

Matthew 14:28

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And Peter answered him and said, Lord, if it be thou, bid me come unto thee on the water.

Analysis

Lord, if it be thou, bid me come unto thee on the water (κύριε, εἰ σὺ εἰ, κέλευσόν με ἐλθεῖν πρὸς σὲ ἐπὶ τὰ ὕδατα, kyrie, ei su ei, keleuson me elthein pros se epi ta hydata)—Peter's request mingles faith with testing. The conditional 'if it be thou' suggests lingering doubt, yet the request itself demonstrates extraordinary boldness. The word keleuson (command, order) recognizes Christ's absolute authority over natural law.

Peter alone among the Twelve had the audacity to request this miracle. His impulsive faith, though imperfect, moved him to attempt what seemed impossible. This verse captures Peter's character—passionate, impetuous, willing to risk failure rather than miss opportunity. Jesus honors such faith-filled boldness, even when tinged with human weakness.

Historical Context

This event occurred during the 'fourth watch of the night' (Matthew 14:25), between 3-6 AM, after Jesus had spent the evening in solitary prayer following the feeding of the five thousand. The Sea of Galilee, approximately 13 miles long and 7 miles wide, was known for sudden violent storms. The disciples had rowed about 3-4 miles (John 6:19), fighting contrary winds for hours. Peter's request came after hours of exhausting labor.

Related Passages

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

1 John 4:8 — God is love

Study Questions

1. How does Peter's mixture of faith ('bid me come') and doubt ('if it be thou') mirror your own spiritual journey?
2. What drives you to step out in faith-filled risks, and when do you hesitate like Peter's conditional 'if'?
3. Why did Jesus honor Peter's imperfect, conditional faith rather than rebuke his presumption in requesting a miracle?

Interlinear Text

ἀποκριθεὶς	δὲ	αὐτῷ	ο	Πέτρος	εἶπεν,	Κύριε	εἰ	σὺ
answered	And	him	G3588	Peter	and said	Lord	if	thou
G611	G1161	G846		G4074	G2036	G2962	G1487	G4771
εἰ,	κέλευσόν	με	πρὸς	σὲ	ἐλθεῖν	ἐπὶ	τὰ	ὕδατα
it be	bid	me	unto	thee	come	on	G3588	the water
G1488	G2753	G3165	G4314	G4571	G2064	G1909		G5204

Additional Cross-References

John 6:68 (References Lord): Then Simon Peter answered him, Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life.

Romans 12:3 (Parallel theme): For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to

think; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith.

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