

January 31, 2021

The New Testament!
Matthew 14:22-33
The True Nature of Saving Faith!

All Scripture ESV English Standard Version unless noted!

Matthew 14:22-36 Immediately he made the disciples get into the boat and go before him to the other side, while he dismissed the crowds. 23 And after he had dismissed the crowds, he went up on the mountain by himself to pray. When evening came, he was there alone, 24 but the boat by this time was a long way from the land, beaten by the waves, for the wind was against them. 25 And in the fourth watch of the night he came to them, walking on the sea. 26 But when the disciples saw him walking on the sea, they were terrified, and said, "It is a ghost!" and they cried out in fear. 27 But immediately Jesus spoke to them, saying, "Take heart; it is I. Do not be afraid."

28 And Peter answered him, "Lord, if it is you, command me to come to you on the water." 29 He said, "Come." So Peter got out of the boat and walked on the water and came to Jesus. 30 But when he saw the wind, he was afraid, and beginning to sink he cried out, "Lord, save me." 31 Jesus immediately reached out his hand and took hold of him, saying to him, "O you of little faith, why did you doubt?" 32 And when they got into the boat, the wind ceased. 33 And those in the boat worshiped him, saying, "Truly you are the Son of God."

Introduction

In the loaves and fishes study we learned that chapters 14-17 have these themes:

As we saw 2 weeks ago He was teaching the disciples that they could do nothing on their own

John 15:5 I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing..

At the same time He was teaching them that He is totally sufficient for the doing of all things

In His allowing the disciples to serve the meal He was teaching them that they (we) are to take the gospel to the people

Two weeks ago we looked at why Jesus sent the disciples away and stayed behind

This was a critical juncture in Jesus' ministry

There was need for prayer

He was tempted and tried

He was being tempted to swerve from the course that would take Him to a cruel death on a rugged cross and the desertion of many of His followers

Last week we looked at the wavering or up and down faith of the best of believers

Jesus was tempted to leave His appointed course

Private prayer, corporate gathering, and Scripture are essential if we are to hold the course

Knowing that Jesus was tempted and knowing what we are capable of we must pray that God

would not ^{allow} ~~all~~ us to be tempted with great temptations

We must know Jesus as the Son of God and Savior and actually putting our faith, trust and confidence for our salvation in Him and His work, and our committing our lives now and in eternity to Him "is to be" in the boat with Him!

Then He will do much with our little but growing faith

Let's take a quick review of verses 28-33

28 And Peter answered him, "Lord, if it is you, command me to come to you on the water."

29 He said, "Come." So Peter got out of the boat and walked on the water and came to Jesus.

30 But when he saw the wind, he was afraid, and beginning to sink he cried out, "Lord, save me."

31 Jesus immediately reached out his hand and took hold of him, saying to him, "O you of little faith, why did you doubt?"

Peter is a pattern of the best believers

We must pray that God in His providence would not allow us to come under great temptations

Matthew 7:7-8 NIV Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. 8 For everyone who asks receives; the one who seeks finds; and to the one who knocks, the door will be opened.

No man knows how he will respond in great temptation

32 And when they got into the boat, the wind ceased.

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

Knowing Jesus as the Son of God and Savior and actually putting our faith, trust and confidence for our

salvation in Him and His work and our committing our lives now and in eternity to Him!

Romans 12:1-2 NIV Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship. 2 Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will.

Hebrews 12:1-2 Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, 2 looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God.

Here for the first time Jesus is called the Son of God Peter could walk on water when He was holding Jesus hand and so could we

The Nature of True Faith!

Giving our lives to Him and trusting Him with our lives for eternity!

True faith is not merely knowing and having knowledge of who Jesus is and what He has done True faith is not just believing He and His work can save us from our sins

True faith is daily giving our lives to Him now and trusting our lives now and in eternity to Him!

This morning I want to put a wrap on the section having to do with our faith before we move on to those that were "**brought to him all who were sick**"

I want to look at three Latin words that define three essential elements of faith!

Notitia (no tich ah), assensus (sen sus), and fiducia (fi dee cia)

Notitia (no tich ah), this has to do with the content of our faith, our understanding of the gospel, who Christ is and what He has done

Assensus (A sen sus), has to do with our agreement with the teaching of doctrine in regard to what Christ has done

Our believing of what the Bible says Jesus has done in providing all that we need to be saved

Combined, these two, notitia (no tich ah), assensus (sen sus) are necessary parts of our faith, but are not yet "saving" faith

True faith involves fiducia (fi dee cia), which is the actual trusting in Jesus as the Son of God and Savior. It is a knowing of Jesus as the Son of God and Savior and actually putting our faith, trust and confidence for our salvation in Him and His work and our committing our lives now and in eternity to Him!

Invitation

You know the basics of the gospel!

The bad news that we are sinners

The good news that God in Christ has provided for our salvation

You believe and feel as if you really know and understand the Scripture when it comes to the gospel!

But let me ask you; have you committed your life today and in eternity to Him?

Does your life look as if you belong to Christ?

Romans 10:9 *Because, if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.*

There are but these two things, which the gospel principally requires in order to our salvation

The one is, the confession of Christ with our mouths

That in spite of all persecution and danger, to own Him "**as our**" Lord

And as for our Jesus: to boldly declare, that we will be ruled by Him today and saved by Him, and by Him only for eternity

Romans 9:33 *As it is written, "Behold, I am laying in Zion a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offense; and whoever believes in him will not be put to shame."*

Not ashamed or confused by the world

The second is believe in our hearts who Jesus is, what He has done including being raised from the dead

This article of the resurrection of Christ, His ascension, being seated at the right hand of God, and intercession

This resurrection puts all the rest to rest

The death and passion of Christ had availed us nothing, unless he had risen again; for when He was raised He obtained a perfect victory over sin, death, and damnation, for all those that are His

This resurrection is the principal ground of our justification

Romans 4:25 *Who was delivered up for our trespasses and raised for our justification.*

January 29, 2021

Must Christians Submit to Evil Authorities? By H. Gordon Smith III

What is a Christian's responsibility to submit to governmental authority when laws and regulations are in conflict with a Christian's belief?

As a pastor, I am regularly confronted with this question, from parishioners and even in my own life as a citizen of the United States.

I was asked the question yet again on our most recent Inauguration Day, when President Joseph Biden was sworn into office. The question was couched in relation to the compliance called for in Romans 13:1-5:

Let everyone be subject to the governing authorities, for there is no authority except that which God has established. The authorities that exist have been established by God. Consequently, whoever rebels against the authority is rebelling against what God has instituted, and those who do so will bring judgment on themselves. For rulers hold no terror for those who do right, but for those who do wrong. Do you want to be free from fear of the one in authority? Then do what is right and you will be commended. For the one in authority is God's servant for your good. But if you do wrong, be afraid, for rulers do not bear the sword for no reason. They are God's servants, agents of wrath to bring punishment on the wrongdoer. Therefore, it is

necessary to submit to the authorities, not only because of possible punishment but also as a matter of conscience.

Drawing one's entire theology concerning our relationship with authority from five verses fails to consider the whole tenor of Scripture. Romans 13:1-5, for instance, cannot be isolated from Ephesians 6:11-12, or Revelation 13:4-5, not to mention several other passages. To do so would be to render irrelevant all those saints over the millennia who resisted evil at the hands of tyrants and unjust laws.

When Paul says that "Jesus is Lord," he refers to his loyalty to Jesus above Caesar ("the state"), who, by Roman law, required citizens to call Caesar "Lord." Paul was obviously governed by an "authority" greater than the nations and rulers of his day.

Nations and rulers are given limited authority by God. As long as these authorities continue to enact laws that defend and protect human dignity without diminishing the authority of God, the Christian is obligated and compelled to comply, "as if unto God."

But if a nation or ruler demands absolute obedience to laws that are contrary to God's authority, then a Christian has a responsibility to lovingly stand against these untruths.

A believer's use of violence is not condoned; rather, the believer is repeatedly exhorted to demonstrate a patient kind of love to his neighbor and even enemy,

coupled with dignity and respect. This is the point of Romans 13:1–5. Providing us a practical example, on many occasions, Paul utilized rhetoric rather than rebellion when compelled to plead his case to the various rulers of his day, whether Jewish or Roman. Like Jesus, Paul's opposition to the state manifested through clinging doggedly to the truth.

Continuing in the tradition of Jesus and Paul, Martin Luther King, Jr. opposed tyranny out of a motive of love and truth. He resisted government (the "authorities") that enforced unjust laws that were contrary to the dignity of what it means to be a human being made in God's image. He, and many others, lovingly contested and pleaded their case, speaking of the arc of the moral universe bending toward justice. They were compelled to do so out of love for both the victims of oppression and their oppressors.

To narrowly interpret Romans 13:1–5 through the lens of absolute and indiscriminate submission to "authorities" creates a problem for Christians. Such a rigid interpretation eliminates a Christian obligation to "resist evil" in the forms of laws and rulers that degrade the dignity of humans, all of whom are imago Dei — created in the image of God. It would also discredit the positive changes wrought by people who resisted tyranny, such as Dietrich Bonhoeffer and Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn.

As I study the many executive orders signed by President Biden in the last few days, two issues in particular concern me: a militant advancement of

transgenderism and abortion. Both are attacks on human dignity, misrepresenting even what it means to be human. Promoting transgender experience advocates for a distorted view of personhood that denies the very biological DNA given by God, bending reality into a lie. Abortion legitimizes the killing of a human being when he is deemed an inconvenience.

Advocating for transgenderism and abortion are therefore the opposite of loving one's neighbor, let alone loving one's family or even loving oneself. Christians, therefore, are compelled to stand up against such injustices, for "the arc of the moral universe is long," but it still "bends toward justice."

I plan to pray for President Biden. I plan to continue praying for our elected officials. I plan to strive to be a faithful citizen of our nation. I plan on submitting to "the rulers of our age" as if to God, but only as long as my absolute allegiance is not required of them above God.

And let me be clear: as long as laws exist that strip the dignity of any human being made in the image of God, I plan to contest such evil. I will attempt to do this in a loving manner, with an eye that sees the God-given potential in every human being, from the child in the womb to those affected by the decision to abort a child to those enslaved by a distorted vision of themselves that rebels against who God made them to be.

I will do this, whether or not I am harassed, ridiculed, disenfranchised, or de-platformed by the "rulers" and "authorities" of our age, whether by governmental, corporate, or social coercion.

Why? Because the moral universe still bends towards justice, and because Jesus is still Lord!

Rev. H. Gordon Smith III is a lead pastor in the Church of the Nazarene. He is a published writer and public speaker and has served as a professor and teacher of theology.

Focus on Family, sticking with science, upsets Twitter, Friday, January 29, 2021 | Steve Jordahl (OneNewsNow.com)

The "cancel culture" has come for Focus on the Family after the ministry, famous for blending biblical insights with family issues, stuck with science and biology, and got in trouble for it.

Focus on the Family's news service, The Daily Citizen, got in trouble with Twitter when one of its news stories described Rachel Levine (pictured at left), a Biden nominee, as a "man who believes he is a woman."

In particular, the sentence that upset Twitter reads, "Dr. Levine is a transgender woman, that is, a man who believes he is a woman."

Paul Batura, a vice president at Focus, tells One News Now the hammer came down hard when the point of the sentence, he says, was to identify what a "trans-woman" is for readers.

"So we simply said it's a man who believes that he's a woman," Batura says. "And they told us that was hate speech."

Twitter has not explained to Focus why the description is "hate speech" when it's true that a biological man, who dresses and lives as a woman, and feels like he is a woman, is in fact a "transgender woman."

The successes of the transgender movement, from athletics to Dr. Levine's nomination, have also

created a conundrum for LGBT advocates since the issues of biological reality and, worse, mental health won't go away.

According to the Human Rights Campaign, the lobbying group that lobbies for homosexual rights, a transgendered person is someone "whose sex assigned at birth is different from who they know they are on the inside."

"For many transgender people," HRC states elsewhere in its media guide on writing about transgenders, "their birth-assigned sex and their own sense of gender identity do not match."

Transgender people such as Dr. Levine following their "own sense" of who they are and how they feel on the "inside," which hint at mental issues, refer to one's own personal feelings just as The Daily Citizen describes.

Batura tells One News Now that the news service offered several alternative descriptions. asking Twitter if those would meet its approval, but never got a reply.

"We've come to a season here," he warns, "where telling the truth in America is now somehow becoming a revolutionary act. It feels like something straight out of 1984."

January 31, 2021, **Upcoming dates of importance for members!**

LADDIES PLEASE SIGN UP TODAY FOR THE CONFERENCE!

Every Wednesday night, Bible studies for all ages, 6:30 P.M. Lesson 28 this week!

February 10, 2nd Maranatha Rapture Bowl, February 10, 2021, 6:30 P.M! Come and see how well you know the book of Genesis through chapter 11!

February 13, Church wide clean-up day. 8-Noon! If you can't make that day we can assign some things that need done prior to the actual work day!

February 20, Women's Conference, 8:30 A.M. till 2ish P.M. Michelle Leslie will again be with us. The subject will be something to do with "women thinking wisely"! Breakfast 8:30, 2 morning sessions, lunch and question and answer session after lunch!

March 14-Conregational meeting

March 22-26-Spring Break

Nothing but the Blood

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Without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness — Hebrews 9:22 NIV

1. What can wash a - way my sin? Noth - ing but the blood of Je - sus;
2. For my par - don, this I see, Noth - ing but the blood of Je - sus;
3. Noth - ing can for sin a - tone, Noth - ing but the blood of Je - sus;
4. This is all my hope and peace, Noth - ing but the blood of Je - sus;

What can make me whole a - gain? Noth - ing but the blood of Je - sus.
For my cleans - ing, this my plea, Noth - ing but the blood of Je - sus.
Naught of good that I have done, Noth - ing but the blood of Je - sus.
This is all my righ - teous - ness, Noth - ing but the blood of Je - sus.

Oh! pre - cious is the flow That makes me white as snow;

No oth - er fount I know, Noth - ing but the blood of Je - sus.

WORDS: Robert Lowry, 1826-1899
MUSIC: Robert Lowry, 1826-1899

PLAINFIELD
Irregular