Pastor Dave Teixeira
Matthew 14:22-36
March 13, 2011

Please use the space below to take notes on today's message:

Take It Homework

We encourage you to not only do these exercises on your own, but also with a group of friends, co-workers, neighbors, small group or family members.

Read Matthew 14:22-36.

"He went up on a mountainside by Himself to pray." These words are just sort of thrown in by Matthew as almost an aside, and yet we know that Jesus' prayer life was crucial to His life and ministry.

- When was the last time you got alone to pray? How often do you really experience intimacy with God? Be real. Be critical. Share ideas about what has and hasn't worked. Don't bite off more than you can chew, but make a plan to take this up a notch in your life.

The next event in this passage is orchestrated by Jesus, not for the crowd, but His core disciples, and it is a pretty scary lesson. It seems that the closer you get to Jesus, the more scary the challenges become.

- Have you found that to be true? If so, how?

Matthew goes to great lengths to describe a situation that wasn't going well. The disciples are struggling and potentially in some danger.

- What are Jesus' words to them?
- Do you think this is the message God wants to speak into <u>your</u> struggles, concerns, setbacks, disappointments, challenges, pain, uncertainty…? Where in your life have you or do you need to receive these words from Jesus?

Now is the moment when I want to say, "Not only did Jesus come and speak courage, but He also calls Peter to a step of faith!" But I can't. Because the idea to walk on the water wasn't Jesus'; it was Peter's. Wow! That guy is the man! He's looking for places to RADICALLY trust and experience Jesus' power.

- Are you looking for those kind of places? Where could you ask Jesus if you could step out in faith? Where is that scary place that you would step out into if you really wanted to trust God?

The next question is one you've heard 1,000 times, but I can't resist asking it.

- Peter starts to sink "when he saw the wind." (On a side note, how do you **see** the wind???) What in your life takes your eyes off of the power and faithfulness of God? What is it that scares you into doubting Jesus?

Finally, Matthew drives this section home with the point that Jesus truly is the "Son of God," the Messiah. And that's a pretty big point. Sometimes we take it for granted, assume we all believe it.

- Do YOU really believe Jesus is the Savior of the World? If not, the wind of this world is pretty scary. If so, you can have courage, because the God of the universe came to save and empower you!