

when He first met Peter in Matt 4:9. It is the same command he gives us all. If Jesus is our Lord, then we need to follow closely, doing what He does.

3. Grow Your Faith

We all start somewhere but that shouldn't be the place that we end.

Maybe your faith started with a simple prayer and showing up on Sundays. Where did it go after that first prayer? Share how you have trusted Jesus in different areas of your life since you became His Follower.

Where have you seen Jesus faithfully show up in your life and guide your steps? Or do you feel like you are still in the starting blocks of your faith? Does it feel like there hasn't been any change for a long time?

Don't settle for a stagnant faith. The power of God's love is limitless. The Holy Spirit will live in you and guide you if you surrender yourself to Him wholeheartedly. Be courageous, God is with you and He is for you. You can trust that He is good and He loves you, so let your faith be stretched, let go and give God the reins.

WRAP-UP

Faith is something that grows over time. We may start with just a little faith, and there will be times when fear, doubt, or difficult circumstances make it hard to trust God. But those moments can also help us grow. Like Peter, we're learning to keep our eyes on Jesus, take steps of faith, and trust Him even when we don't know what's ahead. The more we follow Jesus, spend time with Him, and experience His faithfulness, the stronger our faith becomes. We don't want to stay where we started—we want to keep growing, trusting God more, and allowing Him to lead us in every area of our lives.

MEMORY VERSE

30 But when he saw the wind, he was afraid and, beginning to sink, cried out, "Lord, save me!" 31 Immediately Jesus reached out his hand and caught him. "You of little faith," he said, "why did you doubt?"

- Matthew 14:30-31 NIV

Challenge – Seek God for the next step in growing your faith and then take a courageous step towards following Him.

Little Faith Pastor Jared Moine 9.27.26

INTRODUCTION

This week we are revisiting the story of Peter walking on the water. The story is familiar to most of us, but we are going to specifically consider what it says about our faith. What kind of faith did Peter have to jump out of the boat in a storm and walk on water? And what did Jesus have to say about his faith when he sank? Our faith may start small, but we want to keep it growing throughout our lifetime.

Ice Breaker

Do you remember the first time you jumped off the high dive into a swimming pool? How old were you, and was it easy or hard for you to take the plunge?

Key Passage

22 Immediately Jesus made the disciples get into the boat and go on ahead of him to the other side, while he dismissed the crowd. 23 After he had dismissed them, he went up on a mountainside by himself to pray. Later that night, he was there alone, 24 and the boat was already a considerable distance from land, buffeted by the waves because the wind was against it. 25 Shortly before dawn Jesus went out to them, walking on the lake. 26 When the disciples saw him walking on the lake, they were terrified. "It's a ghost," they said, and cried out in fear. 27 But Jesus immediately said to them: "Take courage! It is I. Don't be afraid." 28 "Lord, if it's you," Peter replied, "tell me to come to you on the water." 29 "Come," he said. Then Peter got down out of the boat, walked on the water and came toward Jesus. 30 But when he saw the wind, he was afraid and, beginning to sink, cried out, "Lord, save me!" 31 Immediately Jesus reached out his hand and caught him. "You of little faith," he said, "why did you doubt?" 32 And when they climbed into the boat, the wind died down. - Matthew 14:22-32 NIV

STUDY QUESTIONS

1. Following the Rabi

This story took place on the Sea of Galilee on a stormy night. The

disciples we headed to the opposite shore, but their progress had stopped because the wind and waves were against them. Then Jesus appeared, walking on the water!

27 But Jesus spoke to them at once. "Don't be afraid," he said. "Take courage. I am here!" - Matthew 14:27 NLT

8 He alone stretches out the heavens and treads on the waves of the sea. - Job 9:8 NIV

10 Don't be afraid, for I am with you. Don't be discouraged, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you. I will hold you up with my victorious right hand. - Isaiah 41:10 NLT

During a terrifying situation Jesus comes to the disciples with the reassurance that He is there with them. When has Jesus' presence given you the courage and strength to face a frightening circumstance? What promise did God give to us through Isaiah?

God doesn't always promise to take away what frightens us. But He does promise to give us strength, to help us and to hold us up through it. Jesus could have told the storm to stop as He had done before, but instead He let Peter exercise his faith. Sometimes He does the same for us.

28 Then Peter called to him, "Lord, if it's really you, tell me to come to you, walking on the water." 29 "Yes, come," Jesus said. So Peter went over the side of the boat and walked on the water toward Jesus.

- Matthew 14:28-29 NLT

13 You call me 'Teacher' and 'Lord,' and you are right, because that's what I am. 14 And since I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you ought to wash each other's feet. 15 I have given you an example to follow. Do as I have done to you. - John 13:13-15 NLT

Jesus was Peter's Lord and his rabbi or teacher. At the Last Supper Jesus gave them an example He wanted them to follow. On this night, on the Sea of Galilee, Peter was already willing to follow Jesus' example.

What are some qualities Jesus modeled that you would like to faithfully follow? (e.g. pray for healing, self-sacrifice, standing up for the oppressed...) What would be the worst-case scenario if you attempted to follow and fell short compared to the best case if we were successful?

One way our faith grows is by abiding with Jesus. The more time we spend in His presence, the more we are transformed and the greater our faith becomes. As we experience Jesus personally, our faith to follow Him will grow.

2. A Little Faith

1 Now faith is confidence in what we hope for and assurance about what we do not see. - Hebrews 11:1 NIV

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- Matthew 14:30-31 NIV

When Peter stepped out of the boat, he was demonstrating that he had faith. According to Hebrews 1:1, that means he had confidence in what he hoped for, even though it was unseen.

What do you think Peter was hoping for when he jumped overboard?

Peter hadn't seen what he hoped for, but what he did see was the storm and that was overwhelming. Yet he still had faith that Jesus would save him and so he cried out for help. Jesus immediately caught Peter and said "You of little faith, why did you doubt?" That word for "little faith" is compound word formed from oligos (Gr.): meaning "little," "few," or "short in duration, and pistis(Gr.): meaning "faith," "trust," or "confidence". So rather than a strong rebuke for having no faith, Jesus may have been encouraging Peter to stretch the confidence he had a little further as if He was saying– "Why did you stop? You were almost there."

Has there been a time in your life when circumstances seemed to overwhelm your faith? What would it look like if Jesus were to encourage you to stretch your faith a little farther in that area?

19 Jesus said this to indicate the kind of death by which Peter would glorify God. Then he said to him, "Follow me!" - John 21:19 NIV

37 About that time she became sick and died, and her body was washed and placed in an upstairs room. ... 40 Peter sent them all out of the room; then he got down on his knees and prayed. Turning toward the dead woman, he said, "Tabitha, get up." She opened her eyes, and seeing Peter she sat up. - Acts 9:37, 40 NIV

Peter's journey of faith had some twists and turns. He famously denied Jesus three times. But after Jesus was resurrected, He restored Peter and confirmed his calling to lead the church. Before Peter's martyrdom his faith grew exponentially, including raising Tabitha from the dead in Acts chapter 9.

When Jesus restored Peter, he ended their conversation with the command, "Follow me!". It was the same command that He had given