

## STEP OUT OF THE BOAT – PART ONE

This is your Friend and Minister, dr. Joshua Uhiara, bringing you Healing Word from the Master, a program of the Master's Vessel Ministry which lets you know that Jesus loves you as you are, but loves you so much that He will not leave you as you are.

Welcome back, friends. Today, I want to speak on: Step out of the Boat. And it is taken from Matthew 14:22

Matthew 14:22-31

<sup>1</sup> *Immediately Jesus made His disciples get into the boat and go before Him to the other side, while He sent the multitudes away [that was after He fed the multitude – five thousand and more].* <sup>23</sup> *And when He had sent the multitudes away, He went up on the mountain by Himself to pray. Now when evening came, He was alone there.* <sup>24</sup> *But the boat was now in the middle of the sea, tossed by the waves, for the wind was contrary.*

<sup>25</sup> *Now in the fourth watch of the night Jesus went to them, walking on the sea.* <sup>26</sup> *And when the disciples saw Him walking on the sea, they were troubled, saying, "It is a ghost!" And they cried out for fear.*

<sup>27</sup> *But immediately Jesus spoke to them, saying, "Be of good cheer! It is I; do not be afraid."*

<sup>28</sup> *And Peter answered Him and said, "Lord, if it is You, command me to come to You on the water."*

<sup>29</sup> *So He said, "Come." And when Peter had come down out of the boat, he walked on the water to go to Jesus.* <sup>30</sup> *But when he saw that the wind was boisterous, he was afraid; and beginning to sink he cried out, saying, "Lord, save me!"*

<sup>31</sup> *And immediately Jesus stretched out His hand and caught him, and said to him, "O you of little faith, why did you doubt?"* <sup>32</sup> *And when they got into the boat, the wind ceased.*

## PRAYER:

*Father, we have come again to You; and ask that You would help us now as we search through this text, that You may speak to our hearts, in the Name of Jesus, Amen!*

In this message today, the context of the text would serve as the introduction. And we would proceed to consider the compassion Jesus had for His disciples, the contrast between Peter and the rest of the disciples, and the conflict of faith that Peter experienced. Jesus had fed five thousand men besides women and children, according to Matthew 14:13-21. A conservative estimate of the number fed must over fifteen thousand people. The scripture said that He made or compelled (that is the Greek that is used there) His disciples to go ahead of Him to the other side of the Sea of Galilee, while He dismissed the multitude.

Before anybody would question why I should make the estimate that high...I think it is not even high enough because only men were five thousand; and there must have been more women because women followed Him more seriously than men; and then of course the Jews had large families. If you add the women and the children that estimate will be very very conservative. His disciples needed to be compelled to leave probably because they were reluctant to leave the scene of the miraculous sandwich. They did not want to leave in a hurry. People have the tendency to linger longer than necessary or overstay their welcome at the scene of an extraordinary experience. Peter did the same thing in Matthew 17 – the Transfiguration. He was ready to erect three tabernacles or tent for Moses, Elijah and Jesus, but did not mind being exposed to the elements with his two friends James and John provided they continued to stay at the scene of the extraordinary experience of transfiguration. Yet down in the valley a man and his epileptic son were in desperate need of healing from Jesus.

We have fun experience in church, many at times, to the neglect of those who need the Gospel Message desperately out there in the world.

Jesus sent them to go to the other side. The other side in verse 22 must have been the Western side of Galilee, assuming they were returning from Capernaum their headquarters. Jesus went up the mountain to pray after He dismissed the crowd: verse 23 of our text. This was in keeping with His habit of praying in solitude. Jesus prayed often in solitudes: solitude of the soul, solitude of space,

solitude of time – solitude of time in the sense that He would go a great while before day; solitude of space in the sense that He would go to a quiet place to pray; and then of course solitude of soul because he experienced a great peace in His soul.

In the meantime, the disciples of Jesus were rowing on the Sea of Galilee with great difficulty, because a strong wind came against them. They could not make any progress despite their strenuous effort, until Jesus came to them.

Let's see the compassion of Jesus. Why did Jesus go to them? Jesus went to them because He had compassion on them. He saw that they were in trouble with the sudden change in weather condition.

Jesus has the same compassion for you, friend. He sees what you are going through even now, and He will come to you even if it would take a miracle similar to walking on water. But do you expect Him, or are you looking for some other quarters for help?

When and how did Jesus go to them?

A simple analysis of the sentence structure of verse 25 reveals this interesting fact.

<sup>25</sup> *Now in the fourth watch of the night Jesus went to them, walking on the sea.*

The main or independent clause of the sentence is: Jesus went to them. Independent clause. This is a little English now: English grammar. That is the clause or the part of the sentence that stands on its own and still makes sense. Independent. Main clause. But in the 'fourth watch of the night' tells us when He went to them. 'Walking on the water' tells us how He went to them. These two clauses are dependent or subordinate clauses. And someone has made this observation: "The main thing is to keep the main thing the main thing". It's interesting. The main thing is to keep the main thing the main thing. Therefore, the main clause is the main thing. I know in your bible...if your bible has headings – paragraphs and headings...mine says, from verse 22: Jesus walks on the sea. But that's not the main clause. That's not the main thing. That is subordinate. Jesus went to them at the fourth watch of the night, walking on the water. So the main thing is that Jesus went to His disciples. They are difficult moment. The time and manner of going to them are incidental to His going to them. The time He went to

them tells us that Jesus can come to you aid unexpectedly. Jesus can come to your help suddenly. He can come at the darkest hour. Just before dawn – we were told at the forth watch of the night is the darkest hour before daybreak.

Friend, are you at your darkest hour now in your judgment? Watch out. Jesus came to them at the darkest hour of their night. The main thing is that He came. When He came to them they were not expecting Him. And they thought that He was a ghost. But when He revealed His identity Peter answered and said to Him, *“Lord, if it is You, command me to come to You on the water.”* And Jesus said to him, *“Come”*. If Jesus did not say come, what Peter decided to do, stepping out of the boat into the rough water of the Sea of Galilee, would have been foolishness, not faith.

When you claim to act by faith, friend, make sure that you have heard clearly from the Lord. Don't pump yourself up and claim you have faith just because a preacher said so. It could lead to disaster. Some people have faith in fate instead of faith in the Lord, instead or faith in the Word of God. You know such people by the emphasis they place on their faith and how they testify of their great faith. They are like those who are proud of their humility. The object of faith is more important than faith itself.

If a little child gives me a promise I would not take it as seriously as a matured man – in good standing. If a little child says he's going to give me a million naira, I will smile; I will laugh. But if a multimillionaire promises to give me a million naira I will consider that seriously. The object is more important than the faith.

Friend, you need to step out of the boat. When we come back next time we will want to find out what really is this boat that we need to step out of; and then we want to see the difference between Peter and the rest of the disciples.

Let us pray.

PRAYER:

*Father, we have come to the end of our discussion today. And there are some in radioland who are going through very difficult times now. You know them. They have been struggling, and their circumstance seems not to yield one bit. Lord Jesus, just as You came to the rescue, to the aid of Your disciples, who faced that*

*kind of situation long ago, come to their aid even now. Thank You, Father, in Jesus Name. Amen!*