid



REFERENCE AND KEY VERSE(S): Matthew 14:22-27

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. Do not be afraid.'

LOOKING FURTHER: Matthew 14:22-33, John 14:15-31

What does this Bible passage tell us?

This passage comes immediately after Jesus has healed many and fed the five thousand. He sends His disciples off by boat to the other side of the lake. Then, Jesus climbs a mountain and spends time alone in prayer. Meanwhile, a storm has blown up and the boat is being thrown around by the waves. The disciples are terrified when they see Jesus walking towards them on the water. He says to them, 'Take courage. Do not be afraid.'

Thinking back to when I have experienced some of the storms of life and accompanied others who are going through difficult times, I remember very clearly the feelings of fear and confusion. These are normal and part of being human. However, sometimes God surprises us - just as the disciples were surprised to see Jesus walking on the water.

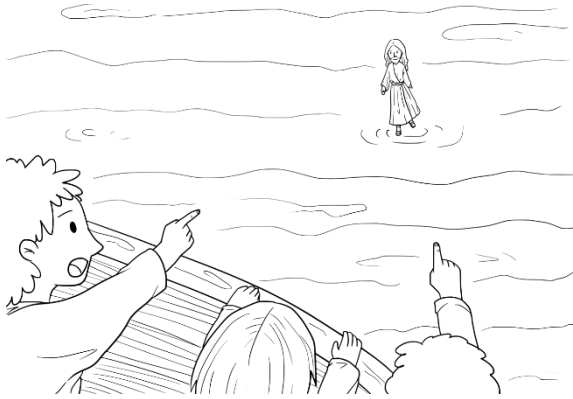
Many years ago, I was waiting for a medical test result and expecting bad news. I prayed as Jesus did in the Garden of Gethsemane the day before He was crucified that, if possible, God would take this away from me; but if not, that God's will would be done and that He would give our family the strength that we needed to get through it. Suddenly, I was hit by this amazing sense of peace which lasted for weeks. It was bad news but we were given the strength and the humour to get through it. We also had invaluable support from family and friends.

God works in many ways. Let us be aware today of who is going through difficult times and be there for them.

Reflections:

- Have you ever been surprised by God? How could that experience help you now?
- Bring any situation that worries you to God in prayer. Please call *Prayer Line* if you would like to - it is free to ring the number.
- How can you help support someone who is experiencing difficult times this week?

Write or draw something you read in this Bible Study that stood out to you.



Do you have any questions about this week's Bible Study?



How does this week's message apply to your life?



What can we learn about God from this week's passage?



What would you like to ask God this week?



Has God responded to your prayers this week in the way you had hoped for? It's okay to talk to God about this.

