

Miracles of Jesus 12-08-19b

We resume our study now looking at the Lord's miraculous ability to walk on water, which was temporarily also granted to Peter. And we're in Mark chapter 6, verses 45 and following. And we have reached the point where in the fourth watch of the night, Jesus came to them walking on the sea and would have passed them by.

He was intending to par-erkomai. Erkomai is the word that means to come. Para is alongside.

And you think, oh, well, see, that's the answer. He meant to come alongside. That's not what par-erkomai means.

If you look it up in the lexicon, it means to go by, to miss, to flow past, to pass by, to out-strip, to overtake, to surpass someone in speed, also to excel someone, even in the non-literal sense, to out-strip them in wisdom or cunning, out-think them, out-do them, go beyond them. So this means to, this is, you know, the Olympics were just a week ago, and you watch these runners, and they bide their time, they bide their time, they draft behind one another. And then it's coming around the final curve while they pull out and they par-erkomai, they pass.

You've got to go beside someone so that you can get ahead of them. And that's the idea here. So you can't wiggle out of it by saying, well, he meant to come alongside.

He was intending to, no, he was intending to go right on by. Now, I was telling Andrew on the break, I have a quiz question for you. Can you think of any similar circumstance? Can you think of another case where it looked as though Jesus was going to par-erkomai, and somebody had to kind of call out to him to stop him, had to make a request? There's a thought when people are calling out to him for healing, and he seems to be ignoring them.

I'm thinking specifically of travel here. There's, you get the idea that somebody's coming up behind him with the woman with the issue. How about after the resurrection, on the road to Emmaus? The road to Emmaus.

Emmaus is seven miles west of Jerusalem. Now, Jesus has just, it's the most significant event in human history, bar none, bar none. Resurrection from the dead.

Think there might be a teaching point for the twelve disciples and those that have been close to him for many years. Jesus is traveling away from that group. He is on, and you say, well, he just wanted to show up.

Apparently not. Because, if you, and this, remember I said there's a chapter five, and when I glanced down at my Bible, I was in Luke chapter five, rather than Mark chapter six. Turn with me to Luke chapter five.

Oh wait, that's not it. We want to go over to Luke. We'll be in Luke five.

Keep trying to get there and can't. Go toward the end of Luke. In chapter 24, verse 13.

They found the empty tomb. Peter rose, ran to the tomb. In verse 12, stooping down, he saw the linen cloths lying by themselves, and he departed, marveling to himself at what had happened.

Then, 24, 13 of Luke. Now, look. Now, behold.

Two of them were traveling that same day to a village called Emmaus, which was seven miles from Jerusalem. And they talked together of all these things which had happened. So it was, while they conversed and reasoned, that Jesus himself drew near and went with them.

Now, if he drew near, what does that mean? Did they catch up to him or did he catch up to them? It's the person behind who draws near, right? So they're traveling to Emmaus. Jesus overtakes them. He draws near.

If he was ahead of them and they caught up, they would draw near to him. He drew near to them. So he's overtaking them, right? Their eyes were restrained.

They did not know him. They look at him, but they don't even think he's a ghost. They just think he's a stranger.

They do not recognize him, much as the figure of Jesus on the sea is not recognized when he overtakes them. He said, what kind of conversation is it? Cleopas answers, are you the only stranger in Jerusalem? You don't know. What things? Things concerning Jesus of Nazareth, chief priests, we were hoping, certain women of our company.

Verse 24, certain of those who are with us went to the tomb, found it just as the woman said, did not see. Then he said to them, oh foolish ones and slow of heart to believe in all that the prophets have spoken. You have forgotten about the loaves.

You shouldn't have to have this explained to you. You've got the knowledge and you have not applied it. You're foolish.

You're slow. Did you not see this coming in the prophets? Once you have seen it, could you not make the connection to the prophets? Ought not the Christ to have suffered these things and to enter into his glory? Through the suffering to enter into glory? The purpose in your suffering is entering into glory? Ought to ring a bell for a Friday night study. Ought not the Christ to have suffered in order that he can enter into his glory? The two are connected, suffering, entering into glory.

Shouldn't it have been that way? Did you not see this in your scriptures? Beginning at Moses and the prophets, he gave them a review. Expounded to them in all the scriptures

the things concerning himself. Then, look at verse 28, they drew near to the village where they were going and he did what? Indicated that he would keep on going.

But they constrained him, saying, Abide with us. Don't pass on by. Don't keep going.

It is evening and the day is far spent. Then as he sat at the table and took bread, blessed and broke it, their eyes were opened. Bread.

They finally get the bread. They finally make the connection. Interesting set of parallels to my mind.

Not the least of which, in addition to the bread, in addition to their recognition not taking place, in addition to him saying, O slow, foolish ones, you should have made this connection, he would have traveled farther. Now, here's my quiz question. If Jesus would have traveled farther, where was he going? Was he just sort of putting on an act here? Well, this is kind of like people fishing for a compliment or whatever.

You act like, oh, shucks, and stick your toe in the dirt. Then you sort of get people to produce the desired reaction. There's no indication that this is Jesus.

He's not just fishing for an invitation, because he has no intention of staying anyway. As soon as he breaks the bread, he's gone from their sight. It says he would have gone farther and they constrained him to come in and break bread, which he does.

So where was he going? He was not going to Emmaus. They stop in Emmaus. So where does the road go if he said, well, you know, this isn't my destination.

I'm going to keep going. Where do you go? So you turn back to the maps and you say, well, I don't see anything interesting beyond Emmaus. And he just was raised from the dead.

Shouldn't he be appearing in upper rooms and eating honey and fish and put your finger in the... Where is he going? Any clue? Well, let's think back to what I'm suggesting as a parallel. Where is Jesus going on the sea that he would have passed them by? Apparently, his intention was not, well, it's time for me to go make a teaching point and get them to remember about the bread, get them to think about the power of God, and, you know, it is I, and so on. He was planning to go somewhere else.

Where was he going on the sea? Well, same place they're going, Bethsaida, Capernaum, and Byron's over there, right? He's going to the next ministry destination. What is he going to do when he gets there? Well, turn back, keep your finger in Luke for just a second, but go back to Mark chapter 6. When they had crossed over, verse 53, they came to the land of Gennesaret. This is the Galilee.

This is the land of the north of the sea there, and anchored. And when they came out of

the boat, immediately the people recognized him throughout that whole surrounding region. They began to carry those who were sick to wherever they heard him.

Wherever he entered into villages, cities, and country, they laid the sick in marketplaces. They begged him that he might just touch the hem of his garment, and as many as touched him were made well. Then in chapter 7, of course, you know, there were no chapter breaks in the original.

Pharisees and some of the scribes came, having come from Jerusalem. They saw some of his disciples eat bread with defiled... Well, we'll get to this later on. But Jesus is continuing his ministry, right? But it is starting to get cluttered up, because people are coming to him only for healing and not for teaching, just as the crowd was coming to him for bread and for rulership rather than for teaching, and coming for an earthly kingdom, earthly solutions, instead of the kingdom of God, right? But what is he there to do? He is there to present the truth.

I am the way, the truth, and the life, so that you can come to the Father through me, right? Isn't that his purpose? I am come that they might have life and have it more abundantly. For this purpose came I into the world. He is the fullness of deity and bodily form.

He is the revelation of God on high to men. That's his purpose. These other things are concomitants.

They are the means to an end. They authenticate him. They draw attention to him, but they are a means to the end.

The end is relationship with God. So, back in Luke, and this is a little bit of an aside, but I think it shines some light on what Jesus is doing in our passage, this particular miracle. Where would Jesus have gone if he kept on going? Well, I had to look to even find a map that would show me something useful in this regard.

The next town of any note on that road is Lydda. You might see it on one of your maps, L-Y-D-D-A. And I say, well, what's so great about Lydda? It turns out, if you turn to Acts chapter 9, I hope my memory is right on this, and you get to verse 32.

This is after the Damascus Road. You tend to get so attracted to Paul on the road that you forget the rest of the chapter. But in verse 31 of Acts 9, all the churches throughout Judea, Galilee, and Samaria had peace and were edified, walking in the fear of the Lord, in the comfort of the Holy Spirit.

They were multiplied. Now it came to pass, verse 32, as Peter went through all parts of the country, that he also came down to the saints which dwelt in Lydda. There are sanctified ones in Lydda, which is the next town down the road from Emmaus.

There he found a certain man named Aeneas, who had been bedridden eight years and was paralyzed. Peter said to him, Aeneas, Jesus the Christ heals you. Arise and make your bed.

Then he arose immediately. So all who dwelt at Lydda and Sharon saw him and turned to the Lord. If you keep going another 11 miles past Lydda, you get to Joppa.

That's the next town down the road. At Joppa there was a certain disciple named Tabitha, translated Dorcas. This woman was full of good works and charitable deeds.

Those days she became sick and died. When they had washed her, they laid her in an upper room. And since Lydda was near Joppa, and the disciples had heard that Peter was there, they sent two men to him, imploring him not to delay in coming to them.

So Peter arose and went with them. When he had come, they brought him to the upper room. Widows stood by him, weeping.

Does this ring any kind of bells, about a dead female in an upper room and a lot of weeping going on? Showing the tunics and garments Dorcas had made while she was with them, Peter put them all out, just as the Lord did, knelt down and prayed, turning to the body. He said, Tabitha, arise. And she opened her eyes, and when she saw Peter, she sat up.

Then he gave her his hand, lifted her up. When he had called the saints and widows, he presented her alive. It became known throughout all Joppa, and many believed on the Lord.

So it was that he stayed many days in Joppa with Simon the Tanner. Do you notice anything helpful in verse 40? What did Peter do? What has he learned since his time on the lake? He prayed. There is a need, and he prays.

So you get the idea that Jesus' intention, expressed as he's on the road to Emmaus, is there are people in whom he is interested, beyond Emmaus, in Lydda and Joppa, for example. And it is his intention to arrive there. Now, what happens in the unspoken, undocumented period between Jesus' resurrection and ascension? Did he go on? Was he there in some fashion? All we know is, there are saints and faithful and interested people in these towns, and that is where Jesus intended to go when Cleopas and his companion constrained him to stay and break bread with them.

But he doesn't stay the night in Emmaus. He doesn't say, well, see you later. He just disappears from their sight.

And you get the idea. He had this delay, and then he made up the time, going wherever it was he was going. But the Lord Jesus has a purpose that is beyond Emmaus, and in light of his resurrection, there is something of his father's work to be done in that

western vicinity.

And we see that Peter is going to follow up on that later on in his own career. But Jesus is always about his father's business. So if he's going past Emmaus, there is somebody there who is going to see the way, the truth, and the life.

Same thing when you come back to Mark 6. But that's one case where he intended to go on by, but he is sort of detained to create explanations. But he says, I shouldn't have to tell you this. You're slow and foolish.

From the prophets, you should know that the Christ ought to have suffered and entered into his glory, that the suffering is a means of entering into his glory. You should have figured this out. Jesus acts as though, I shouldn't really have to tell you this.

I would submit that the reason Jesus has seen them on the water, has waited nine hours, now he's going to go across after he's been in prayer on the mountain, is he still figures they can get this. They've got the teaching. But it is because they cry out to him that he comes and makes it more clear.

The explanation is superfluous, shouldn't be necessary. But the Lord will not deny when people ask a question. When they call out, you really ought to be able to pass this without a hint.

We used to have teachers that would do this. You're taking a big final exam and you're kind of nervous and you read the question and you get all rattled and you're not really understanding. And the teacher says, I can't give you any help, can't give you any answers, but what I can do is clarify the question for you.

And so you say, Mrs. Stokesberry, can you come over here and help me with this? That was my second grade teacher, by the way. Lifted people by the ear, smacked them with rulers, and boy, she'd be in jail today. But could you please come over? And your teacher, in mercy, will emphasize or sort of give you a clue to prime the pump.

She's not going to give you the answer, but she might rephrase the question in a way that, oh, now I can retrieve my knowledge. And it's just a mercy. I had a number of teachers that would just kind of be nice to you when you were in the crunch and, look, do you remember, we talked about this, and what is this really asking you? Look at this word here in the question.

Not giving anything away, but helping you to see the question in a clearer light so that you can retrieve your own knowledge. Do you not remember the prophets? Do you not remember the teaching, oh, disciples, that we've had all day long? Do you not remember about the bread? Do you not remember about the power of prayer? And so he isn't intending to come and give them this Bible lesson. They're going to get it because they ask.

And if you look at the parallel in Matthew 14, and we go to the part where Peter is walking, we see verse 31, Why did you doubt when he's picking Peter up? Why did you doubt? Because in verse 26 of Matthew 14, Peter answered him and said, And Jesus said, Come. And when Peter had come down out of the boat, he walked on the water to go to Jesus. I would love to see the movie of this.

Peter walking on the water toward Jesus, but when he saw that the wind was boisterous. Now, these words are disputed. You probably have a text note in your New King James that boisterous isn't in there.

If you look at the edited Greek text that tries to reflect the best witness that we have, it just says, When he saw the wind. That struck me. I was looking at this in Greek and I was going through and it says, When he saw the wind.

I thought, Well, how do you see wind? Didn't Jesus have a big discussion with Nicodemus about how you can't see the wind? Can't see the pneuma? And so when Peter saw the wind, again, it's like the first time there was great distress in the middle of the sea. That was a windstorm. Remember when they're going across to the man with the legion and they're getting this divine propulsion across? And the wind, not only have they seen Jesus multiply bread, they've also seen Jesus calm the wind.

Peter says, If it's you, bid me to come. And he says, Come. Peter doesn't say, Lord, this wind is really scaring me.

Could you do something about that also? I'm afraid I'm going to lose my balance. He saw the wind. He was afraid and beginning to sink.

And you get the idea that by looking at the wind instead of looking at the Lord, that's when he loses his buoyancy. He loses his ability to stand on the water. We know what water stands for, particularly troubled water.

The wicked are like the troubled sea when it cannot rest. This is troubled water. This is the dwelling place for Leviathan, Behemoth.

God has established His throne upon the flood, the chaotic, uncontrollable force of the ocean beyond any human management. Even in this day of technology, we can't stop the raging sea. But God can.

And Peter doesn't say, Lord, this wind is really throwing me off. I remember once before you said, Peace be still. I wonder if we could do that again so I can finish this trip.

Instead, he takes his eyes off the Lord, looks at the wind, and immediately begins to sink. And the more you think about that, the more powerful the application becomes. If we are looking at the wind, it should immediately put us in prayer.

Not looking at the wind and thinking, Wow, this is scary. Because he wasn't sinking until he looked at the wind. He didn't start to sink and then say, Lord save, I'm perishing.

Plus, Peter is one of the best swimmers in the whole land of Israel. He's been swimming since his daddy threw him in the water off the fishing boat. And it isn't even the water, it's the wind.

The wind affrights him. And it's an invisible thing. Prince of the power of the air.

Rulers of the darkness of this age. He's in the darkness. He's in the sea.

He's got the wind all against him. The wind has been against him all night. And he didn't pray.

Didn't think of the other disciples. None of them thought to pray. Now he's walking on water.

God is giving him a manifest demonstration that he is safe in the presence of Jesus. And he still doesn't pray. Now does he learn this lesson? Look at Acts 9. Look at the rest of the career of Peter after the resurrection of the Lord Jesus.

Great man of prayer. But he's still learning here. And this is something we need to learn.

So, immediately Jesus stretched out his hand and caught him and said to him, O you of little faith, why did you doubt? Doubt is the problem. Doubt compounds the problem. He was in a boat that wasn't making headway.

That's a problem. But it's not life-threatening. He wants to step out in faith when he sees the Lord Jesus.

And he does so. And he's doing an amazing thing. But then doubt sets in.

And he's worse off than before he called out and said, Lord, if it's you, let me come to you. He's worse off. And you think, well, why should he be worse off when he's doing this extraordinary thing? None of the other disciples were willing to step out in faith and walk on the water.

He is water-walking. But his faith lacks a particular quality. And what is it? Endurance.

Patience. Stick with it. God has put you in a unique situation.

Nobody outside of the Lord Jesus Christ, Elijah the prophet, had to part the water. Elisha the prophet had to part the water. Moses had to part the water.

Joshua had to part the water. Or God did so at their behest. Peter is walking on the water.

Something nobody but the Lord Jesus Christ has ever done. Axe head floats in the Old Testament. Apostle floats in the New Testament.

Big, miraculous demonstration of God's power in the presence of the Lord Jesus Christ. Communion with Jesus. Entering into the rarefied place where only Jesus has gone.

And the thing that kills it is doubt. Had enough faith to walk on water until doubt slew it. And he immediately begins to sink.

But the Lord Jesus is there and he finally makes an appeal. Short prayer, as many of these extremist prayers are. Lord, save me.

Lord, deliver me. This is not the moment of Peter's salvation, by the way. Save, as we have so often seen, means deliver.

Immediately, Jesus stretched out his hand. All Jesus is waiting for is the request. And look how close he was.

Look how close Peter was. He's almost there. Two more steps.

Jesus can reach out his hand immediately and pull him up. There's not like a furlong left to go. He's not like 20 yards away.

He's within reach when his faith fails. What is Jesus going to pray for Peter specifically later on? Satan has asked for you that he may sift you like wheat. But I have prayed for you that he doesn't catch you.

I have prayed for you that you avoid him. What is the prayer? I've prayed for you that your faith won't fail. You've got the faith, but you can't let your faith fail.

You've got to stick. You've got to endure. You've got to have patience.

Let patience have its perfect work in you so that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing. Get all the way to the Lord Jesus and stand there and walk back with him to the boat. When they got into the boat, the wind ceased.

Then those who were in the boat came and worshipped him, saying, Truly you are the Son of God. When you look at the parallel in John chapter 6, He said to them, At his eye do not be afraid. They willingly received him into the boat, and immediately the boat was at the land where they were going.

Only John records this detail. Not only does the wind cease, but the boat is there. They were in the midst of the sea when he came.

Peter is afraid. This is not like shallow water where Peter says, Oh, I sunk to my waist. They were in the midst.

But as soon as Jesus gets into the boat, the wind ceases. And they look and they say, Look, it's the dock. We're there.

They're at the goal. Why? They willingly received him into the boat. Well, here's my next quiz question.

Good answers on are there cases where Jesus seemed to be going somewhere and people had to stop him. Conceptually now, this isn't physical travel like the road to Emmaus, and he would have gone on, but they constrained him. But conceptually now, can you think of a case where Jesus clearly seems to have one intention, but someone makes an appeal and he grants their request? Turn one chapter forward in Mark from Mark 6 to Mark 7, verse 24.

He's been in the region of Gennesaret all through chapter 7. We saw how he gets there. From there he arose and went to the region of Tyre and Sidon. Why is he going to the region of Tyre and Sidon? Well, you could ask yourself, Why is he going past Emmaus? Who do we know in Tyre and Sidon? Well, he entered a house and wanted no one to know it, but he could not be hidden.

He didn't want anybody to know that he was going there. Why did he go there and they didn't want anybody to know it? Well, he's got a purpose in his own mind, and it doesn't involve anybody knowing that he's there. For a woman whose young daughter had an unclean spirit heard about him, and she came and fell at his feet.

The woman was a Greek, a Syrophoenician by birth, and she kept asking him to cast the demon out of her daughter. But Jesus said to her, Let the children be filled first. It is not good to take the children's bread and throw it to the little dogs.

She answered and said to him, Yes, Lord, yet even the little dogs under the table eat from the children's crumbs. He said to her, For this saying, Go your way, the demon has gone out of your daughter. And when she had come to her house, she found the demon gone out and her daughter lying on the bed.

Then Jesus departs from Tyre and Sidon. It's the only episode that seems to have taken place there. His intention, I am sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.

When you look at the parallel over in Matthew chapter 15, which also immediately follows this. His disciples came, Send her away, she cries out after us. He answered and said, I was not sent except to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.

I'm going to the lost sheep. Here's somebody appealing that I divert out of my way of ministering to Israel. And because of her persistence, because of her appeal, she's figured out something the disciples are still in the process of learning.

And he says, For this saying, You have found a justification consistent with the plan and

purpose of God. Great is your faith. Let it be to you as you desire.

Gentiles are figuring this out before the disciples do. Well, we want to figure this out as well. That when we know we are moving in the direction of God's plan and purpose, we are doing our best to fulfill God's commands, God's will for us.

And resistance sets in. It is time to pray. It is time to make the case to God.

Yes, Lord, I can see where there's resistance in this course. But is it not true that? And we make an appeal. Moses did this and saved the whole nation of Israel.

I am going to destroy them. Stand aside, Moses. Moses says, Lord, let me divert you from your purpose and make an appeal based on truth.

And God says, Because of this appeal, I will relent. Jesus says, Because you are asking, I will stop and explain. But God is going to accomplish His purpose.

And our real opportunity is to be a part of it, to be there. Jesus was going to get to the destination. He figures, Well, the disciples will get here eventually.

If they finally figure out how to pray, they can get there. Once they receive Jesus into the boat, they are there. Nine hours of rowing to no avail.

Ask Jesus into the boat, you're there. Can they not make this connection? And the question is, Can we not make this connection? Let's be smart. We know we're in the will of God.

We're moving in the right direction. If there is resistance, if there is difficulty, let's ask. Let's make an appeal.

Let's not have a hardened heart. Let's not forget about the loaves. It is not the will of God that we fall short.

It isn't the will of God that we do everything in our own toil and labor. But it is the will of God that we learn to not only express faith, but to maintain our faith in patience and endurance. This is how we lay hold of inheritance.

This is how we have an entrance supplied into the kingdom. How many times have we seen it? What does the Lord require of you, O man? Walk with God. If Jesus is going somewhere, we want to be getting there by divine.

He got there by divine enablement. He's the example. He lived His life in the flesh as an example to us.

He's the test driver for the filling of the Holy Spirit. He shows us how it's done. It's the Spirit and the Word.

That's the power of God coming into our lives. And if we can't see our way clear, if there is difficulty, ask, and it shall be given. Seek, and you will find.

Don't row for nine hours against a headwind. Jesus so painstakingly impresses these things on the disciples, and the Word of God painstakingly impresses it on us. Well, it's again, as we just saw, just touching the hem of the garment of some of these things.

There is so much here that we can profit from. But isn't it interesting to see how details link these things together? You have bread. You have upper rooms.

You have prayer. You have being alone with the Lord Jesus. Jesus is alone with His Father.

Peter ends up being alone with the Lord out on the water. It all partakes of faith, relationship with God in its power, in its fellowship, in its understanding of what the purpose and the goal is. Well, we'll pick up our study of the miracles of the Lord Jesus Christ next week, but we'll close here in a word of prayer.

Father, thank You for the truth of Your Word. Thank You for the wonderful and creative ways that You have formulated and expressed these truths so that God the Holy Spirit can teach them to us and can impress them on our hearts and can make them flame and live in our thinking as we endeavor to apply them, to live in their light, to be enabled and empowered by their strength. We pray that God the Holy Spirit will find us ready pupils, that He will bring these things to our minds at the point of application when it is time for us to choose and to decide and to find the ways to fulfill our responsibilities and to exploit our opportunities in this life, that these things will be present, that they will inspire us and guide us so that we can continue to walk a straight path headed directly for the gate that leads to life, to future enablement and future opportunity and function and reflecting of Your glory at the time when the Lord Jesus returns and forever after.

We pray these things in Jesus' name. Amen.