

Rethink

Part 3: Keep the Faith

Matthew 14:22-33

ME: What does it mean to follow Jesus? We all have our own ideas...

- Knowing a lot about Jesus... study
 - **Following Jesus starts with knowing and being known by Jesus**
- Often think it means having to give up the life we want for one of pious boredom
 - Last episode- **Following Jesus is a full life to enjoy, not a pious lifestyle to endure.**

WE: Another thought is... Following Jesus is about having faith. True... what does that mean?

- Being spiritual
- Choosing to follow a set of religious beliefs, principles, ideas, stories, traditions. OR NOT to follow others.
- Some mystical force that gets us through each week?
- Wishful/Positive thinking... Believing everything will be ok... Turn out way we want?
- Believing that the Bible is true?
- Trying to believe really hard... No matter what others say?
- For many Xians: Often boils down to "believing enough" to make God happy. (whatever that means) or get what we want

Faith is often an illusive and inexplicable concept.

And then we hear things like... "just have faith" ... and "Faith over Fear".

And don't get me started on faith healers... blaming people for not being healed b/c they don't have enough faith.

Put all of this together and we've got a jumbled mess...

What does it mean and actually look like to "have faith" in the 21st century?

If we strip off all of the baggage and barnacles we'll find it means the same thing it meant in the 1st century...

And that maybe we need to rethink what Faith is actually about.

Faith isn't found, it's chosen.

GOD: Someone who knew this better than most... **Matthew** tax collector, hated by others, but Jesus called him to be a disciple... written early, 60's AD

Paraphrase story... Feed 5000, make disciples get on boat, goes off to pray...

V. 24-25

What?! Don't believe it? You're in good company. They were seeing it and didn't believe it either. Don't forget the author was in the boat.

V. 26 - What would you think?

V. 27 Don't be afraid... take courage... Why?

- B/c they needed to toughen up and trust their abilities?
- B/c they just needed to believe things would be ok?
- Believe in God harder?
- Storm wasn't as bad as they thought
- You don't need to feel that way?

Jesus never tells us to simply stop feeling a way... he always gives us a *reason* why we can stop feeling it.

Why not be afraid?

"I am here." The way he uses it (I am) seems to harken back to 'I Am Who I Am' (**Ex. 3:13-14**) *the uncaused first cause*.

I am all sufficient, powerful, everything you need... the reason you never have to fear.

If I wasn't here you would definitely need to be afraid... this is dangerous but you don't have to anymore b/c I AM here.

Based it on himself... **Jesus makes HIMSELF the object of faith**

My thought would be... "Ah ok cool... can you get us back to shore?"

Peter had a different thought...

V. 28-29

Peter for some reason wants to try... Jesus says sure.

Great faith/trust to step out of the boat.

He truly believed Jesus could make him walk on water. How much trust would that take for you to do that?

But then...

V. 30

The wind got too strong and loud... the waves got too big.

Looked around him instead of at Jesus.

Peter doubted. WHAT A SINNER RIGHT?

Doubt can either deepen our fear or deepen our faith.

- We can "what if" ourselves to death
- We can allow doubts to overwhelm us and distort reality... "Oh I have a doubt I guess I don't really have faith"
OR "Oh I have a doubt I guess none of this is real."

- We can ignore them and never really go anywhere... and have no substance to our faith.. Crumbles at first real difficulty
- Or we can dig deeper and ask questions: “From what I know about who Jesus really is... is this too big for him to handle? Is there a logical answer to this doubt?”

My greatest steps in trusting Jesus have come out of some of my biggest times of doubt.

- God do you really exist? Had to dig and research and discover truth for myself
- Do you really care about me/forgive me? “Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and you will be saved...”

What you choose to do with doubt is what makes the difference.

V. 31 Probably with grin

Jesus not saying it's bad to doubt. Didn't mean “why did you doubt” or “why did you stop believing in yourself” “why did you let negative thoughts sneak in” but more to the point “why did you doubt ME”

“From everything you know about me... from what you just saw me do with 5000, seeing me walk on water, you walking on water... why did you choose to stop trusting me?”

Why did you choose to focus on the wind/waves? Negative/dangerous circumstances will always seem bigger... doubts will always seem insurmountable if you put your focus solely on them and not Jesus. **Jesus can handle any doubt... we just have to be willing to look to him.**

Peter had faith... got out of the boat right? But then he shifted his focus onto the waves/wind/doubt...

Issue is not the AMOUNT of Peter's faith... it was that he stopped focusing on the OBJECT of his faith... “you chose to stop trusting me”... “why did you doubt ME?”

Jesus defines faith as the CHOICE to trust HIM.

Peter then very quickly, almost instinct, yells “LORD save me” remembers who he's with...

V. 32-33

Worshipped him (and he accepted it)...

- Who would accept worship (especially in this jewish culture?)
- He's either a Liar, a lunatic, or God. (CS Lewis)

3 choices with this... story is made up... Jesus was a master illusionist... or he really is God the Son.

Eye-witness account, Matthew was in the boat, written only 30 yrs after event, while the others were alive to say... “No that's crazy...” AND Peter is still alive to confirm or deny it.

To me... logically (even though it sounds crazy, just like it did to the men who experienced it) it's a true story.

Not there yet... that's ok... Walking on water is an incredible thing to accept - I just want you to know that from my experience...

Jesus can be trusted because of who he has proven he is.

YOU:

The quality of faith isn't about *amount*... *it's about WHO* the faith is in.

We all face times of fear and doubt (shoot in one right now w/ direction of church)... but it's in those times we can deepen our fear or deepen our faith... "Lord, Save me" Good short prayer to remember :)

Following Jesus isn't about how much we try to believe, it's about the PERSON we choose to trust.

Faith is like a muscle... it starts small and that ok.. Normal... but the more you use it, practice it, the more it grows.

That's why Jesus could say... "Faith as a mustard seed..." and why Paul and Silas could say... "Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and you will be saved" (Acts 16:31). A little but if faith in our huge God.

B/c it's not about how much faith we try to muster up... it's about who our little bit of faith is in.

Trusting he is who he says he is and will do what he says he will do... and then forming our lives on *that* foundation.

And it's a cycle... 1st episode- ***The more you choose to trust Jesus the more you will come to know Jesus...***
and **The more you come to know Jesus the more natural it becomes to choose to trust Jesus.**

True faith is the simple choice to trust Jesus in a complicated world everyday.

As you exercise the faith muscles.

Who is he...

Pray: Show me I can trust you.

Read: Jesus' interactions with people (As reading Gospel, Mark maybe? from episode 63)... **Or more guided: Romans 8:35-39**

WE:

We need to rethink what it means to have faith in the 21st Century...

It's not something we try to muster up

It's not a spiritual high we have to try and chase

It's not dependent on our situation, circumstances, church attendance, culture...

Faith isn't a feeling or an experience, or something we find... Faith is choosing to trust Jesus. That he is who he says he is and will do what he says he will do because he died, resurrected, and is alive today

People say they can't have faith, but we exercise faith everyday. We sit in a chair, we get on an airplane, or we drive down the road with on-coming OREGON drivers.

Faith in Jesus is a choice just like choosing to trust a pilot I have never met and may have never seen.

The difference is that I have all this historical and personal evidence that Jesus is who he said he is and will do what he says he will do.

And when we make that choice... we feel and experience peace, comfort, joy... and we find purpose, meaning, and full life.

True faith is the simple choice to trust Jesus in a complicated world everyday.

Questions

1. How have you seen God working in your life and world this week?
2. Can you relate to Peter in this story? Share an experience from your life of trusting (or not trusting) Jesus.
3. Read Romans 8:35-39. How does this encourage or challenge you in trusting Jesus?
4. What is the next step in you knowing and trusting Jesus? How can your group pray for you this week?

Summary:

"You just need faith." What does that even mean and how do we "get" more faith? Faith is something that seems mysterious and complicated. But Jesus made it simple and powerful. Let's rethink what it means to "have faith" for the 21st century.

Episode Breakdown:

0:00 Trust Fails


1:00 Welcome & Alliances


3:00 Keep the Faith, w/ Jon

26:45 Some News

31:45 Bloopers you can count on

[[Next Episode July 10th! No Episode July 4th weekend.]]

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SHOW NOTES:

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▶ Ask for Prayer or Questions: <https://www.yourcrosscreek.com/welcome/>

▶ Our next Outdoor Party! June 27, 4:30pm POSTPONED due to extreme record-breaking heat. Next ones July 11 & 25! Stay tuned.

▶ #SalemOregon #local Giveaways (Happening on Social Media later this week)

- Enter to win this week on Social Media- Furbish <https://www.facebook.com/furbishsalem/>

- Last week's giveaway- Donatello's <https://www.facebook.com/DonatellosSalem/>

▶ Suggested Bible Readings:

Colossians 1:15-20 <https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Colossians+1%3A15-20&version=NLT>

Hebrews 12:1-4 <https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Hebrews+12%3A1-4&version=NLT>

Acts 16:25-40 (Roman Jailer believes)

<https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Acts+16%3A25-40&version=NLT>

▶ Additional Resources:

Monica recommends: "The Dusty Ones: Why Wandering Deepens Your Faith" by A.J. Swoboda

https://www.thriftbooks.com/w/the-dusty-ones-why-wandering-deepens-your-faith_aj-swoboda/9720030/#isbn=0801016975

The Calling of Matthew scene (The Chosen): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7IUL9yq0We8>

▶ Music we listened to making this episode:

Jay and the Americans: Come a Little Bit Closer- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZuWkVqum6a8>

Meant To Live (live 2021): Switchfoot - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rIaLsr-KwZ0>

Say Something: Pentatonix- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0dYlvdLdK9w>

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► The bible we used in the Scripture section: NLT Life Application Study Bible

<https://www.thriftbooks.com/w/nlt-life-application-study-bible-third-edition-hardcover/20777487/#isbn=1496433823>