

The Gospel of John (6:14-21)

A House Church Outline



1. Praise *(Purpose: To worship God)*

- What are you thankful for this week? *(let the group's secretary write these down in an A4 hardcover or some notebook)*
- Song Service
 - Sing a few songs of praise to God

2. Pray *(Purpose: To carry each others' burdens and to seek the Lord)*

- What challenges did you have this week? *(write these down in an A4 hardcover or some notebook)*
- Go into a season of prayer

3. Review *(Purpose: To learn accountability)*

- Tell us how it went with what you promised to do in last week's meeting? *(e.g. Who did your share your faith with this past week? Who did you minister to? How did actioning your I WILL STATEMENT go?)*
- *Where people have failed to fulfil what they said they would, do not be harsh with them but gently encourage them to try again in the coming week. Give them more support by phoning or joining them in the week.*

4. Give *(Purpose: To be good stewards of our monies)*

- This is the time to return tithes and offerings. If done electronically, kindly ensure that you get the bank account details of your local church from your treasurer. Don't forget to complete an envelope and to send the breakdown to him/her.

5. Discover *(Purpose: To learn to listen to God, and be obedient to His Word)*

- **Notes for the facilitator**

- Read *Desire of Ages (DA)*, p. 377-382
- "Seated upon the grassy plain, in the twilight of the spring evening, the people ate of the food that Christ had provided. The words they had heard that day had come to them as the voice of God. The works of healing they had witnessed were such as only divine power could perform.... And they said one to another, 'This is of a truth that Prophet that should come into the world.' **All day the conviction has strengthened.... The hopes of the people rise higher and higher.... He can break the power of the hated Romans. He can deliver Judah and Jerusalem. He can heal the soldiers who are wounded in battle. He can supply whole armies with food.** He can conquer the nations, and give to Israel the long-sought dominion" (DA 377).
- "In their enthusiasm the people are ready at once to crown Him king. They see that He makes no effort to attract attention or secure honor to Himself.... Consulting together, they agree to take Him by force, and proclaim Him the king of Israel. The disciples unite with the multitude in declaring the throne of David the rightful inheritance of their Master. It is the modesty of Christ, they say, that causes Him to refuse such honor. **They eagerly arrange to carry out their purpose; but Jesus sees what is on foot, and understands, as they cannot, what would be the result of such a movement.** Even now the priests and rulers are hunting His life. They accuse Him of drawing the people away from them. **Violence and insurrection would follow an effort to place Him on the throne, and the work of the spiritual kingdom would be hindered. Without delay the movement must be checked.** Calling His disciples, Jesus bids them take the boat and return at once to Capernaum, leaving Him to dismiss the people" (DA 378).
- "The disciples had not put off immediately from the land, as Jesus directed them. They waited for a time, hoping that He would come to them. But as they saw that darkness

was fast gathering, they ‘entered into a ship, and went over the sea toward Capernaum.’ **They had left Jesus with dissatisfied hearts, more impatient with Him than ever before since acknowledging Him as their Lord. They murmured because they had not been permitted to proclaim Him king. They blamed themselves for yielding so readily to His command.** They reasoned that if they had been more persistent they might have accomplished their purpose” (DA 379).

- **“Unbelief was taking possession of their minds and hearts.** Love of honor had blinded them. They knew that Jesus was hated by the Pharisees, and they were eager to see Him exalted as they thought He should be. **To be united with a teacher who could work mighty miracles, and yet to be reviled as deceivers, was a trial they could ill endure. Were they always to be accounted followers of a false prophet? Would Christ never assert His authority as king? Why did not He who possessed such power reveal Himself in His true character, and make their way less painful? Why had He not saved John the Baptist from a violent death? Thus the disciples reasoned until they brought upon themselves great spiritual darkness. They questioned, Could Jesus be an impostor, as the Pharisees asserted?”** (DA 380)
- **“A violent tempest had been stealing upon them, and they were unprepared for it. It was a sudden contrast, for the day had been perfect; and when the gale struck them, they were afraid. They forgot their disaffection, their unbelief, their impatience.** Everyone worked to keep the boat from sinking.... Until the fourth watch of the night they toiled at the oars. Then the weary men gave themselves up for lost. **In storm and darkness the sea had taught them their own helplessness, and they longed for the presence of their Master”** (DA 380).
- **“Jesus had not forgotten them. The Watcher on the shore saw those fear-stricken men battling with the tempest. Not for a moment did He lose sight of His disciples.** With deepest solicitude His eyes followed the storm-tossed boat with its precious burden; for these men were to be the light of the world. As a mother in tender love watches her child, so the compassionate Master watched His disciples. **When their hearts were subdued, their unholy ambition quelled, and in humility they prayed for help, it was given them.** At the moment when they believe themselves lost, a gleam of light reveals a mysterious figure approaching them upon the water. But they know not that it is Jesus” (DA 381).
- As soon as Jesus identifies Himself, Peter asks Jesus to tell him to come to Him on the water. Jesus agrees. **“Looking unto Jesus, Peter walks securely; but as in self-satisfaction he glances back toward his companions in the boat, his eyes are turned from the Saviour.** The wind is boisterous. The waves roll high, and come directly between him and the Master; and he is afraid. **For a moment Christ is hidden from his view, and his faith gives way. He begins to sink.** But while the billows talk with death, Peter lifts his eyes from the angry waters, and fixing them upon Jesus, cries, ‘Lord, save me.’ Immediately Jesus grasps the outstretched hand, saying, O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?” (DA 381).
- **“When trouble comes upon us, how often we are like Peter! We look upon the waves, instead of keeping our eyes fixed upon the Saviour.** Our footsteps slide, and the proud waters go over our souls. Jesus did not bid Peter come to Him that he should perish; He does not call us to follow Him, and then forsake us” (DA 382).
- **“In this incident on the sea [Jesus] desired to reveal to Peter his own weakness,—to show that his safety was in constant dependence upon divine power. Amid the storms of temptation he could walk safely only as in utter self-distrust he should rely upon the Saviour. It was on the point where he thought himself strong that Peter was weak; and not until he discerned his weakness could he realize his need of dependence upon Christ. Had he learned the lesson that Jesus sought to teach him in that**

experience on the sea, he would not have failed when the great test came upon him” (DA 382).

- “Those who fail to realize their constant dependence upon God will be overcome by temptation. We may now suppose that our feet stand secure, and that we shall never be moved. We may say with confidence, ‘I know in whom I have believed; nothing can shake my faith in God and in His word.’ **But Satan is planning to take advantage of our hereditary and cultivated traits of character, and to blind our eyes to our own necessities and defects. Only through realizing our own weakness and looking steadfastly unto Jesus can we walk securely”** (DA 382).
- “**No sooner had Jesus taken His place in the boat than the wind ceased,** ‘and immediately the ship was at the land whither they went.’ The night of horror was succeeded by the light of dawn. The disciples, and others who also were on board, bowed at the feet of Jesus with thankful hearts, saying, ‘Of a truth Thou art the Son of God!’” (DA 382).
 - **Vs 21: “Immediately ... at the land.** This may be interpreted as a further miracle, indicating that as soon as Jesus entered the ship it was supernaturally transported to the shore. On the other hand, John’s words may be understood as indicating that the storm had driven the boat close to the western shore of the sea by the time Jesus appeared. This appears to be supported by the fact that Matthew and Mark give no indication that the voyage was anything but normal, once Jesus had entered the ship. Matthew’s statement that the disciples were “in the midst of the sea” (Matt. 14:24) when they saw Jesus would be understood then as meaning, not that they were in the geographical center of the lake, but that water was all about them” – *SDA Bible Commentary*
- *Read John 6:14-21 AND Matt. 14:22-33 – two complementary accounts of the same incident. Preferably let one person read it. Let everyone then put down their Bibles and get the group to reconstruct the passage in their own words. This teaches the group to be careful in quotation Scripture correctly and to use it as the basis of their discussions.*
- **Discussion Questions** (use only a few). *The notes in italics after some of the questions below are for the facilitator, and not to be read out to the group.*
 - Why do you think Jesus spent time praying alone (Matt. 14:23)? What do you think he prayed for?
 - Why do you think Jesus waited until near dawn before He went out to help them?
 - Why do you think Jesus came to the disciples walking the water? Could there be any significance to that?
 - When you boil down fear to its core ingredients, what do you think creates and drives fear?
 - What do you think are some of the emotional, mental, spiritual, and physical side effects of living in fear?
 - Why do you think only Peter left the boat and walked on water? Why did the other disciples not join him?
 - How would you define a “step of faith”? Why is it often such a scary experience? (*ask one question at a time*)
 - Why is it important to focus our attention on Jesus in the middle of tough situations— instead of on the trial? How can one practically do that? (*ask one question at a time*)
 - What is an invitation, a promise, a command, or a warning that is found in this story?
- **Application Questions** (*select a few depending on your time. One has to be the I WILL STATEMENT*)
 - When have you ever been afraid for your life or personal safety? Share one incident.
 - When do you tend to leave Jesus behind and out of the picture of your life?

- What personal challenges are you facing? What are you most fearful of, and why? In what ways has your trust in God been strengthened or challenged during this trial? (*ask one question at a time*)
- What's the boldest thing you've ever done as a follower of Jesus? What is one bold step of faith you sense God asking you to take now? Are you willing to obey, or do you need extra courage from Jesus? (*ask one question at a time*)
- I WILL STATEMENT: Formulate an I will statement in response to what you have discovered in the Word. Let the group's secretary also record these in an A4 notebook. Ensure that everyone gets a chance to give their I WILL STATEMENT. You have to be specific. E.g. "I will do one bold thing for Jesus this week, that scares me somewhat: I will ask God to give me the courage to go to my boss and do a 2 min prayer with him. He is going through some personal challenge. I know he does not believe in God, but I want to step out in faith like Peter."

6. Share (*Purpose: To be witnesses of our faith*)

- Do you have anyone you could share today's lesson with this week? *Be specific.*

7. Closing prayer

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