

5th sign John 6:15-21 - Jesus walks on the water

Signs

Semeion say-mi'-on from Semaino see-mah'-ee -no - to signify a legal term used in evidence or a scientific term used in a proof.

5th sign John 6:15-21 - Jesus walks on the water

14After the people saw the miraculous sign that Jesus did, they began to say, "Surely this is the Prophet who is to come into the world." **15**Jesus, knowing that they intended to come and make him king by force, withdrew again to a mountain by himself.

Jesus Walks on the Water

16When evening came, his disciples went down to the lake, **17**where they got into a boat and set off across the lake for Capernaum. By now it was dark, and Jesus had not yet joined them. **18**A strong wind was blowing and the waters grew rough. **19**When they had rowed three or three and a half miles,^[b] they saw Jesus approaching the boat, walking on the water; and they were terrified. **20**But he said to them, "It is I; don't be afraid." **21**Then they were willing to take him into the boat, and immediately the boat reached the shore where they were heading.

22The next day the crowd that had stayed on the opposite shore of the lake realized that only one boat had been there, and that Jesus had not entered it with his disciples, but that they had gone away alone. **23**Then some boats from Tiberias landed near the place where the people had eaten the bread after the Lord had given thanks. **24**Once the crowd realized that neither Jesus nor his disciples were there, they got into the boats and went to Capernaum in search of Jesus.

Jesus the Bread of Life

25When they found him on the other side of the lake, they asked him, "Rabbi, when did you get here?"

26Jesus answered, "I tell you the truth, you are looking for me, not because you saw miraculous signs but because you ate the loaves and had your fill. **27**Do not work for food that spoils, but for food that endures to eternal life, which the Son of Man will give you. On him God the Father has placed his seal of approval."

28Then they asked him, "What must we do to do the works God requires?"

29Jesus answered, "The work of God is this: to believe in the one he has sent."

30So they asked him, "What miraculous sign then will you give that we may see it and believe you? What will you do? **31**Our forefathers ate the manna in the desert; as it is written: 'He gave them bread from heaven to eat.'^[c]"

32Jesus said to them, "I tell you the truth, it is not Moses who has given you the bread from heaven, but it is my Father who gives you the true bread from heaven. **33**For the bread of God is he who comes down from heaven and gives life to the world."

34"Sir," they said, "from now on give us this bread."

35Then Jesus declared, "I am the bread of life. He who comes to me will never go hungry, and he who believes in me will never be thirsty. **36**But as I told you, you have seen me and still you do not believe. **37**All that the Father gives me will come to me, and whoever comes to me I will never drive

away. ³⁸For I have come down from heaven not to do my will but to do the will of him who sent me. ³⁹And this is the will of him who sent me, that I shall lose none of all that he has given me, but raise them up at the last day. ⁴⁰For my Father's will is that everyone who looks to the Son and believes in him shall have eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day."

The recounting of Jesus Walking on the water is recorded three times in the NT. It immediately follows the feeding of the 5000 in each Gospel.

The places where it is recorded include: Matthew 14: 13-33, Mark 6: 30-52, John 6: 15 -21

Matthew, Chapter 14

²²Immediately Jesus made the disciples get into the boat and go on ahead of him to the other side, while he dismissed the crowd. ²³After he had dismissed them, he went up on a mountainside by himself to pray. When evening came, he was there alone, ²⁴but the boat was already a considerable distance from land, buffeted by the waves because the wind was against it.

²⁵During the fourth watch of the night Jesus went out to them, walking on the lake. ²⁶When the disciples saw him walking on the lake, they were terrified. "It's a ghost," they said, and cried out in fear.

²⁷But Jesus immediately said to them: "Take courage! It is I. Don't be afraid."

²⁸"Lord, if it's you," Peter replied, "tell me to come to you on the water." ²⁹"Come," he said.

³⁰Then 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!"

³¹Immediately Jesus reached out his hand and caught him.

"You of little faith," he said, "why did you doubt?"

³²And when they climbed into the boat, the wind died down.

³³Then those who were in the boat worshiped him, saying, "Truly you are the Son of God."

Mark, Chapter 6

⁴⁵Immediately Jesus made his disciples get into the boat and go on ahead of him to Bethsaida, while he dismissed the crowd. ⁴⁶After leaving them, he went up on a mountainside to pray.

⁴⁷When evening came, the boat was in the middle of the lake, and he was alone on land. ⁴⁸He saw the disciples straining at the oars, because the wind was against them. About the fourth watch of the night he went out to them, walking on the lake. He was about to pass by them, ⁴⁹but when they saw him walking on the lake, they thought he was a ghost. They cried out, ⁵⁰because they all saw him and were terrified.

⁵¹Immediately he spoke to them and said, "Take courage! It is I. Don't be afraid." Then he climbed into the boat with them, and the wind died down. They were completely amazed, ⁵²for they had not understood about the loaves; their hearts were hardened.

John, Chapter 6

¹⁴After the people saw the miraculous sign that Jesus did, they began to say, "Surely this is the Prophet who is to come into the world."

¹⁵Jesus, knowing that they intended to come and make him king by force,

withdrew again to a mountain by himself.

¹⁶When evening came, his disciples went down to the lake, ¹⁷where they got into a boat and set off across the lake for Capernaum. By now it was dark, and Jesus had not yet joined them. ¹⁸A strong wind was blowing and the waters grew rough. ¹⁹When they had rowed three or three and a half miles, they saw Jesus approaching the boat, walking on the water; and they were terrified. ²⁰But he said to them, "It is I; don't be afraid." ²¹Then they were willing to take him into the boat, and immediately the boat reached the shore where they were heading.

A Story about Jesus Walking on the Water:

There is a story that pertains to these three accounts that I would like to share. It comes from a close friend. Dr. Mark Tew, ThD. Mark is the Provost at Howard Payne University. When my story concerning Mark took place, he was on the staff and faculty of Judson College and my Sunday School Teacher at Siloam Church in Marion, AL.

I do not want to exaggerate, so let me be very conservative and say, **"Mark is the best Sunday School teacher I have ever encountered"**.

Mark received his ThD from New Orleans Theological Seminary and was a student of Dr. R.E. Glaze Jr. while in school there.

Dr. R. E. Glaze, Jr, ThD, was Professor Emeritus of New Testament, Greek and Hermeneutics at New Orleans Theological Seminary for many years. Eventually he retired and moved to Cullman, Alabama.

Most of us understand that seminary students take many Bible courses and that a lot of work is invested in obtaining a seminary degree. However, the seminary course titled "Hermeneutics" is probably not familiar to most of us. The Curriculum guide at New Orleans Seminary identifies Hermeneutics as:

"Biblical Exposition, enabling the student to develop a sound method for biblical interpretation."

In Hermeneutics, the student learns how to study and find the meaning(s) (interpretation) in scripture.

Mark says there is a story of personal testimony Dr. Glaze told each year to his students at New Orleans. It concerns a seminary student in his Hermeneutics class and an event that relates to the miracle of Jesus walking on the water.

All of us know gifted pastors who have been seminary trained and pastors who have equal skills and passion, but found their way into the ministry through a commitment to lay ministry.

Dr. Glaze's story involves a seminary student who had successfully led a small Baptist church in south Mississippi as their bi-vocational pastor for several years. This man, who had voiced no real desire to enter seminary, suddenly began re-arranging his life and work to allow time to attend New Orleans Theological Seminary on a two day per week schedule.

He would pastor his church and work from Sunday through Wednesday, and then attend classes in New Orleans on Thursday and Friday. Through this schedule, he hoped to complete his studies at Seminary and obtain a degree.

Dr. Glaze said the man was older than most of the men in seminary. He also said the man was, at best, only a marginal student. His grades were in the bottom half of his class and he always seemed to be nearly failing under the pressure of the heavy load of work, study and ministry. However, Dr. Glaze and the man's fellow classmates all knew him to be a man of great conviction and sincerity, very devoted to his studies and to his ministry.

The event in the life of this man that Dr. Glaze shared with his students each semester involved the course known as Hermeneutics.

The semester was at an end, with only the final exam left for the students to complete. The man who is the subject of Dr. Glaze's story had a sister who lived in Picayune, Mississippi. Because of the lengthy drive from his home to New Orleans, he had begun staying at her home overnight between the days he was devoting to attending class in New Orleans.

The morning of his final exam in Hermeneutics, the man was not feeling well. In fact he was very sick, although he probably had no real knowledge exactly how sick he actually was. As he prepared to leave for New Orleans that morning, his sister could see he was not well and questioned whether he should avoid the trip to New Orleans. However, he insisted on going, since the exam was so important.

The final examination was in essay format. Dr. Glaze had chosen the three accounts of Jesus walking on the water,

– from Matthew 14, Mark 6 and John 6 –

as the single essay question for the final exam.

Successful completion would require the student to apply the principles of Hermeneutics to each of the three accountings then complete a written comparison and contrast of the three accounts of Jesus and the disciples during the night when He walked on the sea of Galilee.

Dr. Glaze was in the habit of asking a graduate assistant to monitor his exams, and after handing out the quiz, he retired to his office.

Toward the end of the exam period that morning, the graduate assistant came rushing into Dr. Glaze's office. While taking the exam, the student had collapsed. An ambulance had been called. Dr. Glaze soon received word that his student had not survived transport to the hospital. He had died of a massive heart attack while taking the exam.

One morning, a few weeks later, Dr. Glaze learned that the wife of his student was on campus, wishing to see him. When she arrived at his office, she spoke to Glaze of how much her husband had admired the professor. After talking about her husband and his desire to complete seminary she pulled out a folder out of her purse, which had been given to her with her husband's effects. The folder contained her husband's final exam essay in Hermeneutics. The exam had been so important to her husband that he came to campus to complete it the morning he died, even though he was very ill. She asked if Dr. Glaze would grade it for her.

Dr. Glaze said he was at a loss. He was known to be a man of extremely high ethics and he knew the deceased man was a marginal student at best. He had no desire to be forced to put a mark on the exam in front of the widow. Still, he took the papers and began to read.

Glaze said the paper was near perfect in interpretation of the actions of Jesus and the lessons that could be gleaned from the accounts by Matthew and Mark.

(I will offer a very poor accounting of Matthew and Mark's version of the event.)

From Matthew, we see that Jesus will wait on us (Peter) and that He will reach out to help us, in spite of our poor faith. From Mark, we see that sometimes we are too busy, looking at and hardened by the past, to see the miracles going on in the present (The disciples still wanted to talk about the loaves and fish, even after the miracle of Jesus, walking on the water).

There is obviously much more than these two points in the accounts of Matthew and Mark, but what I have shared needs to be sufficient for this story.

Then Dr. Glaze came to the man's account from the Gospel of John.

As he read what the student had written, he began to notice a wavering in the penmanship. The letters were not as perfectly formed. The movements of the pen became deliberate and stiff. The spacing varied.

As he read, Dr. Glaze began to realize he was reading the last words of his student before he died. He continued reading to the last page and quickly read to the last line of the essay. His student's writing had grown large in size and erratic in shape. The words no longer fell within the blue lines on the page. The last statement slanted and trailed off the edge of the page. Dr. Glaze realized these were the last words the man wrote as he died.

What were his last words?

“Jesus has never promised to stop the storms in life, only to see us through to the other side....”

Dr. Glaze says he wrote the letter “A” at the top of the first page and folded the papers. He said there was only one thing he could say that seemed appropriate as he handed the examination back to the widow, “His interpretation was perfect.”

I could write much more about the sign of Jesus walking on the water, but this seems perfect.