

Lord Save Me! — Matthew 14:22–33

- In the ancient world, **the sea represented chaos, danger and forces beyond human control.**
- Throughout the Old Testament, control over the chaotic waters is associated with **God's divine authority**:
 - God brings order to the waters at creation.
 - God defeats the great sea monsters representing chaos and evil.
 - God parts the Red Sea to create a path of salvation for Israel.
- Against this background, **Jesus walking on the Sea of Galilee reveals his divine authority** over the forces of chaos.
- Jesus identifies himself with the words **"I am"**, echoing the divine name.
- The disciples' response develops from fear to recognition: **"Truly you are the Son of God."**
- Peter's request to Jesus is significant: **"Lord, command me to come to you."**
 - Peter is not primarily seeking a miracle.
 - His desire is to **come closer to Jesus.**
- Jesus simply says **"Come"**, and Peter steps out of the boat and walks on the water.
- Peter initially demonstrates remarkable courage and faith, but then becomes distracted by **the strong wind.**
- The sermon highlights an important contrast:
 - Peter was courageous enough to face the enormous challenge of stepping onto the water.
 - Yet a much smaller thing—the wind—caused him to become afraid and begin to sink.
- This can reflect our own experience: **we may cope remarkably well with major crises but become overwhelmed by relatively small worries, disappointments or unkindnesses.**
- When Peter cries **"Lord, save me!"**, Jesus immediately reaches out and catches him.
- The image from **John Chrysostom** compares Jesus' action to a mother bird swooping beneath a fallen chick and carrying it safely home.
- Jesus does not abandon Peter or leave him to learn a lesson from his failure. **He responds with mercy and rescue.**
- Significantly, **the storm does not immediately stop** after Jesus rescues Peter.
- Jesus holds Peter by the hand and they continue through the storm together.
- Therefore, the problem was not simply the existence of the wind, but **the fear and wavering of faith that the wind produced in Peter.**
- The sermon asks how we can cultivate deeper trust in Christ:
 - Through **honest prayer**, including simply crying, "Lord, save me."
 - By recognising Christ's presence when we are weak or struggling.
 - By **turning our attention away from the "wind" and towards Jesus.**
 - By learning to trust through **small, daily acts of surrender.**
- Christian trust does not require perfect certainty or the solution to every intellectual question.
- We do not necessarily need a single great, heroic act of faith.
- Instead, faith grows through the repeated experience that **when we begin to sink, Christ is already there, reaching out his hand to catch us.**
- **The central message:** We may have to walk through storms that do not immediately disappear, but **Jesus is Lord over the storm, and he will not abandon us in it.**

Questions:

1. **What do you think Peter meant when he said, “Lord, command me to come to you”?**
What does this tell us about what Peter really wanted?
2. **Why do you think Peter was able to step out of the boat, but then became frightened by the wind?**
Can we recognise something of this pattern in our own lives?
3. **The sermon suggests that it was not the wind itself that sank Peter, but the fear it created in him.**
What kinds of “winds” can cause us to lose our trust in Christ?
4. **When Peter cried, “Lord, save me!”, Jesus immediately reached out and caught him.**
What does this tell us about how Jesus responds when we are struggling or failing?
5. **Jesus did not stop the storm when he rescued Peter; instead, he held Peter’s hand and went through the storm with him.**
How might this change our understanding of what it means for Christ to “save” us?
6. **The sermon ends by saying that trust is built through “small daily surrenders”.**
What might a small daily surrender to Christ look like in our own lives this coming week?

Six further discussion questions with Bible references

1. **Jesus says, “Take courage! It is I. Don’t be afraid.”**
How does knowing *who Jesus is* affect the way we face fear? Compare this with **Isaiah 43:1–2** and **Psalm 46:1–3**.
2. **Peter begins to sink when he takes his eyes off Jesus and becomes preoccupied with the wind.**
What does this suggest about the relationship between faith, fear and where we focus our attention? Compare **Hebrews 12:1–3** and **Colossians 3:1–2**.
3. **Peter’s faith is real, yet imperfect: he steps out of the boat but then doubts.**
Can genuine faith coexist with doubt and weakness? What encouragement do we find in **Mark 9:24** and **John 20:24–29**?
4. **Jesus catches Peter before the storm has ended.**
What does this tell us about the difference between God *removing* our difficulties and God *being with us* in them? Consider **Psalm 23:4**, **Isaiah 43:2** and **Romans 8:35–39**.
5. **The disciples respond to Jesus by saying, “Truly you are the Son of God.”**
Why is this confession so important in Matthew’s Gospel? How does this scene help us understand who Jesus is? Compare **Matthew 8:23–27**, **Matthew 16:13–17** and **Matthew 27:50–54**.
6. **The sermon describes trust as something built through “small daily surrenders” rather than one heroic act.**
What practices might help us develop this kind of everyday trust in God? Consider **Proverbs 3:5–6**, **Philippians 4:6–7**, **1 Peter 5:6–7** and **Luke 9:23**.

Matthew 14:22–33 — A reflection for the week

“Lord, command me to come to you.”

Matthew 14:28

The disciples are caught in a violent storm on the Sea of Galilee. Jesus comes towards them, walking on the water, and says: **“Take courage! It is I. Don’t be afraid.”** Peter asks Jesus to command him to come to him. Jesus says simply, **“Come.”** Peter steps out of the boat and, for a while, walks on the water. But then he notices the strength of the wind, becomes afraid and begins to sink. He cries out: **“Lord, save me!”** Jesus immediately reaches out his hand and catches him. The storm does not immediately disappear. Instead, Jesus is **with Peter in the middle of it.**

What might this say to me?

- **Jesus is Lord even over the storms.**
The things that seem chaotic and frightening to me are not beyond his authority.
- **Faith does not mean never being afraid.**
Peter had enough faith to step out of the boat, yet he still became frightened. I can have genuine faith while still experiencing doubt and fear.
- **What I focus on matters.**
When Peter looked at Jesus, he walked towards him. When he became preoccupied with the wind, he began to sink.
- **Jesus does not abandon me when my faith falters.**
Peter’s cry, **“Lord, save me!”**, was enough. Jesus immediately reached out his hand.
- **Jesus may not always calm the storm.**
Sometimes his answer is not to remove the difficulty but to hold me and walk with me through it.
- **Trust grows gradually.**
I do not need to make one enormous leap of faith. I can learn to trust Christ through the small decisions and surrenders of each day.

For personal reflection

What is the “wind” that is troubling me at present? Am I spending more time looking at the storm than looking towards Christ?

Where might Jesus be saying to me, “Come”? What small step of trust could I take this week?

And when I feel myself sinking, can I simply pray: **“Lord, save me.”**

Then remember that **his hand is already reaching out towards me.**

A prayer for the week

Lord Jesus Christ,

When the storms of life frighten me, help me to keep my eyes upon you.

When my courage fails and I begin to sink, help me to remember that you are near.

Teach me not to demand certainty or wait for every storm to disappear, but to trust you one day at a time.

Help me to surrender my fears to you and to hear your invitation: **“Come.”**

And when I cry, **“Lord, save me,”**

help me to trust that your hand
is already reaching out to hold me.

Amen.