

Gospel of Matthew Chapter 14 -- John Karmelich

1. I have nicknamed Chapter 14 “The story of two kings”.
 - a) The first third of the chapter talks about “King” Herod.
 - b) The second two-thirds of the chapter talks about King Jesus.
 - c) Herod wanted the title “king” from the Roman government but never got it.
 - d) Jesus is a true king, but with a few exceptions, nobody was willing to give him that title.
 - e) The Herod of this chapter went down in history as one of the most immoral and despicable people who ever lived. History records he died by committing suicide.
 - f) The Jesus of this chapter is another example of how a true king is to live, and gives examples of how we are to follow that king.
 - i) Remember that the bible says God has made us “kings and priests” to the Lord our God. (See 1st Peter 2:9, Revelation 1:6).
 - ii) Therefore, studying how a “king” should act is an important issue to a Christian.
2. There are 36 verses in Chapter 14. The first 12 tell the story of why Herod killed John the Baptist.
 - a) A question I asked is why did Matthew spend so much time on this story?
 - b) The purpose of Matthew’s gospel is to show Jesus as the promised Messiah to Israel.
 - c) Yet in the first 12 verses, it is a detailed story behind why Herod had John killed.
 - d) Why did Matthew spend so much “space” telling this story?
 - i) My answer is my premise. This is the story of two “kings”.
 - ii) I believe Matthew wanted to show the contrast of Herod to Jesus.
 - iii) There are other reasons as well.
 - a) Maybe Matthew was angry at the injustice of how Herod treated John.
 - b) Maybe Matthew just wanted to tell the story of how John the Baptist died.
 - c) The story of the death of John the Baptist leads to Jesus going into seclusion. Maybe it was “all one big intro”.
 - (1) I’m not sure I accept this last premise, because Matthew could have just said, “After Herod killed John, Jesus went to be by himself.”
 - (2) Matthew didn’t summarize John’s death that succinctly.
 - (3) Instead Matthew spends a lot of time telling about why John the Baptist was killed. “Why” Matthew did that is a mystery, because Matthew didn’t explain why he spent so much space describing Herod killing John.
 - e) For whatever reason Matthew gave these details is not known.
 - i) My job is simply to talk about what the text means and how it applies to our lives.
 - ii) With that said, let’s go to verse 1.
3. Verse 1: At that time Herod the tetrarch heard the reports about Jesus, ² and he said to his attendants, "This is John the Baptist; he has risen from the dead! That is why miraculous powers are at work in him."
 - a) The first thing we have to do is to describe who this Herod is.
 - i) His father was “Herod the Great”. His father killed the babies at Bethlehem.
 - ii) This Herod was a governor over the Galilee region. That is what “tetrarch” means. Technically it means “A governor of a 4th part”. For example, Pontius Pilate was tetrarch over the area around Jerusalem.
 - b) The next thing to notice about Herod is that he is a “religious” man.
 - i) This is a man who was ruler over the Galilee territory, which was mostly Jewish.
 - a) Therefore, he knew about Judaism, but was himself an Edomite. (That was the group that descended from Esau.) He must have had some understanding of Jewish practices and customs.

- ii) I believe Herod is a “religious” man, as he believed in reincarnation.
 - a) In later verses we will read that Herod thought that John was a “righteous man”, but he had John the Baptist killed in order to keep an oath he made in rash at a party.
 - iii) I have met many people who use the word “religious” or “spiritual” to describe their belief in God. These are people who ignore or reject the Gospel message and then make up their own substitute religion and call it “religious” or “spiritual”.
 - a) Here was Herod believing John the Baptist was reincarnated:
 - (1) Did it cause Herod to change his lifestyle?
 - (2) Did it cause Herod to ask God for forgiveness?
 - b) Unfortunately, the answer is no. Many people will claim they believe in some sort of god, and most believe in some sort of afterlife. Unfortunately, these same people will not change their lifestyle. They are comfortable believing in a god that doesn’t require much of them. That is the type of attitude Herod has here.
 - c) The next thing to notice is that Herod believed Jesus was John the Baptist reincarnated.
 - i) Herod must have heard the reports about Jesus’ miracles.
 - ii) Herod must also have heard the reports that the Jewish people were looking for a Messiah. You can’t be a governor over a Jewish people and not understand that the Jewish people hoped in a ruling Messiah. Especially when the Jewish people were looking for someone to overthrow Rome.
 - iii) But Herod couldn’t accept Jesus as the promised Messiah either. Therefore, he looked for other explanations. He came up with “John the Baptist reincarnated”.
 - iv) I mention this is there are many misconceptions of who Jesus is.
 - a) When cult members come to my door and ask me do I believe in Jesus, my favorite response is, “Which Jesus?” Which Jesus do you believe in?
 - b) That makes them think. ☺ A typical response is, “I thought there was only one Jesus”. I say, “oh no. There are lots of Jesus’. The Jesus that Catholics and Protestants believe in is a different Jesus than what the Jehovah Witnesses believe about him and that is different from what the Mormon’s believe and that is different from what other cults teach.
 - c) My point here is that Herod refused to accept the truth about Jesus. He refused to go learn for himself the truth about Jesus. Instead he came to his own false-conclusions that didn’t require any lifestyle changes.
4. Verse 3: Now Herod had arrested John and bound him and put him in prison because of Herodias, his brother Philip's wife, ⁴ for John had been saying to him: "It is not lawful for you to have her." ⁵ Herod wanted to kill John, but he was afraid of the people, because they considered him a prophet.
- a) It’s time for a little more background on Herod:
 - i) Herod’s wife at that time was an arranged marriage from a neighboring kingdom
 - a) This is the Arabian king of the Nabateans.
 - b) Don’t worry; you don’t have to remember that! ☺
 - ii) Herod’s half-brother Phillip lived in Rome.
 - iii) Herod had an affair with Phillip’s wife and took her away with him to Israel.
 - a) Phillip’s wife was Herodias. She became Herod’s wife.
 - b) This woman, Herodias was also Herod’s niece.
 - c) Not only did he have an affair with his brother’s wife but also his niece!
 - iv) History records that Herod’s first wife went back to her father. There was a battle between Rome and the Arabian kingdom over this scandal. Rome had to bring in extra troupes in order to defeat the Arabs.

- v) Herod and Phillip's wife were eventually fired as governor and exiled to Gaul, which is modern day France.
 - vi) History records they eventually committed suicide together.
 - vii) Source for most of this is Josephus, a 1st Century Jewish (non-Christian) historian.
 - b) Notice how Herod handled the guilt of John the Baptist saying, "This isn't right."
 - i) Did Herod say, "Yeah, I know its wrong, now leave me alone"?
 - ii) Did Herod say, "Who are you to judge the king? Off with your head!"
 - iii) The point here is Herod was a man of fear.
 - a) He had John the Baptist arrested and put in jail so he wouldn't have to hear him preach about what was wrong.
 - b) Also, out of fear of a people's revolt, he didn't have John killed.
 - (1) The last part is common in politics. You don't want your enemy killed so he can be a martyr to your enemies' cause. It is better to lock them up so they can't preach any more.
 - iv) Herod in many ways represents people who are neutral on Christianity.
 - a) They just want Christians to "go away and don't make me feel guilty."
 - b) At the same time, they won't "kill Christ." They know Jesus was a righteous man, but they don't want to change their lifestyle.
 - c) These are the type of people who go to church every now and then just to alleviate their guilt. Just as Herod went to go listen to John the Baptist preach, but not do anything about it.
5. Verse 6: On Herod's birthday the daughter of Herodias danced for them and pleased Herod so much ⁷ that he promised with an oath to give her whatever she asked. ⁸ Prompted by her mother, she said, "Give me here on a platter the head of John the Baptist."
- a) The Greek term for "dance" implies a sexual, seductive dance.
 - b) Let's talk about Herod's new wife Herodias:
 - i) What kind of mother teaches her daughter how to dance sexually?
 - ii) What kind of mother teachers her daughter to dance sexually in order to sexually entice her husband?
 - a) This means that Herodias knew her husband has a weakness for beautiful women and was willing to use her own daughter to exploit that weakness.
 - iii) She wanted John the Baptist killed for proclaiming that their relationship was wrong (See Mark 6:19).
 - iv) Her husband Herod was still the governor of this territory.
 - a) She knew Herod didn't want John killed as to avoid an uprising.
 - b) Therefore, she had to go after him at a weak point.
 - c) She had a birthday party for him, as to build his ego.
 - (1) She probably got him drunk.
 - (2) Then she used her daughter to entice him sexually.
 - d) The application to you and I is to "watch out for our weakness"
 - (1) Satan knows our weakness and attacks us during those moments.
 - c) You get the impression Herod was a weak man.
 - i) Further, you get the impression Herodias was an evil, bold, cunning women in the worst sort of way. She is the "Jezebel" of the New Testament!
 - d) Earlier I described Herod as the type of person who wants to be "neutral" about Jesus.
 - i) Herod was content having John the Baptist in jail. Herodias wanted him dead.
 - ii) His wife Herodias represents the type of person who vigorously opposes Christianity. She is the type, (if she existed today) would have a web site attacking Christians and their beliefs. She wanted to live her lifestyle without any guilt and she wanted to kill anyone who said otherwise.

6. Verse 9: The king was distressed, but because of his oaths and his dinner guests, he ordered that her request be granted ¹⁰ and had John beheaded in the prison. ¹¹ His head was brought in on a platter and given to the girl, who carried it to her mother.
- a) Let's look at Mark's Gospel of the same story. Mark adds this comment:
 - i) So Herodias nursed a grudge against John and wanted to kill him. But she was not able to, because Herod feared John and protected him, knowing him to be a righteous and holy man. When Herod heard John, he was greatly puzzled; yet he liked to listen to him. (Mark 6:19-20, NIV)
 - ii) Herod had a strange fascination with John the Baptist.
 - a) He knew in his heart John the Baptist was right.
 - b) It probably calmed his guilt to go to listen to John speak.
 - c) Yet Herod was not strong enough to do anything about it.
 - d) He still had John killed out of fear of not keeping his oath.
 - e) "Like most weak men, Herod feared to be thought weak" (Plumptre).
 - iii) This follows many who hear the Gospel message.
 - a) They go to church once in a while in order to calm their guilt.
 - b) They "lock up" those who preach repentance. This way they only have to hear the message at their convenience, but don't have to do respond.
 - b) Let's talk about Herodias daughter:
 - i) From the historian Josephus, we know her name was Salome.
 - ii) What kind of daughter would dance sexually for her stepfather?
 - a) She agreed to this to whole plot in order to please her mother.
 - b) Think of what "proper brainwashing" can do to your own children!
 - (1) It does not make Salome any less guilty. She is not a "victim" of wanting to please her mother. She agreed out of her freewill.
 - iii) All of this is designed to show what happens when you turn your back on God.
 - iv) There is an interesting "curse" in the Book of Exodus that fits here:
 - a) "Yet he (God) does not leave the guilty unpunished; he punishes the children and their children for the sin of the fathers to the third and fourth generation." (Exodus 34:7b, NIV).
 - b) God does not punish children for the sins of their parents. (See Deut. 24:16) He is saying that children and grandchildren suffer the consequences of the sins of their parents and grandparents.
 - (1) This is a case we have here. Here is an ungodly mother and her daughter follows suit and acts just as wickedly.
 - c) I also wanted to consider these verses from John the Baptist's standpoint.
 - i) The last time we read about John was in Chapter 11.
 - ii) He was wondering where Jesus was the Messiah or not.
 - iii) John the Baptist was in jail and sent some of his followers to see Jesus.
 - iv) I suspect John wanted Jesus to "get the show on the road".
 - a) John may have wanted Jesus to overthrow Rome as to get him out of jail.
 - b) John was cooped up in jail and wanted out.
 - v) There are Christians out there who think, "We should never criticize other's behavior, we should just love one another."
 - a) Is that what John the Baptist did? No! He knew it was wrong for Herod to divorce his wife just to marry this women and he said so publicly!
 - b) For speaking God's truth, it cost John his life.

- vi) John's "earthly" reward for service to Jesus: He was beheaded.
 - a) For many martyrs of the faith, there is no earthly reward for service.
 - b) The bible does not guarantee "riches and prosperity" here on earth if you follow Jesus. Many have died simply for preaching the Gospel message.
 - c) On the positive side, Jesus complimented John as being greater than all the Old Testament prophets. His reward in heaven may be greater than anyone of that time era.
 - d) It wasn't until after John was beheaded that he was rewarded for his ministry.
 - e) "It cost him his head; but it is better to have a head like John the Baptist and lose it than to have an ordinary head and keep it." A.T. Robertson
- 7. Verse 12: John's disciples came and took his body and buried it. Then they went and told Jesus.
 - a) John's disciples took the headless body and gave John the Baptist a proper Jewish burial. Then they went to tell Jesus what happened.
 - b) There is a great little application here:
 - i) When you are hurting, or sorrowful, go and tell Jesus. Cast your cares upon Him.
 - c) Notice that Jesus didn't call for a revolution to overthrow Herod for this action.
 - i) The action was wrong. Jesus has "bigger fish to fry". The purpose of Jesus 1st coming is to pay the price for our sins. Jesus will judge Herod for his action, it is simply not the purpose and timing of Jesus 1st coming to earth.
- 8. Verse 13a: When Jesus heard what had happened, he withdrew by boat privately to a solitary place.
 - a) Just "why" did Jesus withdraw after this incident is a matter of debate. The text does not say why Jesus left after this incident.
 - i) Maybe Jesus was saddened by the news & needed alone time with God the Father.
 - ii) Maybe Jesus, who was working in Herod's territory, needed to get out of Herod's jurisdiction for safety. Jesus didn't want to be killed before his time.
 - iii) The point is we don't know the reason, just the actions that followed.
- 9. Verse 13b: Hearing of this, the crowds followed him on foot from the towns.
 - a) The Sea of Galilee is not a very large body of water.
 - i) At its widest point, it is only 8 miles wide.
 - b) The townsfolk who lived by the lake had seen Jesus' miracles and went looking for him.
 - i) They now heard of the death of John the Baptist.
 - ii) Now they looked for Jesus, as John the Baptist pointed to Jesus as the Messiah.
 - iii) Since the lake wasn't that wide, maybe some of them spotted Jesus in the lake.
 - iv) The crowds started walking/jogging around the lake to see where Jesus landed.
 - v) As they walked, others probably joined them.
- 10. Verse 14: When Jesus landed and saw a large crowd, he had compassion on them and healed their sick.
 - a) Remember that Jesus left the scene to be alone. He saw the crowd walking and running around the lake. He had compassion for them and healed the sick among them.
 - b) Notice what Jesus did not say to the crowd:
 - i) "Hey, can't a guy have some peace and quiet for five minutes? I'm grieving over John's death too you know, now buzz off". ☺
 - c) My point is that as a Christian, there are times, even when we need a break, where God calls us to serve others.

- d) The Greek verb for “compassion” implies that Jesus was moved down to his most inward being. His love for helping others outweighed his need for solitude.
 - i) I am the first to admit this is difficult. There are times when I am so dead tired I don’t feel like helping others. First of all, God does not give you anything you can’t handle. An all-knowing and all-loving God knows when you need a break as well as knows when an opportunity arises for you to help others.
 - ii) Also, sometimes, helping others is the best thing to get your mind off your problems. When I’m having a “pity-party” for myself, sometimes the best remedy is to do some sort of service for others. It can re-energize you when you are emotionally and physically worn out.
 - iii) Remember the expression “Where God leads, God provides”. That includes the strength for you to go on when you don’t feel the strength in yourself.
 - iv) The balance is “boundaries”. One should not help others out of a sense of self-guilt and martyrdom. Make sure it is God calling you to help others and not your own sense of guilt.
- 11. Verse 15: As evening approached, the disciples came to him and said, "This is a remote place, and it's already getting late. Send the crowds away, so they can go to the villages and buy themselves some food."
 - a) Besides healing the sick, Mark’s gospel tells us that Jesus “taught them many things” (See Mark 6:34). This means that Jesus’ taught the crowd, besides healing the sick and the great miracle of feeding everyone. (This is coming up in the story.)
 - b) Now it is late in the day. The disciples are concerned about the crowd’s welfare. They do the logical thing and ask Jesus to order the crowds away to the local villages to buy food.
- 12. Verse 16: Jesus replied, "They do not need to go away. You give them something to eat."
 - a) This one verse is teaching a very valuable lesson to us. The key word is “you” as in “You give them something to eat”.
 - b) Christian service can summed up in the idea that we, as servants of Christ draw upon Jesus for our strength and our daily instructions. Then we have the power, knowledge and wisdom (the application of knowledge) to go out and help others.
 - i) Here is Jesus teaching the same lesson.
 - ii) To paraphrase Jesus, “Hey guys, the whole idea behind Christian service is not to tell the people to go help themselves, but I want you to help them. They will know you are Christians by your love for one another. How much “love” does it take to tell people go buy their own food? You take care of them.”
- 13. Verse 17: "We have here only five loaves of bread and two fish," they answered.
 - a) The other gospel accounts give more details, but the basic idea is grasped here in Matthew. That idea is “Where God lead, God provides.”
 - i) In John’s account we learn that the food actually came from a boy (John 6:9).
 - a) I wondered if the boy voluntarily gave up the food. Imagine his jump in faith when he gave up his only meal and seeing everything multiplied!
 - b) Jesus just gave the command to feed the large crowd.
 - i) The disciples only had five loafs (more like “falafels”) and two fish.
 - ii) From the disciples standpoint it was not their problem how Jesus was going to feed this many with the five loaves and two fish!
 - iii) Our job is to be obedient to Jesus no matter what the request.
 - iv) Again, “where God leads, God provides”.
 - v) I believe that application is the main reason why this story of the “feeding of the 5,000” is included in all four gospels. It is an excellent model of obedience to service for God.

14. Verse 18: "Bring them here to me," he said. ¹⁹ And he directed the people to sit down on the grass. Taking the five loaves and the two fish and looking up to heaven, he gave thanks and broke the loaves. Then he gave them to the disciples, and the disciples gave them to the people.
- a) Here are some miscellaneous thoughts and background comments.
 - i) They all agreed to sit down in ranks. They all listened to the teaching all day.
 - ii) This event occurred shortly before the Jewish holiday of Passover (See John 6:4).
 - a) Therefore, the population of the local towns grew as many family members and guests were "home for the holidays".
 - iii) Here was this large multitude of people. Among these are many would reject Jesus at a later date.
 - a) Remember that the Jews wanted a ruling king, not one who would die for their sins. Jesus refusal to overthrow Rome caused his rejection.
 - b) They wanted either to see miracles, or see if this "was" the Messiah.
 - b) Again, notice the model for us to follow:
 - i) The bread itself (enough to feed 5,000) came from Jesus himself.
 - ii) He is the one who gives the blessings.
 - iii) We, as his servants, then take the bread and give it to others.
 - c) Getting a little mystical here, I want to discuss the grass. ☺
 - i) Matthew, Mark & John's account of this story all mention the people sitting on the grass. In fact, Mark's account said it was "green grass" (Mark 6:39).
 - ii) Why did they all mention such a trivial detail?
 - iii) My personal theory is to remind the reader of Psalm 23:
 - a) This is arguably the most well known Psalm in the bible. Notice this:
 - (1) The LORD is my shepherd, I shall not be in want.
He makes me lie down in green pastures,
he leads me beside quiet waters,
he restores my soul. (Psalm 23:1, NIV)
 - b) For those of you who like these kind of "mystical connections", here is Jesus commanding the crowd to recline on the green grass. In Psalm 23 the Lord "makes me lie down in green pastures".
 - c) For those who think I'm reading too much into Matthew that's ok too. ☺
 - d) There are lots of commentaries out there on this specific miracle.
 - i) You can find liberal commentaries who said, "Well, the people really had some food among them and they shared what they had".
 - a) That is nonsense!
 - b) These were people, hearing that Jesus was at a specific location, stopped what they were doing and jogged around the lake to see Him.
 - c) They didn't plan on being there all day.
 - d) Think how hungry you are when you haven't eaten all day!
 - e) Verse 20 says that everybody was "satisfied". The Greek word for satisfied implies "stuffed to the point you don't want to see any more food!"
15. Verse 20: They all ate and were satisfied, and the disciples picked up twelve basketfuls of broken pieces that were left over.
- a) One can see the application here for Christian service:
 - i) There were 12 basketfuls left, one for each disciple.
 - ii) The idea is to show, if you use your time, talent and God given abilities to serve others, there will be enough for yourself.

- b) You have to wonder if the disciples were tempted to each a few loaves while they were passing out the food. If I haven't eaten all day, it would tempt me. ☺
 - i) I suspect they didn't, as they were marveling at the miracle and waited later.
 - ii) Here was enough food for 5,000 men, plus women and children.
 - a) Most commentators estimate the total crowd at 10,000 to 15,000.
 - iii) It is interesting that there was just enough food to make everyone stuffed and "only" enough leftovers for exactly one basket per disciple!
 - a) It wasn't enough food to cover everybody's needs for the rest of their lives, just enough to cover the moment for each of them.
 - b) That is how God works in our lives. "Give us this day our daily bread."
 - (1) You can't ask for a lifetime at once.
 - (2) God wants us to walk by faith and trust him daily.
 - c) Many of the commentators pick up on the idea that "nothing was wasted".
 - i) They go on to talk about not wasting talent or service in the ministry.
 - d) Getting back to the "mystical" application, some commentators take this a step further.
 - i) Jesus describes himself as the "bread of life" (John 6:35 and John 6:48).
 - ii) Here is Jesus providing miraculous bread for everyone and "12" loaves.
 - iii) Some tie this to the 12 tribes of Israel and Jesus looking out for them.
 - iv) In Chapter 15, we will read of a similar miracle where Jesus feeds 4,000 people including women and children. In that case "7" baskets are filled.
 - v) These same commentators believe the second miracle ties to Gentile believers while the "5,000" ties to Jewish believers.
 - vi) This particular interpretation is controversial and not all commentators take that position. We'll discuss this further next week. I just want you to have this thought in your mind as a possibility.
16. Verse 21: The number of those who ate was about five thousand men, besides women and children.
- a) In Mark's Gospel we learn that Jesus commanded the group to sit in groups of fifties and one hundred's (Mark 6:40).
 - i) In this culture, the men always sat and ate separately from the women & children.
 - ii) That is how all the disciples knew that 5,000 were fed. They just counted groups!
17. Verse 22: Immediately Jesus made the disciples get into the boat and go on ahead of him to the other side, while he dismissed the crowd.
- a) The reason Jesus ordered the disciples to immediately get in the boat is explained in John's account of the same story:
 - i) "After the people saw the miraculous sign (feeding of the 5,000) that Jesus did, they began to say, "Surely this is the Prophet who is to come into the world." Jesus, knowing that they intended to come and make him king by force, withdrew again to a mountain by himself. (John 6:14-15).
 - ii) Remember at this time, the disciples didn't "get it" as far as Jesus having to die and rise again on the third day.
 - iii) They were still looking for Jesus to be the ruling Messiah over Rome.
 - iv) Therefore, if the crowd wanted to make Jesus king, the disciples may have wanted to encourage the idea. Therefore, Jesus ordered the disciples to get on the boat probably to avoid this confrontation.
 - v) Remember when Jesus was tempted by Satan back in Chapter 4, one of the temptations was for Jesus to declare himself as Messiah. This is a similar temptation here with this large crowd.

- b) Notice the crowd obeyed Jesus. The crowd included believers and non-believers. It shows Jesus power over all of nature, including non-believers.
 - i) Let's face it, they could have rioted, or put Jesus on their shoulders and carried him to Jerusalem. The fact that Jesus "dismissed the crowd" shows his authority.
- 18. Verse 23: After he had dismissed them, he went up on a mountainside by himself to pray. When evening came, he was there alone,
 - a) Remember that when Jesus heard the news of John the Baptist being beheaded, he went off on a boat for the purpose of being by himself.
 - b) Here is the second time we read of Jesus' desire to be alone to pray to God.
 - c) We don't know the reason Jesus desired to be alone to pray with God, just that He did.
 - i) Prayer is a time to ask for and regain your spiritual strength.
 - ii) It is drawing upon God as a resource as to serve others.
 - iii) The one thing we do know about this prayer time is that the next thing we read of Jesus is that he is walking on water.
 - a) Did Jesus get those instructions during that time?
 - b) It is interesting speculation, as we don't know.
- 19. Verse 24: but the boat was already a considerable distance from land, buffeted by the waves because the wind was against it.
 - a) The Sea of Galilee is a relatively small body of water to be called a "Sea".
 - i) The geographical location of the Sea of Galilee has warm desert winds mixing with coastal cooler winds to causing violent storms at times.
- 20. Verse 25: During the fourth watch of the night Jesus went out to them, walking on the lake.
 - a) The "fourth watch" is a Roman term that simply means between 3am and 6am.
 - b) Mark's Gospel adds this line. "He (Jesus) saw the disciples straining at the oars, because the wind was against them." (Mark 6:48a, NIV)
 - i) Notice the disciples were not calling out to Jesus for help.
 - ii) They were simply trying to get through the storm themselves.
 - iii) Jesus is always on "stand by" wanting to help us.
- 21. Verse 26: When the disciples saw him walking on the lake, they were terrified. "It's a ghost," they said, and cried out in fear. ²⁷ But Jesus immediately said to them: "Take courage! It is I. Don't be afraid."
 - a) I would admit, if I saw a person walking on the water toward me, in the middle of the night, I would be scared too!
 - b) These verses are great to remember in those difficult moments in our lives.
 - i) We all go through "rough sea" moments. We have to remember that no matter what the circumstance, Jesus is there wanting to help us.
 - ii) Here were the disciples, rowing for their lives in a bad storm.
 - iii) Here comes Jesus walking by, as if it were no big deal. ☺
 - a) If Jesus created all things, than it is no big deal for him to walk on water.
 - iv) I can almost hear Jesus saying, "Hey guys, having a tough time out here at sea?" ☺
 - c) You have to remember that at this point, the storm is still raging.
 - i) Yet, seeing the power of Jesus got the disciples minds off the storm and onto Jesus.
 - ii) Grant it, they had to deal with the fear of seeing Jesus in all of his power.
 - iii) These verses are a reminder that through the storms of life, Jesus is there.
 - a) Further, the storms don't "seem so bad", when we have Jesus in focus!
- 22. Verse 28: "Lord, if it's you," Peter replied, "tell me to come to you on the water."
 - a) Give Peter credit for asking Jesus for permission, as opposed to trying it himself.
 - b) When God gives you a command, he gives you the ability to perform that command.
 - c) It makes you wonder the power we could have as believers if we were just willing to ask Jesus!

23. Verse 29: "Come," he said. Then Peter got down out of the boat, walked on the water and came toward Jesus. ³⁰ But when he saw the wind, he was afraid and, beginning to sink, cried out, "Lord, save me!"
- a) "Imagine stepping off of a small boat into the water.
 - b) How many words can you get out of your mouth before you sink?
 - i) If it were not for Jesus intervention, Peter would have said, "Lord glub glub glub" instead of "Lord, save me". ☺
 - a) The point is Jesus was in control of the whole situation.
 - b) God has control over gravity!
 - c) Jesus gave Peter the power to walk on water.
 - d) When Peter started to see the waves and doubted, Jesus only allowed Peter to sink at a slow rate where Peter would have time to cry out "Lord save me".
My point is Jesus was in charge of the whole situation.
 - c) Notice Jesus is more than willing to help a man who cries out "Lord save me"
 - i) Jesus didn't say, "Well, you doubted, guess its time for you to drown". ☺
 - ii) Jesus didn't say, "Maybe I'll let you sink some more and think about it!" ☺
 - d) This story makes me stop and think of all the times in my life where I panic, I worry, I focus on my problems, and yet delay to call out to God, "Lord save me".
 - i) There isn't a situation in our lives that God is not extremely aware of our circumstances.
 - ii) We don't always get the answer as to why we go through those situations.
 - iii) We don't always get Jesus to pull us back in the boat immediately.
 - iv) The point to remember is that God is always in control.
 - a) God was in control of the speed at which Peter was sinking.
 - b) God is in control of how much pain we go through in our lives.
 - c) All God asks of us is that we cry out "Lord save me". And he does.
 - (1) He may not pull you back in the boat immediately, but Jesus always answers the cry of Lord save me and is there to comfort us through the worst of our trials.
24. Verse 31: Immediately Jesus reached out his hand and caught him. "You of little faith," he said, "why did you doubt?"
- a) A key phrase of this verse is "(Jesus) caught him."
 - i) Despite Peter's lack of faith, Jesus did not let Peter sink in the water.
 - b) Jesus made all things. (See Colossians 1:16).
 - i) Therefore, Jesus made the seas. He made the storm and he calmed the storm.
 - ii) That storm existed for their testing.
 - c) Remember the disciples, a few hours earlier, saw Jesus feed 5,000 people.
 - i) Now, a few hours later, they get this test.
 - d) There is often a pattern in Christian service where God tests us after moments of great triumph.
 - i) Here were the disciples, excited from the 5,000 men all cheering Jesus after feeding all of them. They probably had their heads in the clouds. Now, they get into a violent storm. Peter had to be rescued from sinking in the water.
 - ii) It is as if God is saying, "I don't want you to get too big of an ego. It's me working and I choose you as to work through you. Don't let it get to your head". ☺
 - iii) My point is I have seen God humble me right after great events in my life as to remind me that it is God working through me and it is not "me" in charge.

25. Verse 32: And when they climbed into the boat, the wind died down. ³³ Then those who were in the boat worshiped him, saying, "Truly you are the Son of God."
- a) Sometimes it takes a miracle to appreciate Jesus as God.
 - i) Many people received a miracle by Jesus and were grateful. Yet they only acknowledged Jesus as a miracle worker, not the Son of God.
 - b) Others might think, "OK, if only I could see Jesus "walk on water" then I would believe in Him.
 - i) The disciple Thomas thought the same thing after the resurrection. He wouldn't believe unless he saw the nail prints.
 - ii) Jesus response, "Because you have seen me, you have believed; blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed." (John 20:29b, NIV).
 - a) In that sense, we are greater than the disciples here in the boat.
 - b) They had first hand miracles and were asked to believe.
 - c) We have the written word and the witness of those around us.
 - d) God calls us "more blessed" as we believe by faith, and not by miracles.
26. Verse 34: When they had crossed over, they landed at Gennesaret. ³⁵ And when the men of that place recognized Jesus, they sent word to all the surrounding country. People brought all their sick to him ³⁶ and begged him to let the sick just touch the edge of his cloak, and all who touched him were healed.
- a) Gennesaret is a northwest plain off the shore of the Sea of Galilee.
 - b) You can almost hear the local crowd say, "Look, Jesus is here. Quick get the sick and crippled people out here. We're going to have some healing!"
 - c) It makes you wish we as Christians had the same attitude.
 - i) We don't look at the sick and lame and say, "Hey, Jesus is here, let's bring them to Jesus so he can heal them."
 - ii) We're too afraid of failure.
 - iii) We're afraid that their disease won't go away.
 - iv) If we bring 1,000 people to Jesus and one gets healed, was it worth the effort? If a few of those turn their life over to Jesus, was it worth the effort to bring those who God doesn't choose to heal at that moment?
 - v) Think of the business world. We are willing to advertise to thousands or millions of people in the hope that a small percentage will buy our product. Yet when it comes to telling others about Jesus, we "clam up" and won't take a chance. We (myself included) often need to pray for more boldness in our witness for Him.
 - d) Notice all who were brought to Jesus were healed.
 - i) The verse said that they "touched the edge of his cloak".
 - a) In Jewish thought, the edge of one's cloak is where one keeps his authority.
 - b) In a similar way, one knows a navy officer is a captain or an admiral as they wear their rank on their shoulder. Their shoulder of their garment indicates their rank. Jewish families often embroider some of their family tree on the hem of their garment. Touching the edge of his cloak was like touching his rank & authority.
27. Well, last week I ran long and I promised to lighten up this week, so I am.
- a) But before I do ☺, lets tie my intro to some closing thoughts:
 - b) This chapter contrasted two "kings": Herod and Jesus.
 - i) Herod was a man of fear. He wanted power and never got it.
 - ii) Jesus was a man of peace. He had power and knew how to use it to show others how much God the Father loves us.
 - iii) Herod wanted to be king. Despite the power given to him by Rome, He never got that title and never had the respect of the people.

- iv) Jesus wants us to recognize He is the king of our lives.
 - a) Many acknowledge Jesus as king, but few do much about that fact.
 - b) Jesus is more than willing to help those people grow and mature who do acknowledge Jesus as Lord (Peter sinking in the water).
 - c) Jesus is more than willing to heal the sick, feed the hungry of those who do seek after him.
- v) Herod violated people's rights to accomplish his own desires.
 - a) John the Baptist was killed because he dared to stand up to Herod and say what was right.
 - b) Yet, Jesus never violates our free will and desires we come to Him out of our own desire.
 - c) He didn't help Peter until Peter cried out for help.
- vi) John the Baptist wasn't "saved" to live another day.
 - a) His rewards were eternal, not here on this earth.
 - b) But Jesus choose to reach out his hand to Peter, so that Peter may live another day to serve Him.
 - c) "If we live, we live to the Lord; and if we die, we die to the Lord. So, whether we live or die, we belong to the Lord." (Romans 8:14 NIV)

28. Let's Pray: Heavenly Father, we thank you for answering the prayer for all of us when we first cried out "Lord save us". Out of that prayer, we live for eternity in gratitude for what you do for us. We don't know how long our live on this earth will last. All we do ask, is that you give us the strength, the boldness and to make ourselves available in service to you. Grant to us opportunities that we may serve you as you desire. For we ask this in Jesus name, Amen.