

A Stop by Quiet Waters

Jesus: Our Provider and Enabler.

Hi Friend,

Recently I was reading Matthew 14 and felt the Spirit of God impress 2 lessons on me. When our Lord Jesus tells us to do something beyond what we have at hand for doing it he will always provide everything we need in order to accomplish the task, and, when our Lord challenges us to do something humanly impossible he will always enable us to fulfill the challenge.

The first lesson comes from the feeding of the 5000. Jesus and the disciples were facing the problem of a large crowd of hungry people. The only solution the disciples could see was for Jesus to send the crowd away. But Jesus told them to solve the problem by feeding the people. They said they couldn't as they were woefully short of enough food. In response he asked them to bring him what they had, and he made it feed everybody, with plenty left over.

The lesson here is that if the Lord Jesus asks us to do something, and we bring to him what little we have to meet that task, he'll increase it to the point where we can do what he's asked. If he has asked you to pastor a congregation, whether large or small, then he will enable you to do it and people will be helped. Some will come to faith in Jesus Christ, others will be built up in their faith, still others will experience victory over long standing sin patterns which have enslaved them. He will help you with every challenge, problem, and difficulty which comes your way as you seek to do what he's asked you to do. Bring what little you have to Jesus, whether limited giftedness, abilities, resources, or whatever, and he'll make it more than adequate for the task before you. He will provide all you don't have that is needed for the work he has given you. It was his touch on the bread and fish which made it more than enough for the needs of the people the disciples were dealing with. He did not call you to pastor your congregation without also making provision for every need you will face when that need presents itself. Remember the lesson of the manna – there was always enough for the day at hand. How he provides and through whom he provides is up to him, but provide for you to complete the task he has given he will do!

The second lesson comes from Peter's experience of walking on the water. When he saw Jesus on the water he wanted to walk on the water all the way to Jesus. He had a deep desire to do what he saw the Lord doing. There is nothing wrong with that and much to commend it. Jesus responded to Peter by inviting him to come to him. Peter stepped out of the boat and actually began walking on water! But then he saw the fury of the wind and waves and, losing his nerve, began to sink. Jesus rescued him, but also chided him for his loss of faith before he finished what the Lord had called him to do. He would have fully succeeded if he had continued to dare to do it because Jesus had told him to.

You have asked the Lord to enable you to develop a ministry in the place where he has called you, and he has told you to go ahead and do it. You have begun and he has made it possible for you to succeed so far. Look carefully at where you have come from

and you will see there is now some distance between you and your boat. In essence you have been walking on water.

When we encounter potent forces of difficulty we must not lose faith, back off and do only what we think we can do. No! We must keep walking on the water for he will enable us to do it. It's our faith in him which frees us to do what is otherwise humanly impossible for us. If the only ministry we seek to do is what we think we are capable of doing then we are not doing what our Lord Jesus wants us to do, for he never, **yes, never**, calls us to do only what we in our own unaided strength can so.

In both passages in Matthew 14 Jesus asked the disciples to do something which was beyond their capacity. In the first incident he provided what they didn't have so they could do what he asked, feed 5000+ people. In the second case he enabled Peter to do what he told him he could do but which in himself Peter was unable to do. We can apply both these lessons to our lives and our ministries because we believe the Lord Jesus has asked us to do this work. Do you believe this about your ministry? If so then keep going for the Lord Jesus is both your provider and your enabler. Do not let difficulty and discouragement defeat you, the Lord Jesus never sets us up for failure.

Paul assures us of this in 2 Corinthians 3:5-6: *"Not that we are competent in ourselves to claim anything for ourselves, but our competence comes from God. He has made us competent as ministers of a new covenant- — not of the letter but of the Spirit; for the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life."* ^{NIV}

In Eph 1:18-19 he says: *"I pray also that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which he has called you, the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints, and his incomparably great power for us who believe."* ^{NIV}
(Underlining added)

Dick Germaine

PS. *If the Lord brought you encouragement here, please send this along to your fellow pastors, friends, and lay leaders for their encouragement. How to have your name added to the regular distribution list is explained below.*

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