



August 9, 2026 | *Should Have Known Better* | Pastor Eddie Eddy

Matthew 14:22-33 New International Version Jesus Walks on the Water

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. ²³ After he had dismissed them, he went up on a mountainside by himself to pray. Later that night, he was there alone, ²⁴ and the boat was already a considerable distance from land, buffeted by the waves because the wind was against it.

²⁵ Shortly before dawn Jesus went out to them, walking on the lake. 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."

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

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!"

³¹ Immediately Jesus reached out his hand and caught him. "You of little faith," he said, "why did you doubt?"

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."

L: This is the word of God for the people of God.

P: Thanks be to God.

We Should Know Better

There are moments in life when you look back and just shake your head. Maybe it was something you said. Maybe it was a decision you made. Maybe it happened in a split second before your brain had time to catch up with your emotions. Then afterward you sit there thinking, *What was I thinking? I should have known better.*

I've got one of those moments that still comes back to me every now and then.

My younger brother John and I were pretty much pitted against each other our whole lives. I was two years older than him. John was my dad's favorite, and my mom knew exactly how to use that to keep conflict and chaos alive in our family. It seemed like there was always some kind of competition between us. Looking back now, I understand a lot more than I did back then, but at the time we were just two brothers who knew how to push each other's buttons.

One day I was leaving to go somewhere. Honestly, I don't even remember where. Maybe I was headed to work. Maybe I was going to a friend's house. That part isn't important. What I do remember is pulling out of our street just as John was walking home. I stopped beside him, probably to say something smart because that's just what brothers do. Instead of walking away, John jumped up onto the hood of my car. His hands were planted on the hood, and his feet were hanging off the side.

Being the kind, patient, loving older brother that I was...I very politely asked him to get off. He didn't. So I asked again. He still didn't. After a couple more peaceful requests that ended with the same stubborn response, I finally decided I'd had enough...and I hit the gas.

Our street wasn't very long, but I got that car moving pretty good. I probably reached about thirty-five miles an hour before I slammed on the brakes and launched my brother down the road.

In that instant my heart stopped.

I honestly thought I had just killed my brother.

By the grace of God, he got up. Somehow he wasn't seriously hurt. Physically, he walked away. But I didn't.

Inside, I was crushed.

You see, I had been hit by a car before. I knew exactly what that felt like. I knew how dangerous that was. I knew better.

I remember thinking, *What in the world was I thinking?*

I should have known better.

SHORT PAUSE

Have you ever had one of those moments? Maybe it wasn't with a speeding car and a stubborn little brother, but you've said something in anger that you wish you could take back. Maybe you made a decision in the heat of the moment. Maybe you let your pride get in the way. Maybe fear took over. Then later, after everything settled down, you looked back and thought, *I should have known better.*

I think every one of us has experienced that. And I think that's exactly why this story of Peter speaks to us so powerfully.

SHORT PAUSE

The context of this story is important. Jesus has just learned that His cousin, John the Baptist, has been executed. All he wanted was to be alone. He wanted some time to grieve. He wanted to pray.

But the crowds followed Him anyway. And instead of sending them away, Jesus worked through his grief and he healed the sick. Then He fed more than five thousand people with five loaves and two fish. By the end of the day everyone...including Jesus was exhausted. So, to find a moments peace...Jesus sent the disciples across the lake while He finally went up the mountain to pray.

The disciples had already seen enough to know who Jesus was. They had watched Him heal diseases. They had seen demons cast out. They had watched Him perform miracle after miracle. They had seen Him provide when there was no food. They had watched Him do what no one else could do. If anyone had reason to trust Him, it was these men.

But sometime during the night the storm came.

The Sea of Galilee is known for that. The surrounding hills create conditions where violent storms can appear almost without warning. The wind began to howl. The waves crashed against the boat. The disciples were exhausted, soaked, and terrified.

Isn't that exactly how fear works?

Fear has a way of making us forget what we already know.

We know God has been faithful before. We know He's carried us through impossible situations. We know He's never abandoned us. We know He's kept His promises. But then a storm shows up, and suddenly all those certainties begin to disappear behind the wind and the waves.

The disciples were so overwhelmed by fear that when Jesus came walking across the water, they didn't even recognize Him. They thought He was a ghost.

You see...fear distorts reality.

It makes our problems look bigger than God. It makes tomorrow seem hopeless. It convinces us we're all alone when Jesus is standing right in front of us.

And in the midst of that storm...Peter does what Peter always seems to do. He speaks first.

"Lord," he says, "if it's really You, tell me to come."

Jesus answers with one simple word.

"Come."

Can you imagine that moment? Peter climbs over the side of the boat. One foot...then the other...and somehow...he's actually walking on water. As long as his eyes remain fixed on Jesus, he's doing what should have been impossible.

Yet in that moment...his human nature takes over...he notices the wind. He feels the spray hitting his face. He hears the waves crashing around him. He starts thinking about everything that could go wrong. The moment his focus shifts from Jesus to the storm, he begins to sink.

Peter didn't forget who Jesus was.

He forgot what he already knew about Jesus.

He had already seen Jesus heal the sick.

He had already watched Him feed thousands.

He had already witnessed miracle after miracle.

He already knew Jesus was trustworthy.

For just a moment...the storm became bigger than the Savior.

Before we're too hard on Peter, maybe we ought to look in the mirror.

How many times have we forgotten what we already know?

How many times have we allowed fear to become bigger than our faith? How many times have we let anger make our decisions? How many times have we spoken before thinking? How many times have we worried ourselves sick over something God was already taking care of? How many times have we forgotten everything God has already proven about Himself?

The beautiful part of this story isn't that Peter failed.

The beautiful part is what Jesus did next.

The Scripture says, "Immediately Jesus reached out His hand and caught him."

Immediately.

Not after Peter apologized.

Not after Peter promised to do better.

Not after Peter earned another chance.

Immediately.

Jesus didn't stand there with His arms folded saying, "Well Peter, I hope you've learned your lesson."

He reached for him.

That's grace.

Grace doesn't wait until we've got everything figured out. Grace reaches for us while we're still sinking. Grace reaches for us when we've made a mess of things and all we can manage to say is, "Lord...save me."

Maybe that's exactly where some of us are today.

Maybe you've made decisions you wish you could undo. Maybe you've spoken words you wish you could take back. Maybe you've allowed fear to control your life. Maybe you've drifted farther from God than you ever imagined you would. Maybe you've been carrying around the weight of hearing that little voice saying, *You should have known better.*

The truth is...you probably should have.

I probably should have too.

We all should have.

But here's the good news of the Gospel.

Jesus already knows.

And He still reaches out His hand.

William Barclay, the great Scottish theologian, lost his only daughter in a tragic drowning accident just days before her wedding. Later, while reflecting on this very passage, he said that he wasn't nearly as concerned about whether Jesus calmed the storm on the Sea of Galilee as he was about the fact that Jesus had calmed the storm inside his own heart.

I love that thought.

Because sometimes Jesus calms the storm around us.

But many more times...He calms **us** while the storm is still raging.

As one author put it, "I'd rather be in a rocking boat with a calm Jesus than in a calm boat with a shaky captain."

Friends, every one of us has moments when we look back and say, *I should have known better.*

But maybe the better way to say that is this...

We forgot what we already knew. We forgot that God has always been faithful. We forgot that He has never abandoned us. We forgot that His grace is greater than our malfunctions. We forgot that Jesus is still in control, even when the wind is howling and the waves are crashing around us.

Short Pause

Our hope has never been grounded in knowing better. Our hope is grounded in knowing Jesus.

Because when our strength fails (and it will) ...when our faith wavers (and it will)...when fear gets the better of us (and it will)...when we begin to sink (and we will)...Jesus is still reaching for us.

And perhaps that's the one thing that we should know better and never forget...
He has always been reaching for us.

To God be the glory, Amen.

Invitation to the offering:

This morning we've been reminded that fear has a way of making us forget what we already know. One of the things we know is that God has always been faithful. Every blessing we enjoy has come from His hand.

Our offering is one of the ways we remember that truth. It is an act of worship that declares our trust is not in our possessions, but in the God who provides all things. As we give today, we do so with grateful hearts, knowing that these gifts become the hands and feet of Jesus throughout our communities and beyond.

Thank you for your faithful generosity. As the ushers come forward, let us worship the Lord through the giving of our tithes and offerings.

Closing Prayer with Dedication:

Heavenly Father, we thank You for Your presence with us here today. Thank You for reminding us that even when we forget what we already know, You never forget us. When fear overwhelms us, You remain faithful. When our faith begins to falter, Your hand is already reaching toward us.

Lord, as we leave this place, help us keep our eyes fixed on Jesus rather than on the storms around us. Give us the courage to trust You in the uncertain moments, the wisdom to remember Your faithfulness, and the confidence to walk wherever You call us.

We also dedicate these tithes and offerings to You. Receive them as an expression of our gratitude and our trust. Multiply them for the work of Your Kingdom. Use them to proclaim the Gospel, care for those in need, strengthen Your Church, and help more people discover the hope that is found in Jesus Christ alone.

Now send us into the world as people of hope. May we carry the peace of Christ into every conversation, every home, every workplace, and every challenge we face this week. And when the storms come...as they surely will...remind us to remember what we already know: You are with us, You are for us, and You will never let us go.

We ask this in the strong and saving name of Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.