

“The Miracle of Scripture Study”

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Sister Anne Marie Pace

Student participants: Indee, Jon, and Lyla

Brother Pace: Brothers and sisters, welcome. We’re grateful that you would join us. We are met here today as friends to study the scriptures. As you are aware, the Church over the last four years has encouraged us to study the scriptures, and they provided the *Come, Follow Me* manual. This year we’re studying the New Testament. And so, I’m here today with Indee and Jon and Lyla, all of whom are students at BYU-Pathway. And Anne Marie and I are here. We’ve invited these wonderful friends to join us in our scripture study and would like to invite you to join us as well. We are trying to model today that which we hope that you will do in your personal lives, and that is to take time every day to study the scriptures. *Come, Follow Me* helps us study just a little bit at a time, and it’s a delight. And as we study the scriptures, Heavenly Father knows of our sincerity and of our interest, and the Holy Ghost blesses us, and it inspires us and guides us in our lives. We’re grateful for the opportunity to study the scriptures, and to study with *Come, Follow Me* is a delight, and we’re grateful to have you here. So, why don’t we get started? Today, we’re going to read from [Matthew chapter 14](#) in the New Testament. And Indee, why don’t we have you start? We’ll do — why don’t you do the introduction and two verses and then, Jon, two verses, and we’ll just keep going around and—

Indee: It sounds good.

Brother Pace: Let’s talk. When we have comments and thoughts, let’s do it, okay?

Indee: Perfect.

Brother Pace: Why don’t you go ahead and get us started?

Matthew 14:1–14

Indee: Alright. “John the Baptist is beheaded. Jesus feeds the 5,000 and walks on the sea. Those who touch the hem of his garment are made whole. At the time, Herod, the tetrarch, heard the fame of Jesus and said unto his servants, This is John the Baptist. He is risen from the dead and therefore mighty works do show forth themselves in him.”

Jon: “For Herod had laid hold on John, and bound him and put him in prison for Herodias’ sake, his brother Philip’s wife, for John said unto him, It is not lawful for thee to have her.”

Lyla: “And when he would have put him to death, he feared the multitude because they counted him as a prophet. But when Herod’s birthday was kept, the daughter of Herodias danced before them and pleased Herod.”

Sister Pace: “Where upon he promised with an oath to give her whatsoever she would ask. And she, being before instructed of her mother said, Give me here John Baptist’s head in a charger.”

Brother Pace: I understand from looking down at the footnotes, that the charger means like a platter or something like that. Quite the story here, huh? Okay. “And the king was sorry: nevertheless for the oath’s sake, and them which sat with him at meat, he commanded it to be given her. And he sent, and beheaded John in the prison.”

Indee: “And his head was brought in a charger, and given to the damsel: and she brought it to her mother. And his disciples came and took up the body and buried it, and went and told Jesus.”

Jon: “When Jesus heard of it, he departed thence by ship into a desert place apart: and when the people had heard thereof, they followed him on foot out of the cities. And Jesus went forth, and saw a great multitude, and was moved with compassion toward them, and he healed their sick.”

Sister Pace: Verse 13 sounds like they put Him in a ship to take Him to a place apart — that He needed some peace and quiet, maybe some alone time, some time for prayer or whatever. But the people heard it and followed him on foot out of the cities. And so, when He sees the multitude, He’s moved with compassion. Even though He’s tired and had other plans, He stops and heals them.

Lyla: Well, He was in pain. He was grieving. He loved John the Baptist.

Brother Pace: Yeah. Now I was thinking about how He must have felt to hear that John the Baptist had been beheaded.

Lyla: Yeah.

Brother Pace: Ah, wow.

Indee: That’s His cousin.

Brother Pace: Yeah.

Sister Pace: Yeah.

Matthew 14:15–20

Lyla: “And when it was evening, his disciples came to him, saying, This is a desert place, and the time is now past; send the multitude away, that they may go into the villages, and buy themselves victuals. But Jesus said unto them, They need not depart; give ye them to eat.”

Sister Pace: So, isn’t that interesting? So, He goes to be alone, they follow Him, He heals them, and now He wants to feed them.

Lyla: They’re hungry.

Sister Pace: Wow. Wow. 17. “And they say unto him, We have here but five loaves and two fishes. He said, Bring them hither to me.”

Brother Pace: “And he commanded the multitude to sit down on the grass, and took the five loaves, and the two fishes, and looking up to heaven, he blessed and brake, and gave the loaves to his disciples, and the disciples to the multitude. And they did all eat, and were filled: and they took up of the fragments that remained twelve baskets full.” What do you think of this miracle? What are your thoughts? What are your impressions? Jon, what do you think?

Jon: I mean, I think for me, just this whole part right here, it really makes me think about service and just how, you know, even though Jesus was obviously grieving and He was sad, He was able to help these people. And that’s really what we’re taught in the Church, right, is that when we’re having a hard time in our lives — which is a lot of the time — we can do service, we can think of other people before ourselves. And somehow that’s like the miracle right there is that, even though we are thinking about other people, it’s still helping us, right? It’s still — we are healing in that process as well.

Sister Pace: It started the miracles, didn't it?

Jon: Yeah.

Sister Pace: Because He wanted to serve. Good point.

Brother Pace: Any other thoughts?

Indee: I think, for me, something that came to mind was that Jesus can make amazing things come out of something seemingly small, right? I mean, He made food enough for multitudes out of five loaves and two fishes. And He is so aware of the details of the details of our lives. He was willing to feed those that were hungry, those that were hurting and sick, even though He himself was also hurting.

Lyla: He didn't just feed all of them; they had leftovers. They had 12 baskets of leftovers of food.

Brother Pace: Yeah. It's amazing. It's amazing.

Lyla: Five thousand.

Brother Pace: So, He says, "Feed them." And they go, "Oh, we got five loaves and two fishes. What do you want us to do?" And that's why I love what He says: "Bring them hither to me." Have you ever had a church assignment or calling responsibility that you thought that you were here and that responsibility was like here and there was just — we just aren't up to it. We can't do it. I think this is a great example to us here where we give the Lord what we have — we give it what we have. And He blesses it and makes it sufficient for the thing at hand. I remember when we were on our mission, a couple times in particular, when I was praying and saying, "Heavenly Father, I am not up to this. I don't have what it takes to do what needs to be done." And then the Lord does His miracle, and we give what we have, and He makes it enough and more — 12 baskets more.

Lyla: I have experience that when I was a Relief Society president. I had a very young secretary who was homeschooling and just doing everything on her own because her husband worked all the time. Long story short, she asked to be released, and there were only about 40 women that I could choose from, and half of them were inactive. And I just remember praying and praying, going over the list, praying and praying. Nothing came to my mind ever. So the day before she was going to be released and we were going to church to set up for a visiting teaching conference, I just remember saying, "Heavenly Father, please help me. I don't know what to do. I don't know who to call in this position, and I need it filled." And literally what came to me was, "Beg Faith to stay."

I thought that was so strange. I got to the church. I met her there. I walked in the Relief Society room. I closed the door. She was there with my counselors. I got on my knees, and I said, "Please, Faith, don't leave. Please don't leave. Please stay. I need you in this calling." And she said, "I'm so glad you asked me to stay because I changed my mind a long time ago." And my mom said, "Well, great Faith, you've just shot yourself in the foot. There go all your blessings." But I'll just never forget how that was a miracle to me. I needed her the next three years that I served, and it was amazing.

Brother Pace: Well, this is a wonderful miracle, and I think—

Matthew 14:21–26

Indee: Verse 21.

Brother Pace: And who's up on 21?

Indee: I think it's my turn.

Brother Pace: Okay. Okay. There you go.

Indee: Alright, "And they that had eaten were about five thousand men, beside women and children. And straightway Jesus constrained his disciples to get into a ship, and to go before him into the other side while he sent the multitudes away."

Jon: "And when he had sent the multitudes away, he went up into a mountain apart to pray: and when the evening was come, he was there alone. But the ship was now in the midst of the sea, tossed with waves for the wind was contrary."

Lyla: "And in the fourth watch of the night, Jesus went unto them walking on the sea. And when the disciples saw him walking on the sea, they were troubled saying it is a spirit. And they cried out for fear."

Brother Pace: Okay, let's stop there. Sweetie, Anne Marie, tell us about the fourth watch. What does that mean?

Sister Pace: Well, the night was divided into four three-hour sections, and the fourth watch would've occurred between 3:00 a.m. and 6:00 a.m. It's the last watch of the night because then morning starts and, traditionally, it's thought of as the darkest part of the night, the longest part.

Brother Pace: Okay. Okay. Alright.

Lyla: I didn't know that.

Matthew 14:27–32

Sister Pace: Yeah. "But straightway Jesus spake unto them, saying, Be of good cheer; it is I; be not afraid. And Peter answered him and said, Lord, if it be thou, bid me come unto thee on the water."

Brother Pace: "And he said come. And when Peter was come down out of the ship, he walked on the water, to go to Jesus. But when he saw the wind boisterous, he was afraid, and beginning to sink he cried, saying, Lord, save me."

Indee: "And immediately Jesus stretched forth his hand and caught him, and said unto him, O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt? And when they were come into the ship, the wind ceased."

Sister Pace: This story has always fascinated me because Peter really, he shows this — *Animo* is what we say in Spanish. But he has this energy, this excitement and wants to walk on the water as well. But what happens? He takes his eyes off the Savior. He notices the boisterous wind and the waves. And I think that happens a lot to me in life, to a lot of us. If we take our focus off the Savior, we see what's happening in the world around us.

Lyla: It's true.

Indee: On my mission, something that my companions and I would share with the friends that we were teaching. Because this was a story, actually, that we would share with a lot of people. Because just like Sister Pace shared that, when you focus on the Savior, you're able to do amazing things with His power. Because just like it says in verse 27, Jesus Himself says it's a commandment to be of good cheer. And so, we would—

Sister Pace: Oh, I like that.

Indee: We would tell our friends— It was this kind of little cheesy saying that we came up with to help them remember. And I have it written in my scriptures, but it says, “Whenever you feel like you’re drowning in fear, doubt, or despair, don’t forget your lifeguard walks on water.”

Lyla: Oh, I like that.

Indee: Because with Him you can be of good cheer, and you don’t have to be afraid. And that’s something that I really admire about Peter, is that he was able to step out of the boat in the first place.

Jon: And I guess just kind of — it’s a little bit different — but kind of talking about the “be of good cheer.” That kind of stands out to me, when Jesus says that to be of good cheer, because we always think about Jesus’ example, right, and all these other things. But I think that’s a small thing that, at least, I want to be more like Jesus in the fact that I want when people see me to be of good cheer. I think that’s kind of — I think any of His disciples that saw Jesus were of good cheer; when they saw Him, they were happy. And that’s kind of the example that I want to be as well — be able to kind of be that light. And when people see me, they could be of good cheer. So, I just think that’s kind of cool.

Brother Pace: Well said, well said.

Sister Pace: I think that attracts — there’s light to being happy and being of good cheer. It attracts people. Yeah. It attracts me.

Jon: Yeah.

Lyla: Yeah.

Brother Pace: You know, for me, Anne Marie talked about it a minute ago, that Jesus went out to them in the fourth watch of the night. I think there’s a lot of symbolism in that. He came out to them at the darkest hour. He had been up in the mountains praying, and He had told them to go across the sea in the ship. And they’re out there. They’re toiling. There’s a storm that they said the winds were contrary. So, it was challenging. You know, how well did their ship handle it? I don’t know. But they were struggling. But He came. He came. He came in the fourth watch of the night when the night was darkest. When you might have thought that would be the last time He would come, because you’d think it’s too late; He’s not going to come. He came. And I think when we are dealing with challenges in our families or in our individual lives, we can remember that Jesus is the God of the fourth watch. And He comes. He comes.

Lyla: And off of that, I think it’s so interesting when Peter said, “Bid me to come,” and He said that one word “come,” because He came to them and just “come.” And I love that. And that’s what all He asks of us. I think, “Lyla, when you’re struggling, just come, come to me. Come to me in prayer. Come to me at the temple. Come to me in your scripture study. Come. And I’m there. I’m there to help you.”

Matthew 14:33–36

Brother Pace: Okay. I think we’re on verse 33. Yeah, Jon. Okay.

Jon: “Then they that were in the ship came and worshipped him, saying, Of a truth thou art the Son of God. And when they were gone over, they came into the land of Gennesaret.”

Lyla: “And when the men of that place had knowledge of him, they sent out into all that country round about, and brought unto him all that were diseased and besought him that they might only touch the hem of his garment: And as many as touched were made perfectly whole.”

Sister Pace: This reminds me of the parable that we read several weeks ago, in another lesson, with the woman who had the issue of blood for 12 years. So that — I wonder if that story was noised around, but even that had to require a lot of faith to just touch the hem of His garment to be healed.

Lyla: It was all faith.

Jon: Yeah. I think that's the important part, right? It wasn't the garment that healed them, right? It was their faith.

Sister Pace: Exactly. Yeah.

Brother Pace: As we look back over this chapter, what do you think the Holy Ghost is teaching us? What would the Savior have us learn from these experiences and these miracles?

Sister Pace: One thing that stood out to me that hasn't really made an impact on me before, is that even the Savior needed to go be alone at times and pray. And if He needed to go and spend time praying to His Father in Heaven, how much more do I need to do that as well?

Indee: Faith in Jesus Christ always precedes the miracle.

Jon: I think just, for me, just that thought of service and just serving others, even when I'm having a hard time. I think that's a huge thing that I want to work on, is being able to be there for others and lift others up. I actually recently got a calling. It's small, but for my YSA I'm like one of the group leaders for the FHE activities and stuff. And so I think especially now, you know, reading this, it's making me realize that I really need to be there for that calling, and I need to be able to serve those people that are in my group.

Sister Pace: Good for you.

Brother Pace: Lyla, your thoughts?

Lyla: I love that Heavenly Father loves us so much that He sent Jesus Christ to us. I love that nobody can not have a miracle happen in their life. We are all able to have a miracle happen in our life, if they're really small or significantly large. And as cheesy as it sounds, I am blessed. I am blessed by my Savior. I am blessed that He loves me. I'm blessed that He's mindful of me. I'm blessed that He feeds me, not just physically but spiritually in every way. We're so blessed to have a Savior that loves us so much, and He has so many miracles that He's just ready to give out. We just need to be ready for them and willing to accept them and be worthy. No, just to accept them.

Brother Pace: Anne Marie, any thoughts as we conclude?

Sister Pace: Just more confirmations to me that He was and is the Son of our Heavenly Father, that He is a God, that He was — He was subject to mortality just as we are subject to mortality, but that He lived the perfect life. And I'm so grateful that we have not only someone who suffered and paid the price for all of our sins, weaknesses, and life's injustices and sorrows, but also for the perfect example that we find in Him.

Brother Pace: Thank you. Thank you very much. Well, we are grateful that you would join us in scripture study. As you can see, it doesn't have to take all day. Reading a chapter is terrific and if we hadn't had time to read and stop and talk, and we'd just been alone and we'd just read through, that would've been great too. But it's wonderful to read as directed in the *Come, Follow Me* resource. And, for me, I would just tell you that the fondest desire of our hearts is that the habit of coming unto the Savior by reading His words would be something that would become an increasing part of your life. You know, one of the sweet things that happens to us as we study the scriptures is that the Holy Ghost speaks to us. The Holy Ghost speaks to us by peaceful, warm feelings that we feel — feelings of

peace and comfort — but the Holy Ghost also speaks to us through inspired thoughts that come to our minds. As we've been studying here, we have felt the influence of the Holy Ghost. It has been a delight, and we're grateful for that experience every time we read the scriptures. As I was looking at this chapter, and I had never had this impression before until we were talking about it, all these miracles happened because people went and sought the Savior. The multitude sought Him, and then the miracle happened. He invited Peter to come to Him, and Peter came to Him. And then after they were out of the ship and they were in the other country, then the people came to Him again and touched His clothes.

The miracle of Jesus Christ and His atoning sacrifice in our lives continues to bless us, and it blesses us as we seek Him. And one of the wonderful ways that we can seek Him is by reading His scriptures, by praying, and by attending sacrament meeting and the other church meetings on Sunday. We extend to you our love. May the Lord bless you, and may you know that we love the Savior, and we love reading His scriptures, and we testify of Him and express to you our heartfelt desire that this might be a continuing pattern in your life of reading the scriptures and that you would know that we know that Jesus lives. His gospel has been restored upon the earth. Russell M. Nelson is His living prophet, and we seek to pattern our lives after Him as we continue to read His scriptures. May the Lord's blessings rest upon you in the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

Sister Pace: Amen.

Indee: Amen.