

Keep Your Eyes upon Jesus - 07 Nov 2004 - Joshua Daniel

Mathew 14 and verse 23: And when he had sent the multitudes away; he went up into a mountain apart to pray: and when the evening was come, he was there alone.

One sure cause for spiritual failure is not getting this time alone with God. One of the earliest lessons which God taught me is enshrined in this verse. Every evening even if it was a cricket match that I had to play, which meant of course, many hours out in the grounds and all kinds of weather; sometimes heavy shower would send us running into the pavilion or shelter, whatever the shelter there was or if we are called to bask in the sun, oh we gladly did so. After a long day to go into the presence of God and just get refreshed and renewed. How do you live without it? Those who attempt to live without it, those attempt to just have those, you know, sleepy noddy moments before you hit the pillow, I tell you, you are going to be a sure failure. There's no uncertainty about it at all. What do we see here? The Lord Jesus needed that time alone with the Father. And would you tell me that you don't need it? No. You need it. To be renewed, to be able to walk effectively, to walk straight and so we see the Lord Jesus Christ going to these disciples who had already set out on the boat between 3 o'clock and 6 o'clock, 4th watch of the night. There were fighting the wind and the boisterous waves, boisterous wind and the raging waves rather. But the ship was now tossed in the midst of the sea with waves for the wind was contrary. And in the 4th watch of the night Jesus went unto them walking on the sea. And when the disciples saw him walking on the sea they were troubled saying, "it is a spirit"; and they cried out for fear. But straightway Jesus spake unto them, saying, "be of good cheer; it is I"; be not afraid.

What a picture we have, the sea is bound to be turbulent at times and rarely is at flaccid and smooth and making it you know smooth sailing. Now look at our world today, full of turbulence. One shocking event after the other until we are getting inured to these things, we are becoming harder and harder, we can read it in the newspaper that 30,000 people died, doesn't move us. Well, far far away we don't relate to it. And even if we did last week, by this week it is forgotten. The cries of the widow and the orphan, the children picked up from the rubble, from underneath the rubble, that's all a very old story because new stories have hit the banner headlines. So we go from sensation to sensation. Unrelated to a turbulent world and yet so many people are caught in this turbulence and are unable to escape. Here we see our Lord however, walking on the sea. You know, that reminds me of a teacher schooled in modern theology who said "well, Jesus was walking by the sea shore". Well, there's a lot of different walking on the sea. One girl who had better content in the upper story than her teacher said "how did he sink ma'am"? Well, I am sure she was flustered and didn't know what answer to give, however there are those who have denied the miraculous. Here is the Lord Jesus walking on the sea and Peter said to him, what did he exactly say? "If it be you, bid me come unto you on the water". Just notice, there was an element of doubt. Is it really you? Is it possible that you can't recognize the Lord Jesus? Now here when he said "if it is you bid me come to you on the water" and he said come. And when Peter was

come down out of the ship he walked on the water to go to Jesus, to meet the savior wherever and whenever possible. You know in today's world we don't think of really meeting the savior, in challenging situations especially, we'd rather be indifferent to a challenge. Today, you know, sometimes people come and tell me he's so indifferent. What? Anyone be indifferent to reality? No. When it is an old, old story, then of course you can be pretty indifferent. I don't like to hear stories, I want facts. I want challenges; I want to see real situations. I was not interested in all these kind of beaten up froth with which many people are taken up. Now, going to Jesus brings you into very real challenging situations. Just following Jesus, oh what a challenge it is! and there are people who are averse to taking up a challenge. They don't want it. Oh it's too heavy, it's too hard or it's beyond me or whatever but the Lord Jesus presents us challenging situations. Now presents to us, a real challenge, some of you have the youth to weep through the streets. Yes, with groans and tears I walked the streets. But, today I don't see such concern, I don't see such burden. It is just fulfilling some religious duties. A heartless indifference. I don't believe that there is a challenge which cannot be met in the strength of the Lord. I don't believe. Only thing is there is a price to be paid. There is a price to be paid for revival. There is a price to be paid in discipleship. There is a price to be paid in the thick of the battle. When we are unwilling to pay the price we come up with alternatives, easy alternatives. All of us may like it easy, but let me tell you if I had grumbled at discomforts and a few privations or feared some threats, I would have done nothing for God. Let me tell you, if I had been unwilling to shed self, I would have done nothing for God, nothing. I would have just chosen the easy road and say, Ok I'm serving god! You know my friends, God does not want donors, God wants disciples. The trouble with modern Christianity is, they want to be patrons and donors. I'm giving this money, I'm doing that thing, I'm doing the other thing but I stay away from where the bullets fly and the flesh is torn. Well my dear friend, in that case you will never walk with God. You will never walk with Jesus Christ. Now get this clear, the kind of life which we want today, the status, the life style, the present value system, it is just a negation, it is the opposite of discipleship. And yet, we are so comfortable and we like it this way. When peter walked over to the Lord Jesus he was pretty well, he was safe but what did he do? You all know I presume what he did. Verse 30; but when he saw the wind boisterous, he was afraid; and beginning to sink, he cried, saying, Lord, Save me. He saw the wind boisterous, the wind was contrary the bible says. Now how do you like it? He looked at the boisterous waves. Now you can focus either upon the Lord or upon the triumphant life and he with you as your sure guide or you can focus on the boisterous waves. Here was peter walking; he did pretty well until he focused on the waves.