

THE PLACE TO BE
Matthew 14:22-28
By Raymond White

Matthew 14:22 And straightway Jesus constrained his disciples to get into a ship and go before him unto the other side while he sent the multitude away.

Jesus gave them a direct command. "Leave." What did they do? They left. They got into a ship and headed for the other side. That's obedience.

The conflicting thing about obeying God is that doing what he says may get you into trouble. And so it was with them. However, trouble or not, being where God tells you to be is still the safest place to be. Again: and so it was with them.

Matthew 14:24 But the ship was now in the midst of the sea, tossed with waves; for the wind was contrary.

Now that's trouble. Imagine that. They did exactly what Jesus told them to do and now they are in trouble. The storm was more than trouble, it was life threatening, and it worked against them, pushing them back, away from their destination.

But still, *John 6:19* they rowed forward. Why? Because they were determined to do what Jesus had told them to do even though it was hard and dangerous. They were in a storm. But they were also in the place of obedience which was safest place to be although it didn't feel like that, surrounded by threatening waves. They had always felt safe with Jesus, but Jesus wasn't there and not likely to show up. They must have wondered, "Why did he send us out into this?" And all they could do was struggle with his command and do their best even though it seemed fruitless and they were likely to perish.

Yes, obedience creates trouble, but obedience also earns God's protection.

Matthew 14:26 And in the fourth watch of the night Jesus went unto them, walking on the sea. :27 Saying, Be of good cheer; it is I: be not afraid.

Even in the storm, it turns out, they had been safe. Here is some very good advice: *Jude 21* Keep yourself in the love of God. Obedience does that. It keeps you in God's love and in his protection.

Peter, it seems, wanted to be even closer.

Matthew 14:28 And Peter answered him and said, Lord, if it be thou, bid me come unto thee on the water.

And Jesus did.

Why did Peter do that? Why did Peter ask Jesus to let him walk across the water? Did Peter do that to show off? No. Did he do it to test Jesus? No. He did it for the most compelling reason of all: safety. In that situation, Peter knew one thing above all else: In the midst of a storm there is one guaranteed safe place to be, standing next to Jesus.

Final note. Who sees the miracle? Those who obey Jesus and endure the storm.