

Matthew

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- [0 : 0 0] The text is read in St. Matthew chapter 14 and verse 22.
- St. Matthew chapter 14 and the central theme in verse 22.
- And straightway Jesus constrained his disciples to get into a ship and to go before him and to the other side while he sent the multitudes away.
- This is one of the very numerous narratives, maritime narratives, inspired as to the divine record by the Holy Ghost.
- And placed in the canon of scripture by the Spirit. So that there should be an equation in the hearts and lives and experiences of the people of God.
- [1 : 3 8] That is in harmony with these narratives. That they might be helped and instructed and comforted and cheered.
- And have the blessed prospect of reaching the distant shore.
- There are two observations that preface the discourse this evening. One is because God always has a divine purpose in all his movements and dispensations.
- The unfolding of his will. There is although at first perhaps hidden and mysterious.
- A divine, blessed, holy, God-honoring, soul-profitting purpose that the Lord has in view.
- [2 : 5 6] And you may ask, why should he have constrained his disciples to get into this ship, this little ship, and to pass to the other side?
- And he himself, as we read, went into the mountain apart to pray. But why should they come into this little ship, being constrained to come there, enter it, and have the experience of tranquility, and then of storm and tempest and contrary winds and waves beating into the ship so that it was now full?
- And so on. Why? There is an answer. It seemed as though, as in some of the narratives, these maritime narratives, it seemed as though they were going to perish.
- It looked as though the boat would go down. They would never reach the distant shore. It looked as though the waters would prevail and they would sink to the bottom.
- Why should his disciples experience these trying, distressing, extreme circumstances?
- [5 : 0 3] Why? Can you assign any reason? Primarily, we have the beautiful, concise, glorious answer in the close of the narrative here.
- And what is it? The purpose that the Lord had in view was this, that he would demonstrate to them his deity, that he was and is the glorious sovereign, that he reigns, that he reigns over the elements, that he reigns over all things, over the whole universe.
- Nevertheless, everything is at his control and con not. And this elicited from them when he, as in St. Mark, when he revealed the winds and said to the sea, Peace, be still.
- And living near the sea, you must know what a rough sea is. Tremendous mountainous waves.

He said, Peace, be still. There was a great calm. And this, by his grace and teaching and the illumination of the Holy Ghost and his divine revealing grace in their hearts, this brought forth from their very souls and their lips, this noble confession of living faith.

[7 : 29] They said, Of a truth, thou art the Son of God. So, in a transcendent manner, that was the purpose of God in the whole experience that they knew, so that they might prove and observe and see and witness the glorious truth of his deity having all power.

You know, it is in deep waters, it is in heavy trials, it is in extremities often that the Lord makes his glorious power and love known to his beloved people for the government is upon his shoulder.

And so, their faith was confirmed in his deity, his almighty power and his divine sovereignty supreme in authority and power and dominion and might and government and grace and goodness and mercy supreme and to his dear people supreme in preciousness.

And so, you may wonder why you have to pass through some of these drying scenes. It is that there should be a greater, fuller, more wonderful demonstration to you of the Lord, his goodness and mercy and faithfulness and love and skill and wisdom so that you might say in divine worship and adoration of a truth.

This is the holy testimony of a truth. Thou art the Son of God. And then, I believe that as the Lord Jesus was often close to this Sea of Galilee and lived there for a while at Capernaum on the borders and on the edge of this sea.

[10 : 37] I believe that speaking to his disciples to go before him and to the other side.

There's another side. I believe we may reverently suggest that he thought much of his own passion, his agony, his sacrificial death, his agony in the garden, his scourging in the pillar, his crucifixion, his voluntary death, his glorious resurrection, and then his return to glory, the other side.

of his birth. He said that in order to accomplish the work of our redemption, a body has now prepared me.

Then said I, lo, I come. In the volume of the book it is written of me, I delight to do thy will. O my God, yea, thy lois within my heart, a body hast thou prepared me.

And he sailed, as it were, from Bethlehem to Olivet, especially am I thinking of the ocean, the sea, and all its stormy character he sailed through.

[12 : 39] He went through those storms of his agony and passion, and one day he returned to glory on high.

He went back to where he came from. He reached the other shore. Oh, I believe, you know, that as he looked on this that shore, he must have felt what there is to pass through before I reached that distant shore.

Before I return to my father, before I return to through those gates, lift up your heads over your gates, and me lift up your everlasting doors, and the king of glory shall come in.

Ah, there's a distant shore. And then, in this introduction, I believe too, that he has put this down, and made it a blessed part of the canon of scripture, so that his dear people might be sweetly encouraged by these narratives, that the Holy Ghost should use them, that they should be equated with their own voyage to heaven.

That's a wonderful thing. You see, many of us hope that long since the Lord has constrained us to get into the ship, and to go before him unto the other side.

[14 : 43] And we're getting comparatively close to that. And some dear ones, in fact, I thought this evening of the 50 years since I first preached here, and how many have reached that blessed shore of our dear ones, and your dear ones, pastors, and the pastors, and deacons that I have known here, and also the Lord's dear people.

How many have been brought through the storm of life, and the Lord has guided them safely into the haven, and receive their soul at last.

so we extend our sincere sympathy, condolences to our dear friends and to our dear brother here in his bereavement.

You see, they have reached that shore. And so this is an encouragement to the Lord's dear people. Very well.

now let us, by his grace, just endeavor to expound a little the salient points in these narratives.

[16 : 27] And straightway, Jesus constrained his disciples to get into a ship. Now, there are two things there, very important.

he constrained them to get into a ship. There are several facets of interpretation as to the ship, but I would like to suggest to your nine, for the sake of our meditation this evening, the prefix that is before each case of the worthies of faith given in Hebrews 11.

By faith, by faith, by faith, Moses, when he had come to years, by faith, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season, by faith in Christ, and you set sail.

Undoubtedly, you will look to the Lord himself, to his mercy and grace and atonement, that is by faith, and it is very sweet, beloved, this wonderful term that we have before us in this portion, he constrained his disciples to get into a ship.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. You know, this word constrained reveals a glorious principle of the kingdom of grace, exclusive to the living family of God.

[18 : 57] It does not belong to the ungodly, it belongs only to those that he has chosen. constrained.

It's a two-way term, but first he constrained. Now, I want to remind you, the Lord never forces by the sheer weight of his omnipotence.

he never forces or compels them by his omnipotence, as it were, to do his will.

He constrains them by his love. I know there is that word compelled them to come in, but that compelling is the compelling of his mercy and grace by the Holy Spirit.

He never with his people uses in the abstract the sheer weight of his omnipotence to compel them and force them to do something.

[20 : 26] He constrains them by love. And that love, divine love and grace and mercy and compassion, his presence, his wonderful love constrains.

love. Now the constraining influence of divine love is prevalent, transcendent, efficacious, divine, and they're made willing in the day of his power.

love. So it is the principle of the kingdom of heaven, a principle that can strain. And so very willingly under the influence of his divine love and grace did they take that step.

They got into the ship. they entered that little ship. There was no question of an alternative.

They were constrained, it was done, it was spontaneous, it was irresistible. My dear friends, every step that is of the Holy Spirit, that the Lord will have you take, he will constrain you by his love.

[22 : 24] And the steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord, you're constrained. Just to say, before I dilate on this first facet of constraining, name that we have named, just to name the other facet, you, child of God, may constrain Christ.

We referred in our prayer to the two on the Emmaus road, and when they reached that place, he made as though he would have gone further, other, but they constrained him.

I wonder if you constrained him to come into this service tonight, Jesus himself to draw near and go with us.

Did you constrain him? He is constrained by his own love, and by his own spirit, and that blessed spirit indwells the living people of God, and the Lord is constrained.

We sing sometimes to the force of their united prayers, no pair can long withstand. Now, prayer, where there's united prayer, all the constraining.

[24 : 08] Even with one, the effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much, or two, again I say unto you that if two of you shall agree as touching anything that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father who is in heaven.

and when Peter was incarcerated, the prayer was made without ceasing of the church unto God for him. But I do love that word about the toll on the Emmaus road, and he made as though he would have gone further, but they constrained him.

Constrained him, my friends, as you're named, saying, abide with us, for it is toward evening and the days far spent. And he went in to tarry with them.

So you see, it's a beautiful, it's a divine, it's a heavenly word. It is a principle of the kingdom. freedom. If the Lord gives a few gracious souls in a church, they'll constrain him.

Well, just to revert to A, the constraining of the blessed love of God in our souls, constraining us with a powerful transcendent influence to do his will.

[25 : 54] And this will cover all the matters that concern you. You're constrained.

Obviously, I am disposed to tabulate a few. Not that it is possible to dilate upon every one of them by any means, but to name them.

The people of God are constrained by, it's a good thing to be constrained by love in all things, isn't it? Under the law, there's terror.

And the grace that's constraining by love. Love is the most separating grace there is.

And uniting, it unites you to the Lord, to his truth, to his will, to his person, to his precepts, to the trinity, to heaven, to his dear saints, chiefly to himself, and as it unites you to all things that are holy and pure and lovely and blessed and divine, it consequently separates you from everything that is inimical to that.

[27 : 31] Love is the thing, beautiful. Beautiful. Cleanse from idols, none will do it. If the Lord Jesus Christ is chief, if he is the altogether lovely to your soul, you'll be separated from idols.

That will kill off the idols. of this constraining. Let me just give a covering word.

If any step is undertaken by the constraining influence of the Lord, it's a good beginning, a good start in a thing, isn't it?

And if the beginning is right, the end will be right. if the Lord is author of the beginning and the beginning is by constraining, then the end is right.

There may be much need of correction and discipline and may be reproof, but the end will be right if the beginning is. So constrain.

[28 : 54] it's a great favor when two people are drawn together and they both fear God and love God and taught of God and they're constrained in their union to give their consent and to go to the altar of God to be united in holy matrimony and they're constrained.

Oh, the wonder of that, to have Jesus at the marriage and the marriage feast, the joy and the joy.

because they're both constrained. And so he puts his broad seal and attestation upon the marriage.

They were constrained. And it's a wonderful thing, too, to have the blessed harbinger in your spirit of having thus been united that you will be married to Christ.

And it's all a question of divine love. I, how wonderful if we are really married to the Lord Jesus.

[30 : 39] Love brought him from the skies. love, oh, love is the immortal grace.

Yea, he loved the people. It never began, it never ends. His delights were with them. He rejoiced in the habitable part of his earth before creation work began.

love, my friends, it's all love. And it is with me to name the holy precepts.

Now, some seem to think that the only precept is to follow the Lord in baptism. That is one of the holy precepts and one of the blessed holy ordinances, but it's love that constrains.

Obviously, we profess as a denomination holy baptism by immersion for believers believers.

[32 : 05] And yet, there's hardly anyone these days, or very, very few, who seem to have any exercise concerning it.

But he constrains by love. Love does it. It's spontaneous, it is absolutely wrought in the spirit by the Holy Ghost.

It's done. And then, when it's done in the spirit, there may be a poor, trembling body and mind.

There may be a poor, nervous and timorous body and mind again that would draw back, that feels incapable of facing what it would look on as an ordeal.

But what a joy it is to testify of the goodness of God. He constrained them. Well, I didn't come and I didn't intend to preach baptism at any length, but he comes into it.

[33 : 37] He constrained them. There's a time of love. There's a time when you pass through those waters in spirit.

Before ever you pass through them literally. I remember when my dear mother was baptized that the minister said to her, he said, you've passed this way before in spirit.

You've been this way. You've been in it. You've passed through it in spirit. And it's true. If you're constrained, you pass through it.

And then it's a matter of the Lord giving strength and grace so that you don't draw back.

what a preventative that may be. Now if any man draw back, my soul hath no pleasure in him.

[34 : 53] Well, it's love the constraints and then take the holy offices of the church of God, the office of deacon, of minister, of pastor, is a matter of constraining thy love.

I remember when the Lord put the dicker flock into my heart and hands in 1936, which is a long time ago now, and I felt two things.

I felt the weight of it prostrated me, but at the same time I felt such a measure of love, such a volume of love, that I put out both my arms and embraced it.

I was constrained. And of course it includes the dear sisters, those who labor in Zion, we referred to those who ministered to Christ.

they were constrained by love, oh yes, they loved him so dearly. There was Joanna, and there was Salome, there were a number of them, and Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of Joseph, and there were a number of these.

[36 : 35] Now, oh how important this is, and even to be a minister's wife, constrained. Because it means a tremendous load, as well as a deacon's wife, especially where there's no pastor.

Now, there's a constraining by love, and also in caring for the house of God, and the various matters that relate to your life, you're made willing, you're constrained.

And a situation, a position in this life, constrained, and where you live, it's not a matter of just thinking, well, out of a hundred houses, I can take any that I feel particularly interested in, it's a matter of being constrained by the love of God.

The Lord has made room for us, constrained, for the bounds of our habitation are fixed. you know every step from first to last, you take constrained, constrained to do something that is menial, and difficult, and something that your flesh would recoil from, and you're made willing.

You're constrained. You're constrained. well, the Lord constrained them. What a blessed start this is.

[38 : 26] And they got in the ship, and it was, the waters were tranquil at first. There was no storm. There was nothing to cause them dismay.

Oh, the dear Savior went on the mountain, went up to the mountain to pray. And I want to remind you that you are perhaps now in the midst of the sea, and the winds are contrary, and you're tossed, for the ship was now in the midst of the sea, tossed with waves, for the wind was contrary, things are a bit trying, rather difficult, and you wonder if you can hold on your why.

The Lord Jesus is interceding for you in heaven. He's not praying for you as he did on the mountain.

He's interceding for you. You'll come through, you'll hold on your why. He that hath clean hands shall be stronger and stronger.

It's well, you'll never sink, the boat will never go down, precious cargo, all the beauty of it.

[40 : 01] And you see, this covers to the business life of a child of God, or their profession. The Lord constrains them to do something.

And it's very much prayer. And the Lord helps them. And when things are difficult, they hold on their way. the ship was in the midst of the sea, tossed with waves.

Ah, what a wonderful thing it is, isn't it, to have the Lord as your guard, for him to be your savior and your intercessor.

And you're not alone in the storm of life. The ship is tossed with these waves. And the winds blow against you sometimes, not always, but you know the Lord is your guard and he'll bring you safely through.

He's your blessed pilot and his word is your compass. He'll bring you safely through. There'll be no loss.

[41 : 23] You'll never lose your life. You'll come safely through. And so, what a word of robust encouragement it is.

Oh, poor tempest, tossed soul, be still, be still, the Lord will come. He will say to the winds, he will rebuke them, he will say to those angry waves, to the sea, peace be still.

There's a great calm. You know, there are many storms. We talk about storms in the ocean, and they're terrific, and some of them.

having had two sons in the British Merchant Navy, we have received something of their reports, waves as high as the South Downs, and so on.

Never thought they'd get through, never thought they'd come to the port, and the cyclones, and so on, but you see, it's a wonderful thing, isn't it, to be brought safely through.

[42 : 45] They didn't think they'd come through a few times, but my friends, you sail, you sail to heaven with the Lord, and with his dear people, you'll come safely through.

He's there with you, for in that other narrative in St. Mark, he was asleep on the pillow, actually, love had put a pillow there for his dear head, that was crowned with thorns, later, that mine might with glory be crowned, and they awakened, they said, care is thou not that we perish?

They were safe enough, he knew, as man, he was sleeping, as God, his eyelids never asleep, he knew all about it, they were safe, and when he had rebuilt the wind, and said, peace be still to the ocean, he said, why are you so fearful?

How is it that she have no faith? well, this has been a joy to me, just to speak a few words in his name on this glorious subject.

You see, presently, you'll, by grace, go round the break water, enter the peaceful waters of the harbour, those tranquil waters, your little bar will every storm out ride, what about it?

[44 : 45] Your little bar, that was a sweet word to me many years ago, in London, your little bar will every storm out ride.

Presently, you will have reached that harbour, the waters are tranquil there, and you're about to come alongside the strand, to be tied up at the strand, and Christ there to welcome you.

Oh, with what raptures he will receive you. How amazing, isn't it? Blessed be God.

Lord, that has what they in dam homers confus in and will grow so in I morning, bist Och, got it a unbelievable more!

One is the Thank you.

[47 : 05] Thank you.