

International Conversation Cafe

New Testament: Jesus Walks on Water, Matthew 14

Have you heard of the time when Jesus multiplied 5 small loaves of bread and 2 small fish to feed a crowd of over 5,000 people? The first four books of the New Testament record this event. You can imagine how excited people were when they realized how easily Jesus provided food for them. They thought if Jesus were their king, their problems would be solved. They would never have to work again. Jesus, the miracle worker/healer would do it all! When Jesus heard that they intended to make him their king, he sent the crowd away and immediately left the area. He sent his disciples off as well. Though Jesus would someday be their king, this was not the time or place.

Matthew 14

²² Right away Jesus made the disciples get into the boat. He had them go on ahead of him to the other side of the Sea of Galilee. Then he sent the crowd away. ²³ After he had sent them away, he went up on a mountainside by himself to pray. When evening came, he was there alone. ²⁴ The boat was already a long way from land. It was being pounded by the waves because the wind was blowing against it.

²⁵ Early in the morning, Jesus went out to the disciples. He walked on the lake. ²⁶ They saw him walking on the lake and were terrified. "It's a ghost!" they said. And they cried out in fear.

²⁷ Right away Jesus called out to them, "Be brave! It is I. Don't be afraid."

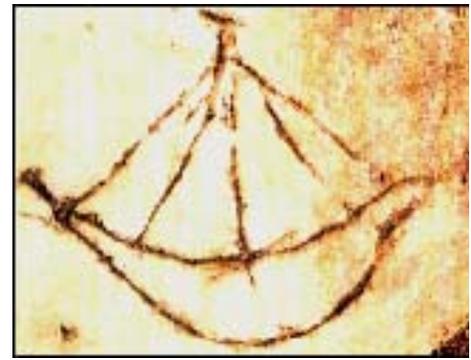
²⁸ "Lord, is it you?" Peter asked. "If it is, tell me to come to you on the water."

²⁹ "Come," Jesus said.

So Peter got out of the boat. He walked on the water toward Jesus. ³⁰ But when Peter saw the wind, he was afraid. He began to sink. He cried out, "Lord! Save me!"

³¹ Right away Jesus reached out his hand and caught him. "Your faith is so small!" he said. "Why did you doubt me?"

³² When they climbed into the boat, the wind died down. ³³ Then those in the boat worshiped Jesus. They said, "You really are the Son of God!"



Christian symbol of a boat, Catacombs of St. Callixtus

Discussion Questions

Retell the story starting with a few facts from the introduction.

Imagine how the disciples must have felt having been tossed in a boat for hours during a storm. Tell about a situation where you thought your life was about to end and you had no control over the outcome...in an airplane, boat, car, or hospital?

This story is an analogy. The storm represents the difficult things that come to us in life. Jesus offers his presence and words to give courage to his followers.

What does Jesus say that you feel are significant?

How and when could these words give you courage?

The Lord did not discourage Peter from getting out of the boat and walking toward him. What did Peter do that caused him to start sinking?

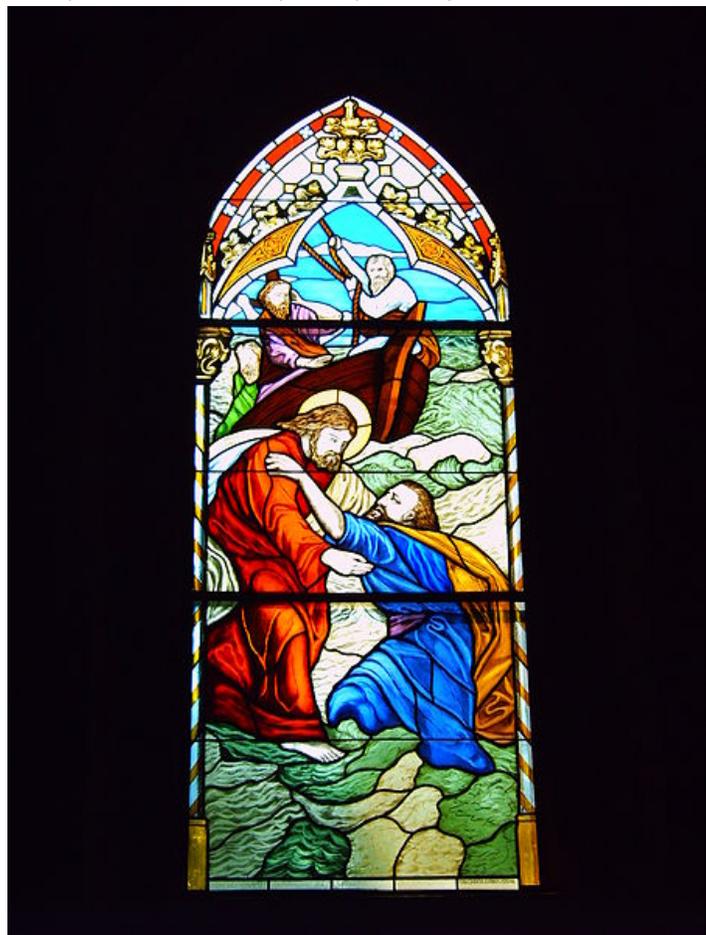
What are some difficult things that take our attention away from Jesus and cause us to doubt?

Early Christians were reminded of Jesus' presence, power, and love by the symbol of a boat. Are there other symbols that remind you of hope?

How is Peter's faith greater than that of the other disciples?

Describe what you see in this painting.

What would you like to ask the artist?



Poland, Mielno, church, stained glass, Walk on Water