

Matthew 14:22-27, 17:1-8, 28: Jesus says: Do not be afraid 20/1/2008, am

## **With the kids: What are you afraid of?**

- Stuff going wrong?
  - display the 7 images of imminent disaster!
- What are we afraid of?
  - Jesus said: "do not be afraid"
  - we will be thinking later about when and what he meant...

## Introduction

- What are you afraid of?
  - one of the "imminent disasters" from earlier?
    - *or maybe its closer to home?*
  - stuff happening to you or your family
  - what people do or might think of you...

## "Do not be afraid"

- Most common command in the whole Bible!
- Jesus himself tells people not to be afraid on three occasions in Matthew's gospel:
  - and we read from them earlier...

### Walk on Water

- They've just seen Jesus have great compassion (14:14) on the crowd as well as seen his great power to provide
  - are they afraid that he is the Son of God, or afraid that he isn't?
  - afraid that he is some kind of compassionless, in-human monster?
  - a ghost (v.26)

### Transfiguration

- Peter has just declared great love for Jesus (admittedly partly misguided!), and made a huge leap in understanding...

### Resurrection

- In each case, in a sense, there was nothing to fear until Jesus showed up!
  - fully revealed, he is awesome, scary, fearful - holy, powerful, beyond what we can take in!
- Why does he say "do not be afraid"?
  - when he himself is the object of fear!!
- Compare with Psalm 23:
  - (1) *The LORD is my shepherd, I shall not be in want.* (2) *He makes me lie down in green pastures, he leads me beside quiet waters,* (3) *he restores my soul. He guides me in paths of righteousness for his name's sake.* (4) *Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me.*
- God does not want us to fear
  - when are we not afraid?
  - when the Lord is with us
  - why were the disciples afraid?
  - because they were overwhelmed with the realisation of God's holiness and power, so they almost couldn't see his compassion, care, his love

## Conclusion

- Are we afraid?
  - don't need to be - God is with us
- Are we not afraid?
  - we should be, at least from time to time, as we realise the great holiness and power and majesty of God!