

“TAKE HIS HAND”

Pastor Mike Corwin

TEXT: ROMANS 8:26-39

GOD’S WORD: MATTHEW 14:22-33

I – OCEANS:

I love this song!!! My 3rd service people are the ones who introduced me to it during that service. I have to tell you that every time I listened to it, my spirit was set on fire. It changed me. The message I had for that day almost always changed as the Holy Spirit took me into a whole new zone and direction! It is a wonderful song of faith and I asked Sarah McGrady to please come and sing it for us today to lead us into this message. Did you pay attention to the lyrics?

**You call me out upon the waters
The great unknown where feet may fail
And there I find You in the mystery
In oceans deep
My faith will stand**

Do you see the faith reference? About Jesus calling us out upon the water. This song was obviously written based on the Scripture you heard read a few minutes ago. Where Jesus walks on the water and calls Peter to come and join him and before it’s over Peter starts to sink. The song continues on this faith theme with the lyrics:

**Spirit lead me where my trust is without borders
Let me walk upon the waters
Wherever You would call me
Take me deeper than my feet could ever wander
And my faith will be made stronger
In the presence of my Saviour**

Now we get a plea to make our faith even stronger than what it is. Asking Jesus to take us deeper in that faith than we’ve ever been taken before. To grow stronger in our faith so we would gladly follow Jesus even if he calls us to walk upon the water. It also points out that our faith is made stronger in the presence of Jesus...not the absence of him.

II – PETER:

But I’ve preached the passage from Matthew a couple of times and it’s usually been about faith in Jesus. But in light of the troubles we face today I want to show you something else in this passage. The song tells

me about it too. The illusion is that Peter stepped out of the boat, took a few steps and then lost his faith in the face of the strong wind and the waves and started to sink. The song tells the story of what happened next in this poetic form:

**Your grace abounds in deepest waters
Your sovereign hand
Will be my guide
Where feet may fail
And fear surrounds me
You've never failed
And You won't start now**

**So I will call upon Your name
And keep my eyes above the waves
When oceans rise
My soul will rest in Your embrace
For I am Yours and You are mine
And You are mine**

I have to tell you that I get chills from the spirit when I get to these words and take in what they mean. When I'm having my worst day...when I'm facing my fears...when I'm going through trials, tribulations, persecutions, and whatever else this earthly life throw at me, the grace of God outweighs them all! The sovereign hand of Jesus my Lord and my Savior guides me through it all. He will be my guide.

When I call upon his name he comes to my rescue. My heart, my soul, my spirit find rest in his embrace. I am his and because I've made the decision to be his, he is mine! He won't let me drown in the sea of chaos I face.

That's the part I want you to take note of in this morning's scripture. Peter did have faith or he wouldn't have gotten out of the boat. His face though wasn't that strong yet so when he saw the trouble (wind and waves) around him he started to sink, started to drown. But is says that Jesus "Immediately reached out and grabbed him. He took Peter's hand and walked him back to the boat, back to safety. He did not let Peter drown, but came to his rescue.

III – TROUBLES?:

The last couple of sermon's I've done pertained to the troubles other people were having and how we should respond. How we should treat others, accept others, and look at others. But now I want to get to how you treat yourself. How you look at yourself. How you are surviving all that is going on around you. You have troubles don't you? You have fears, illness, loneliness, problems and turmoil in some form or the other. You may have some regrets, baggage, or shame you've been carrying around with you for years. How do you handle it all? I have yet to meet the human being whose life was perfect. We all have what I'll nicely refer to as "Issues." So how are you holding up how are you weathering the storms that seem to be raging around us all the time?

Are you drowning, even if you're still in the safety of the boat? Then I want to tell you that if you'll just reach out your hand, if you'll just call on Jesus, he will take yours and help you through. You may still get wet but you won't drown. That's the simple faith that keeps you going. That's the kind of faith I have practiced now for years and I can tell you that it has helped me through an awful lot and continues to do so.

The goal is that our faith gets to the point that we don't have to reach out for his hand because we always have it in ours. It's a way of life...not a reaction to life.

IV – TEXT:

I have that kind of faith because of promises like this one from my God and my Savior...

ROMANS 8:26-39 (NLT)

²⁶ And the Holy Spirit helps us in our weakness. For example, we don't know what God wants us to pray for. But the Holy Spirit prays for us with groanings that cannot be expressed in words. ²⁷ And the Father who knows all hearts knows what the Spirit is saying, for the Spirit pleads for us believers in harmony with God's own will. ²⁸ And we know that God causes everything to work together for the good of those who love God and are called according to his purpose for them. ²⁹ For God knew his people in advance, and he chose them to become like his Son, so that his Son would be the firstborn among many brothers and sisters. ³⁰ And having chosen them, he called them to come to him. And having called them, he gave them right standing with himself. And having given them right standing, he gave them his glory.

³¹ What shall we say about such wonderful things as these? If God is for us, who can ever be against us? ³² Since he did not spare even his own Son but gave him up for us all, won't he also give us everything else? ³³ Who dares accuse us whom God has chosen for his own? No one—for God himself has given us right standing with himself. ³⁴ Who then will condemn us? No one—for Christ Jesus died for us and was raised to life for us, and he is sitting in the place of honor at God's right hand, pleading for us. ³⁵ Can anything ever separate us from Christ's love? Does it mean he no longer loves us if we have trouble or calamity, or are persecuted, or hungry, or destitute, or in danger, or threatened with death? ³⁶ (As the Scriptures say, "For your sake we are killed every day; we are being slaughtered like sheep.") ³⁷ No, despite all these things, overwhelming victory is ours through Christ, who loved us.

³⁸ And I am convinced that nothing can ever separate us from God's love. Neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither our fears for today nor our worries about tomorrow—not even the powers of hell can separate us from God's love. ³⁹ No power in the sky above or in the earth below—indeed, nothing in all creation will ever be able to separate us from the love of God that is revealed in Christ Jesus our Lord.

If you are in trouble this passage tells me that you will be taken care of. It tells me that even when I'm in such spiritual or physical pain, when I can do nothing but cry and groan, when I can't even fathom or form the words I need to tell God my problems, the Holy Spirit carries my broken spirit to God and seeks my healing.

It tells me that even through the troubles I'm going to learn something. I'm going to come out of it with new insight, with new stamina, with new faith because I love God. God knew me before I was thought of by my parents, watched me being conceived and formed. Watched me as I grew in the womb. The amazing thing is that he loved me before any of that, as he does all of you. That his wishes for all of us is that we would all find Jesus, that we would all be changed and become Christ-Like, that we would all be his children.

And then I get to the real promises. The fact that God loves me so much that it doesn't matter what happens here. What matters is that I have found Jesus. I have put my hand in his, I am walking with him and I will never be separated from him. The greatest part of this whole passage to me is:

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And you can add to this list anything you want like cancer, like poverty, like poor of spirit, like Covid-19, because this list is all inclusive. When you grab the hand of Jesus it doesn't matter that sometimes you may want to let go...he won't!!

V- HOLD TIGHT / EXPLORE:

Maybe you aren't there yet. Maybe you don't think your faith is strong enough. Maybe you haven't really taken Jesus' hand and you're still looking for it. That's OK. We're all on the journey and as we exercise our faith we'll get stronger and live it more fully.

There is a lot of fear in our world right now. There is a lot of civil and social unrest. We live in fear about where we are going with this virus, where we are going with our police, where we are going with our government, where we're going with life in general. You can watch TV or listen to the news and find out all these issues have many sides that opinions are not short and you can find one that will lead you in whatever direction you want to go. But...if they all have the answers why do we still have all the problems? They will not reach out and take your hand and keep you from drowning! There is only one place to put your trust in, to grab the hand of...His name is Jesus.

None of the others have or would die for you...but he did. He is still rolling stones away from tombs, still putting love into the hearts of his brothers and sisters, Only Jesus. I'll hold hands with him any day and every day.

AMEN