

Lost & Found Center Teaching Series



# **WALKING ON WATER - GRACE PART 3**

## Introduction

I've been following a theme lately called "the way of grace." The theme is that God has poured out grace into our lives and he desires that we seek out that grace and then have the faith to walk in it. First, we need an awareness of his grace like Jesus continually demonstrated. The awareness of his grace, is understanding the power and the purpose of God in the moment. Once we understand that grace then we need faith to act - to do what God desires in the moment. The final part of the way of grace is the release of power. The release of power is the result of grace interacting with faith. Think of this like a formula. We could call it the formula of his grace.

The movement of our faith through his grace causes the release of power. For those of you who are mathematically inclined we can write it this way:

**grace + faith = power**

This is not new. This is Ephesians 2

**For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—** Ephesians 2:8 NIV

## The Formula of Salvation

This formula can be applied to understanding salvation. Jesus' death and resurrection represent the power of God in its fullness. The availability of that power for us could be called his grace. The receiving of his grace by faith causes that power to be released into our lives. Or we could say, the combination of his grace with our faith completes the spiritual transaction of our salvation. Does that make sense?

**grace + faith = power**

## How This Works

Lets look at a passage in Mathew 14 to see how this works. Jesus had just fed over 5,000 men, not including women and children. Here's what happened next:

**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. When evening came, he was there alone, but the boat was already a considerable distance from land, buffeted by the waves because the wind was against it. During the fourth watch of the night Jesus went out to them, walking on the lake.** Matthew 14:22-25 NIV

Jesus was aware of what God was going to do. Just like when he was aware the power of God

## Lost and Found Center - Teaching Series

was available to heal the sick in Luke 5:17. Or like when he asked the disciples how they would feed the 5,000 men even though he already knew what he was going to do in John 6:6. This is a pattern. He had an awareness of the grace of God, and in this case there was power available to walk on water. He knew. He moved. He walked. The Lord desires that we be aware of his grace and then move out in faith just like Jesus.

Jesus wasn't showing off but showing the disciples and us what is possible in God. He shows us a little about who he is, who we can be and how it all works. He shows us a little of our current potential and our destiny, because God's design is that we become like him. This is grace and faith and power in action.

### **How it doesn't work**

There's another formula that I want you to see. It is also not new but maybe you never saw it as a formula.

Faith = - Fear

This is an important formula to remember but I'd like you to remember it in a different format. This equation shows that fear and faith are in opposition. Fear opposes faith. Does that make sense? We'll see as we read more of Matthew 14. However, let me rewrite this formula in another way to emphasize my point.

Faith + Fear = 0

Now do you get it?

**When the disciples saw him walking on the lake, they were terrified. "It's a ghost," they said, and cried out in fear. Matthew 14:26 NIV**

Here's a question for you. Where did the disciples get the idea that this wasn't really Jesus but a ghost? Earlier they had seen Jesus feed possibly 20,000 people. At some point, after all those miracles, you'd think they would start to become convinced that he really could do anything. Where then did the ghost idea come from?

The idea came from fear. Fear can be creative. It can set our boundaries. Fear can define the situation if we let it. Fear can determine our options. We can get our information and understanding from fear. Fear is often wrong, so it cannot be trusted. It prevents us from seeing the obvious. The kingdom of God does not operate on fear. Listen closely. Fear neutralizes the formula. Fear cancels out faith. Fear will prevent power from being released into your life.

**But Jesus immediately said to them: "Take courage! It is I. Don't be afraid."**

Matthew 14:27 NIV

Jesus reacts immediately. When Jesus does anything immediately, pay attention. He wanted to cut fear out before it took root. Don't let yourself be afraid. Don't believe what fear is telling you. Don't follow fear's line of reasoning or live in fear's world. Ask the Holy Spirit for courage in your heart. Ask him to help you fight fear. That is the will of God. Note to self: Anything he tells you to do IS his will. Our response should always be to ask for help in anything he tells us to do or be.

### **Peter's Example**

If Jesus is an example of our destiny, then the disciples are an example of our transition points, the reality that we just aren't there yet.

**"Lord, if it's you," Peter replied, "tell me to come to you on the water."**

Matthew 14:28 NIV

I love this part. I really do. Peter is on top of things right here. Fear can be creative but so can faith. With God everything is possible so why not explore some of those possibilities. Draw a few conclusions about who Jesus is and what he can do based upon what you know about him. That's exactly what Abraham did when God told him to sacrifice Isaac. Abraham was ready to willingly sacrifice Isaac not because God told him everything would work out, but because he was a little creative with his faith. Abraham thought to himself (of course I'm paraphrasing) "hmm, God can do anything right?" Here's how Hebrews put it.

**Abraham reasoned that God could raise the dead, and figuratively speaking, he did receive Isaac back from death.** Hebrews 11:19 NIV

Just think if Abraham had let fear define the situation for him. Reason like Abraham. If Jesus can do anything then fill in the blanks for your life. Don't let fear define what God will or won't do for you, but let your knowledge of God explore the possibilities. Let the truths of God loose to fight against your fears.

**"Come," he said.** Matthew 14:29 NIV

This is simple but confusing and even controversial. When Jesus says come, I want you to think grace. Jesus is really telling Peter that there is grace to come, so Peter went. If Jesus says no, there is no grace. If Jesus doesn't answer, who are you to move forward anyway? This is one of the areas where we get confused. Faith is not moving forward, whether there is grace or not and then hoping God will back us up. That is not how Jesus was or is. Look at the following verse.

**"My food," said Jesus, "is to do the will of him who sent me and to finish his**

**work.** John 4:34 NIV

Jesus was never independent of the purposes of God. There was always grace. Grace is before faith.

**Then Peter got down out of the boat, walked on the water and came toward Jesus. But when he saw the wind, he was afraid and, beginning to sink, cried out, "Lord, save me!"** Matthew 14:30 NIV

This is a review about how fear affects our lives. Right in the midst of the power of God in our lives, fear can still get in and instantaneously redefine the situation. Fear can redefine what is possible. Fear can rearrange our furniture. Be on guard.

### **My Vision/Daydream**

Let me tell you about a vision/day dream I had about this a few weeks ago. I was in a boat and Jesus was in the water and he told me to come to him. I got out of the boat and started to walk towards him. I was looking down concentrating, determined to make it there without sinking. When I got to him he started walking and wanted me to follow. Here's the funny part. I thought I had to work up my faith just enough to get to him. But when I looked up the whole road was water. The entire way was water.

That can change your mindset on faith. We don't just get to him by faith and then relax - we live by faith. Get used to walking by faith. Get used to being on the move.

**For in the gospel a righteousness from God is revealed, a righteousness that is by faith from first to last, just as it is written: "The righteous will live by faith."** Romans 1:17 NIV

He wants us to have faith in the beginning, faith in the middle, faith in the end.

### **Putting Everything Together**

Grace is from God. God's grace is according to his purposes not ours. Our job on the grace side is not to command it, but to be aware of it, asking for it is okay. How do I become more aware? Pray for a heightened awareness of his grace.

What about the faith part? That's where we come in. When grace is available we need to be ready to move. There are pockets of grace that we step into all the time that require us to immediately act in faith. I'm sure you've sensed it before. What do you need to do at that moment? It could be anything. You may need to say, "yes" to something outside your ability. Or you may need to pray for someone not later but "now" in the moment. Or you may need to stop what you're

## Lost and Found Center - Teaching Series

doing “now” and help someone. Or you may need to testify about Jesus in your life “now” when the grace of God is available. Or you may need to speak up “now.” Get the idea. The formula has a time component, which corresponds to the moment. Faith often seems like now when fear often seems like tomorrow. Get the idea?

The fear part? Remember it opposes faith so it prevents the release of power into our lives.  
Faith + Fear = 0.

The power part? Move in faith when the opportunity presents itself and then see what God does. Don't supply the power. Don't count to three and snap your fingers. Don't jump up and down. Supply faith at the right moment and then see what God does.

Lord help us. Help us to be aware of your grace and then give us the courage to move in faith to do what needs to be done or to say what needs to be said - in the moment. Amen.

**Grace + faith = power**

Remember that for the quiz.

## Lost and Found Center – Teaching Series

### Notes

For Questions or Comments please respond to [info@lostandfoundcenter.org](mailto:info@lostandfoundcenter.org) and visit [www.lostandfoudcenter.org](http://www.lostandfoudcenter.org) for additional information.

Copyright  2009 Lost and Found Center, All rights Reserved.