



## Harvest in Action: Family and Friends

Message Notes, February 18, 2018

Matthew 14:22-33

For four weeks we have explored the key aspects of Jesus' call to the Harvest, beginning with God's glory, rooted in a right view of the world, fueled by love and culminating in a call to go. We do not want to simply be "hearers of the word and not doers, so how do we respond tangibly to this harvest call? To whom is God calling us to share the His love and gospel? We all have three concentric circles of influence:

- Family and friends
- Neighbors and associates
- Strangers we encounter

We focus today on perhaps the most difficult "circle" to harvest – family and friends. Why are these among the most challenging relationships in which to share our faith? One reason is they hold the greatest potential for the "storm" of conflict, and we can't just walk away from these when they get messy (especially family).

Two other factors that make the family and friends harvest so difficult:

1. They know us well – our good, our bad and our ugly.
2. We can tend to get frustrated with them – e.g., "Why aren't they getting it?"

Pastor Mike suggested we can learn solid principles from the story of Jesus (and Peter) walking on the water that will strengthen us for the challenging privilege of sharing our faith with family and friends.

### Lessons from Matthew 14:22-33

1. **Retreat to Pray.** Take proactive time to seek the Lord, listen for His guidance, ask Him to go before us and prepare family and friends to hear the gospel. i.e., More than in-the-moment "911" praying.
2. **Face the reality of the storm.** The challenge of sharing in such intimate relationships is real and can be intimidating. And the obstacles and difficulties they are struggling with are real as well.
3. **Address our fears.** Like the disciples in the boat, we must acknowledge our fears and then surrender them to Jesus. Hear Him say, "Fear not; I am with you."
4. **Call out to God.** Like Peter calling to the Lord on the water, we must cry out to the Lord; look to Him; trust His grace and help.
5. **Wait for God to speak.** Jesus called Peter to "come out of the boat." We don't need to barrel over people with our "agenda." We need to wait and listen for the Lord's voice about when and how to share.
6. **Step out** (onto the rough waters – like Peter). When we feel led by the Lord, we need to step out with courage and confidence.
7. **Do not shift our focus from Jesus to the challenges and circumstances.** Peter took His eyes off Jesus and sank. 1 Corinthians 3:6-7 reminds us that our place is to sow and water. We do not cause the growth; God does that! We need only be faithful to our place and trust God with producing the fruit.



### **Reflection Questions**

1. Who is God putting on your heart?
2. How are you praying for them and your relationship with them?
3. Prepare yourself:
  - Repent – if you have been hard-hearted and unwilling.
  - Pray (ask, listen, pray for Holy Spirit to go before).
  - Pursue the relationship.
  - Be attentive for opportunities.