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Pastor Jeff Bachman

Well, good morning, everyone. How we all doing? It's a good Sunday. It's great for you to be here. I'm glad you're here. I'm glad I'm here. It's a good Sunday. It's a good Sunday. Hey, as you heard from Pastor Aaron, we have a gift for those who are new, and that gift is our Matthew journal. We give that up for a couple of reasons. We're preaching through the book of Matthew. We have been, we will be. Hopefully, we will be done before Jesus comes back. That is yet to be determined. We will see, but the jury's still out. But we'll be doing that. And that journal that we give for newcomers and for everyone is a way to just track, that each week as you come, you see what God's truth has to say to you. It becomes kind of rear view living, rear view mirror living that you can kind of track what's going on. So we encourage you to have that. We're continuing on. Today we're in Matthew 14, 22 through 36. So I think before we start, I think it's worth mentioning this. Today's passage is probably one of the most famous passages in the Bible, okay? So it's the story or in the account of Jesus and Peter walking on water. Now, I don't know why that has become so famous. I mean, think about it, it doesn't make a ton of sense. There's a couple stories that are similar to this that if you've grown up in church, you've seen the story on flannelgraph. Any flannelgraph survivors? If you don't know what flannelgraph is, Welcome to church. We're so glad that you're here. It's where you take pictures and you stick them up on the... It's magic. I don't understand, but it just, it hangs on the board. So it's the best. So, but there's a couple of stories. I mean, there's this one, but there's a story about a big boat and a bunch of animals, and it's Noah's Ark, and we teach that one. And it's extraordinary circumstances create this powerful thing where you see God moving. But everyone just kind of goes, "Oh, yeah, there's a big boat and lots of animals, and it's just fine." Like, no, don't miss it, that's pretty amazing. Or you look at the story of a big guy and a little guy, and the little guy defeats the big guy, and trusting God, 'cause you have David and Goliath, right? There's that story. And then, but I was kind of thinking, the stories that I was raised on in church are Noah's Ark, David and Goliath, and then Peter walking on water with Jesus. Which, by the way, these are actual photos from the incidents that took place. The resolution is fantastic. But I mean, think about it for a second. This story, again, if you're not familiar with it, then I'll describe it a little bit. It's a story of Jesus, as we'll find, walking on water in the middle of the night, and he ends up being anywhere between two to four miles out into the... In fact, look at this map. Here's a map of... Now, those were hyperbole and pictures. This isn't. This is an actual map of what took place. There is actually the Sea of Galilee, and this is where it took place. So if you look at the Sea of Galilee, the accounts that we were reading in 14 was taking place on the right-hand side or off to the east in Bethesda. And so what it says is that Jesus immediately sends them into the boat. They cross from Bethesda over to Gennesaret. And so they're on a boat in the middle. The Sea of Galilee is 13 miles long and 8 miles wide. It's actually a place that you can sit. And so if you're in the middle of this, you don't see the side. It really feels for all intents and purposes like you're in the ocean. Like there's nothing to be seen and it's out there. And there are wind and waves. This isn't a pond or a lake, it's big. And so if this is, here's what I'll say, is if you grew up in church and this is normal to you, read it again. 'Cause it shouldn't be normal. It shouldn't be

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commonplace. It shouldn't be boring. This is an extraordinary account. And for those of us, if you're new to the things of faith or the Bible or of church, if this sounds hard to believe, it is for everyone. So welcome, we're glad that you're here. Now, do I think that it happened? Yes, I absolutely do think that it happened. And why is it included in the book of Matthew? I'm not sure, but I think it has something to do, I think Matthew was including this for a few reasons. One is that I think it gives us a fuller picture of Jesus and who he is and what he's calling his disciples and ultimately us into. I think in the big picture, it's talking about what it looks like to have a life of faith, which faith is very difficult. Faith is hard. It is a muscle that you have to work on and develop and exercise. And then I think here's the thing that we can start with. Here's our starting point as the one, is that a life with Jesus starts with one step, one step out of the boat. Maybe, maybe today that's what God is calling us into in whatever capacity that that means to be true for us. So let's look at Matthew 14, and we're gonna start at 22. I'm not gonna read the whole thing. I'm gonna read a little bit. We're gonna talk, and then we'll kind of go back and forth like that. But it starts in Matthew 14, 22, and it says, and notice, I want you to count in your own head how many times the word immediately pops up. Immediately, there's one. Jesus made the disciples get into the boat and go on to the other side, go ahead of him to the other side while he dismissed the crowd. After he had dismissed them, he went up to the mountainside by himself to pray. Later that night, he was there alone, and the boat was already a considerable distance from the land, buffeted by the waves because the wind was against it. Shortly before dawn, Jesus went out to them, walking on the lake." So to give you some context for this passage, again, this is a continuation. We've been preaching through Matthew. Pastor Larry talked in 14 this last week there, that in fact, for the last couple of weeks, we've been looking at King Herod, that Herod was a political leader that was jealous of John the Baptist and Jesus, he was threatened by them. And so he had John the Baptist killed, not only killed, but beheaded. So Jesus heard about this, Jesus being his friend, his partner in ministry, and actually his cousin. So Jesus was, as it said in scripture, he was grieved. And yet at the moment that he discovered that he was grieved, he then immediately proceeded to then with him through the disciples feed thousands. And it was, as we saw at the start of this passage, immediately. It was done immediately. Jesus was working in and through all of this. So then I think for this account today, there's no break in time, there's no lapse, though Jesus retreated to the hillside for a little bit, is that there was no chance to regroup. So I wonder, could it be that based on this famous account of Jesus that while grieving, still doing miracles, trusting in God with his disciples, could it be that he's asking us and inviting us in to experience that exact same life? I think so, I do. There's an old leadership adage that I've heard, I've used at different points in time. I don't know if this is true for you, but it's this. It's four steps, it says this. I do and you watch me. Then we do it together, then you do it, and I watch you, and then you do it alone. And then hopefully you will then do that for other people. Anyone else ever heard this or did I just make it up? I'm gonna be selling my book outside in the lobby next week. So, okay, so I made this one up. You're gonna be, it's a treat. Get ready. This leadership adage, though, I think it became all the more real to us and to me when I decided that I believed it, but that at the point that I had

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to teach my son to drive, all of a sudden it became very real in life. So, preface, I think I'm a really good driver. Statistically, my wife is a better driver based on the amount of accidents that I've had and she hasn't, the tickets that I've had and she hasn't, but I still think I'm a better driver. Anyways, we'll debate that later, But I think we're both good drivers and I think that we lived a life where we lived very loudly about why you should drive and you should stay off your phone and you should use your arm signals and all that. And so Jackson watched attentively. But there came a day where we had to switch seats. And if you have not ever experienced teaching a 15 year old with a fuzzy gray brain how to drive, you have not lived one moment of your life. And if you say, "How does that feel like?" I'll describe it, the only thing I can say is, I'll describe it like this. It is, oh, and actually that's him there. So here's the end of the story, he passed. He passed, in fact, so proud of him, he went and he got a job and he saved up and he bought his own car, so he's a rockstar. So proud of him for that, but didn't start that way. So we got him in the car, so to understand what it feels like, pretend that you're in your car and you get your car up to 70 miles an hour. and then you turn on cruise control. And then you climb in the backseat and you just see what's gonna happen. That's what it feels like allowing a 15 year old to drive. You don't know where it's gonna go. Sometimes it's gonna go good. Sometimes you are, I was so close to Jesus those days. I was, it was, it was, he, I actually said, I should probably get in the backseat. Jesus, you set up your shotgun. You'll, it can't give Jesus a wheel either. My son had to have it. So, but good luck. Now, here's where it becomes true. I saw in our life, it was one of those where at some point I had to move out of the driver's seat and take my hand off the wheel. And you start to see Jesus do that same thing with his disciples. In fact, it was last week, Larry talked about, the disciples said, "These guys are hungry." And Jesus says in Matthew 14, 16, "You feed them. "They don't need to go anywhere. "You do it." Hands off the wheel. He's giving us a model of how we're supposed to live, not only with each other, but with the disciples as well. And so then we take these truths that he has lived out, and at some point for them, and also for us, is that he's not here. He is not here. We continue to have guidance through God's spirit that leads us and guides us, but it is ultimately up to us on how we are going to live a life of faith. And that's what we're gonna see here in Matthew 14, 26 and following. When the disciples saw him walking on the lake, they were terrified. "It's a ghost," they said, and they cried out in fear. But Jesus immediately said to them, "Take courage, it is I, do not be afraid." "Lord, if it is you," Peter replied, "tell me to come out onto the water." "Come," he said. And then Peter got down onto the boat, walked on the water and came towards Jesus. How many times in your own life, just think about this for a minute, have you allowed an opportunity to pass by? A chance to be generous, a compliment to give, an opportunity that you could grab. How many of those have just gone by, or that you've sat and watched them happen. On some level, I feel like that's kind of the definition of hope. Hope is a feeling or an expectation for a desired outcome that you want to see happen. You see a circumstance and a situation, and you want to place yourself into it with hope. I mean, full confession, I think there are many times in my own life that I would rather have hope in what could be than actually taking that step and it not happening the way that I expected it to. I think about in my own life, there's probably a

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graveyard of hope sitting there of different moments that I saw could have happened, but I was so afraid to take that step out that I missed maybe what God was doing in that moment for me. But now Peter, he saw it. Picture him sitting in the boat. He saw it and he hoped that he could be with Jesus. He experienced, he wanted to experience what Jesus was experiencing. Live like Jesus was living and to be with Him. But so often I think that we lose hope because we're afraid of what we might miss if we take that step like Jesus does, or I'm sorry, like Peter did. Jesus' response to fear, "Take courage, it is I, don't be afraid." I think it's interesting that in Scripture we never see that Jesus comes and He doesn't bring peace to a situation. Now to be clear, Jesus is peace and in Him there is peace. But what I kind of went through, I was like, does Jesus ever bring peace? Not usually, what Jesus brings is a sword, He brings division and He brings an abundant life. But He doesn't necessarily bring calm to a situation. What He said in this circumstance, it wasn't like everybody calm down, don't freak out. He actually said to take courage. Notice that doesn't change the circumstances in the situation. It's literally that because of who Jesus is, he is bringing something for them to take on, to take courage, that translates actually to the words have confidence. I picture it almost as that Jesus is bringing this thing that he's offering to them to try it on, like a sweater, see what it feels like to live a life that is confident and courageous, not because of ourselves, but to say, it's as if Jesus says, I am here, you can have confidence, not because of yourself, and I am for sure not right now going to change circumstances for you, but I am going to offer you a life of confidence and courage that will allow you to live and experience it. You will experience the experiences differently, even though the circumstances haven't changed. So have confidence, I am here. Jesus is inviting the disciples to step into an opportunity and a miracle, that they get a chance to now experience the infinite right in in the temporal, which is ultimately what Jesus invites us into. It's what we get to step into when we worship. It's what we get to step into when we live in the next steps that Jesus has for us in our life. When we care and serve for people, when we live generously, when we build into God's kingdom, that's what we're doing. You know, I wonder what it is about fear that keeps us from those experiences and those opportunities and the full intentions of what it is that God wants us to experience. I think on some level, at least for me, it's a protection of what I have. That I've taken an inventory of my life and who I am and what I have and the experiences that I have are too valuable for I would rather hold onto this than risk this, whatever this is for what I'm being invited into. And say, and that looks nice, but I'd rather stay here. And yet what Peter did is that he took with hope his courage and he translated that into faith. Hebrews 11, one says it like this. Now, faith is the assurance of things hoped for and the conviction of things not seen. It's as if this hope that he had was then placed into something with that very first step. And all of a sudden his faith started to grow and take shape and I picture it, and maybe this is wrong, but I picture it, that Peter looked and he stepped out of the water And he looked at Jesus, he goes, "Can you see this? I'm walking on water." And Jesus is like, "That's right, you look at me. We're here, we're in this together." And he's like, "I'm walking." And he's like, "I know, can you believe it?" I've had the privilege of watching my three kids each take their first step. And it's very similar. That they start as babies laying on the ground and

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then they sit up and at some point they start pulling up on everything, on walls, on animals, on tables, anything that they can pull up on and they stand. And there's a moment where they're holding on to that, which is for sure. This thing that I go, I know this thing is not going to let me down. And they take their hands off. And then it's just, Jesus, take the wheel. And here we go. And their arms are up, their fingers are wide out, their eyes are open, and they're just looking at the parent. And they're like, we're doing this. And the parent's like, yeah, come on, let's do this. Have you ever gone into a living room just seen a kid taking their first steps just wandering around? Never, never, they're walking to something and they're looking at you and they're walking like this and then all of a sudden, after about two or three steps, they go, I can't believe I'm doing this. Do you see how far away I am from the wall? You're so far away, I can't do this. What do they do? They fall down, right? Thank the, they sit down, yes. Thank the Lord for diapers. That's probably why they were invented. But I picture it similar, is that Jesus is like, Peter, just look at me, fix your eyes on me. It's you and me, we're gonna do this. But all of a sudden he starts to, it's reality sets in. And the world that's around him begins to tell him that this thing that you can, begins to say, you can't. You won't, I bet you won't. And Jesus says, you can. Continue on Matthew 14, 33. Says, but when he saw the wind, he was afraid. Beginning to sink, he cried out, Lord, save me. Immediately, there it is again, Jesus reached out his hand and caught him. You of little faith, he said, why do you doubt? When they climbed into the boat, the wind died down. Then those who were in the boat worshiped him saying, truly, you are the son of God. You of little faith. Anyone ever read that and think that Jesus is shaming Peter? I do. That's how I've always interpreted that. And yet I don't think that's true. After some consideration and prayer, here's where I land on this, is that I actually feel like Jesus is speaking to Peter exactly how Peter needs to be spoken to. Told you I have three kids, I love all of my kids the same. Depending on the day, I like them at different levels of good and bad, and today, maybe, maybe. Like I said, infinite love. You're doing great today. I love them all, I love them differently. I love them how they need to be loved. I speak to them how they need to be spoken to. I discipline how they need to be spoken to. And I see the same thing with Jesus and Peter. Peter is cut from a different cloth. If you spent time in scripture, you know he is more ready, fire, aim than he is ready, aim, fire. And so Jesus is going to have a different relationship with Peter than he has with the other ones. Notice if you're familiar with scripture later on, Peter goes and cuts off the ear of a soldier who's trying to arrest him and then denies Jesus later that night. That's Peter. Notice that when Jesus is resurrected and he says, "Go find the disciples and Peter." If any of them are actual disciples, it's Peter. So then why in the world did Jesus say, "The disciples and Peter?" It's because Peter needed something different at that moment. And I think that that's true here as well. Is that he and Jesus have a different relationship. On you, I will build my church, Peter, Petros, the rock. I will build it on you, and so I'm going to speak to you differently. And Peter spoke to Jesus differently too. If you don't know what that feels like, you need to get somebody in your life who talks to Jesus differently, not irreverently, but differently. I'm fortunate enough, we have on our staff, Pastor Megan. And if you have ever listened to Pastor Megan talk to God or to affirm or encourage you, you just go, I think you know more about Jesus

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than I do. And though he makes mistakes, I look at Peter and I go, "I think you're getting it in a way that I don't get it." So you need to find a Peter to speak to Jesus in your life and learn from that. So I think that's, and then the second is this, is I think that on some level, the interpretation for what he said in "You Have Little Faith" is kind of this idea, "We've been over this. "We've talked about this." With no disappointment in his voice, probably less than I even gave right there, it's saying, "Peter, we've talked about this "and we've done this." Like I said, I taught my son to drive. My wife taught him to drive better. And after he had gotten his permit and he had done his three driver's trainings, he had kind of been in it for about four to six months. He, at the start of driving, really favored the right-hand side of the road, which, I'll tell you what, you're not living until you're six inches away from somebody else's rearview mirror. Like, it's just, you're just alive. And so when you're in that right-hand seat, you really just get a good look at all the other cars and the bodies and pets and houses and front lawns. You're just, you're way over there to the right. Over the time of the four to six months of his training, he fixed that. And he kind of moved into the center where most drivers drive on the lanes. About four to six months in, he all of a sudden started to revert back to that, to where he was starting to get over there to that side where, and being in the right-hand seat, you're like, this is too close for me. And so we had a conversation where I just talked to him, I said, "Bud, you've learned this already. "You know this. I'm okay with you making mistakes, let's make new mistakes. Let's do something differently. And I see that true in here as well. Because in Matthew 8, same book, a little earlier in Matthew 8, 23 through 27, Jesus and the disciples have a similar experience. 23, it says, "Then he got into the boat "and his disciples followed him. "Suddenly a furious storm came up out of the lake "so that the waves swept over the boat. "But Jesus was sleeping. "The disciples went and woke him saying, "'Lord, save us, we are going to drown.' He replied, "You of little faith, why are you so afraid?" And then he got up and he rebuked the wind and the waves, and it was completely calm. The men were amazed and he asked, "What kind of man is this? Even the wind and the waves obey him." We've been over this, but it's not shame. And I think that we've got to get to a point in our own life, in our life in Jesus, in our life with faith, where we've got to understand that in Christ, we are fully loved. "In Christ we are fully seen," which that might be the scariest part of this. And in fact, if you've been in any sort of a, well, in any sort of a relationship, but I don't see there being a lot of correlation between being fully loved and fully seen sometimes in human relationships. Because if I am fully loved, then I can't be fully seen because you haven't seen all the gross stuff of who I actually am. So then as Jesus comes to see and know more about me, which he already did, but as I step into that relationship, is to know and to trust that I am fully loved, I am fully seen, and yet I am fully accepted. And the feeling that you feel when you sink and that you fail and that you tell God, that's the thing that's trying to protect us to fail and to flee and to not do it again, but that's not of God. Just hear me clear. And especially students, hear me clear. Failure, that feeling, that shame, that is not from God. That is us, it's a protective thing that we have, or it's an expectation that was put on you, but that is not truth and that is not from God. As I read the story, there are shadows of fear and doubt, and then I interpret that into some level of shame. But

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that's not what Jesus is teaching, and that's not what he's telling Peter. And so ultimately, I believe that's not what he's telling you and I. I think that Jesus taught this, and he spoke to Peter in this way, to teach for a changed life. He didn't come simply to give you information. He didn't want you to learn more and know more so that we could just be more. He gave us information and he gave us the character of God so that we could do something with it. Think of the people that he had the biggest issue with. The people that Jesus had the biggest issue with are the ones who knew the most. But it wasn't that they knew the most, it was that they didn't do anything with the things that they knew. So then for you and for I, as I read this, I sit here and I go, how much do I know? I'm a professional Christian. Like I gave up my Olympic status a long time ago. I went to school for this. So I know a decent amount. Am I doing what I should be with this? It's almost always the religious leaders and the disciples that Jesus took issue with because of the things that they knew and their life didn't match up what they knew. You have little faith, verse 26. Why are you so afraid? He asked them and he meets the disciples in that. I found an interesting quote about this. Andy Stanley says it like this, "Jesus wasn't after mental assent to facts, knowing more. Jesus was after active, living, do the right thing faith. And when he taught, he taught with that in mind." And so Peter wasn't living out the thing that Jesus had taught and that they had worked on. Jesus wasn't telling him he failed, rather he needed to continue to step in by faith to what they had gone through. I think that there's another part in this that I don't want us to miss, and it's this idea, It's one word, it's the idea, it's balance. A couple of weeks ago, we had an event for the men, it was called Jesus on Tap. If you came to it, it was a fantastic event. We gathered down at Mare Island Brewing Company on First Street, and we're gonna do it again. I hope that you come. I met more guys that felt comfortable coming to an environment like that than darkening the doors of our church. And we got to talk about things of faith, it was fantastic. But there was a very honest question that was asked that night, and I love the question, and it was this. It essentially said this, how do you balance, there's that word, How do you balance being a Christian and a father and a husband and just an all around good guy? And the answer that I gave him, I said, you don't. That's not, that's a fake aspiration to live towards. You aren't going to live in balance. Let's just be clear. If that's your expectation, you're gonna be disappointed all day and you're chasing something that I don't actually think exists because you are going to have wind and waves. And social media tells you that you have more wind and waves than everybody else 'cause their life is perfect. So just remember that you are going to experience wind and waves. And in fact, I think that it goes on from there and to just say this, I think that there's an old adage that we believe that has come somewhere out of Christian culture that's not actually true and it's this, that God won't give you any more than you can handle. First off, I think that's an absolute lie. Secondly, I think it comes from 1 Corinthians 10, 13 where it says that God won't tempt you any more than you can handle. And if you are tempted beyond what you can handle, He will give you a way to stand up under it or run out from underneath it. That's what it is. It's not that God won't give you any more than you can handle. So then which of course, if you believe that, if you believe that that is a true statement about the character of God, then you of course, when the wind and the waves come in your life, which

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they will, they will come. When the wind and the waves come in your life, then you're going to assume one of two things. One, either that you've done something wrong to deserve and earn these wind and waves, or secondly, that God has absolutely abandoned you and walked away from you. And we come here on a Sunday and we sing that song, oh, you're never gonna let, never gonna let me down. And I'm just sitting there going, I don't actually believe that all the time. I feel let down all the time, but the truth is that God hasn't let us down. It's that when we live in an existence and in a circumstance where our faith becomes shaken, we put it on him, not us. What I see in scripture is actually completely different from that. Psalm 23 says that, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, not stay there. And so, yes, our life is going to be tens and ones on a scale and every now and again, when it's just right, we're gonna pass through fives, but that's not where we're gonna stay. You're gonna walk through the valley of the shadow of death. You're gonna step into Psalm 42, where it says that waves crash over me and deep cries out to deep. That's life and that's reality of saying that the life that we live in is broken and this side of heaven, that's what we're going to experience. What I see is James 1, 2. Consider it joy when you face trials of many kinds because the testing of your faith will develop perseverance. What I see is Genesis 50, 20, where it says what you intended for harm, God will use for good. He doesn't waste a tear. He doesn't waste anything that you're going through, but that doesn't mean that you need to smile in the face of it and be okay with it. Just know that Jesus is in it with you. God allows in his sovereignty for us to experience things so that it brings us back to a place of dependency on him and that we will then look more like Jesus. That's the goal. Not that our bank account is full and that we got green lights all the way down the road. That's not it. And so God meets us in that. And so if God is giving us any sort of circumstances, I actually think he's giving us exactly what we can't handle to remind us that it needs to be in him and in him alone that we trust. Trust in the Lord with all of our heart and lean not on our own understanding. In all of our ways acknowledge him and he will lead our paths straight. Go back to James 1, 2 and see this. See it like this. It starts out, consider it pure joy. my brothers and sisters, when you face trials of many kinds, but it doesn't stop there. It continues on with the people that he's writing to are the scattered Jews. He's writing to the people that are suffering, that are struggling. They're saying, I took a step out in faith. I followed Jesus even after he was resurrected. And it's James saying, it's there, and Jesus is doing something in you. It doesn't stop there. Three goes and says, because you know that the testing of your faith will produce perseverance, not perfection, perseverance, that you can make it through. Let perseverance finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, lacking in nothing. Again, if we think that the end goal is that we win, we lose. God is developing you to look more like Jesus today than you were yesterday. That's the goal. And if you're missing that, if you lack it, verse five, it says that if you lack wisdom, you should ask God. That wisdom is the word wisdom, Sophia, which also means God-given wisdom. Sometimes the Holy Spirit that leads and guides in you and also external circumstances of people guiding you and leading you as well. And then it goes on in six. But when you ask Peter to walk on water, you must believe and not doubt because the one who doubts is like waves of the sea blown and tossed by the wind. And when we step and when we cry out and when we

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sink, when does Jesus save? Immediately. Immediately. Maybe not the way that you and I would expect, but immediately. And so he doesn't waste a tear or a wave or an experience because he is conforming us to look more like him. Matthew 14, 34 through 36 finishes by saying this. "When they had crossed over, they landed at Gennesaret. "And when the men of the place recognized Jesus, "they sent word to all the surrounding country. "People brought all their sick to him "and begged him to let the sick "just touch the edge of his cloak. "And all who touched it were to be healed." Jesus' ministry continued to grow to grow exactly in the way that he planned, and he was now becoming more famous and infamous than ever, as we will see in the chapters to come. But when I read this passage, I always think that it's more about shame and what didn't happen than what did. For so many years, I read this as Peter walked on water, he saw the wind and the waves, he doubted, he sank... Sanctated? I don't know. He sunk. Shame on Peter. There's a book that was written... It's been a bit now, but it's a gentleman by the name of John Ornberg, who is a pastor, and a preacher, and an author, and a friend of Northgate. He wrote a book called, "If You Want to Walk on Water, You've Got to Get Out of the Boat." And he pointed this out to me that for a brief moment, at least Peter walked on water, right? At least he walked on water. He experienced a water walking life. Why did we immediately go to the sinking? When it was he's the one who did the Everybody else would have sunk. I would have sink. Everybody else sinks. He walked on water. There's a study that was done a few years ago where they had 100 people play the game of Super Mario Brothers. It's in fact called the Super Mario Effect. Had 100 people play Super Mario Brothers, 50 of them got three lives, 50 of them got infinite lives. Of the ones who had three lives, they performed poorly or worse. They didn't get as far, far and they didn't have as much fun. The people were, it was all green lights and they couldn't lose and if they fell down a pit they would go back. It was this idea that they got to experience more. It's focusing on the princess and not the pits to stick with the task and to learn more. That's Super Mario. That's the Super Mario effect. It was living and saying, "If I lose, I still win." got Peter out of the boat, faith held him up, but it was fear and taking his eyes off Jesus that began the sinking. So when you live a water walking life with Jesus, when you take a step, when Jesus calls you out of the boat, you learn and you grow and you step into the fullness of what God intended for you. And when you ask for wisdom and faith and experience, God's going to to give it to you, but I'll tell you this, it's usually not going to be in the way that you expect it. So don't be surprised when things don't go exactly as you planned. It's sitting in the passenger seat of a permitted driver and it's going to be a little crazy. I promise it. I think so often for me, I miss water, water. I will, I will stop by the boat when, fill in the blanks. It's just a really busy season. I'll walk out, I'll step on the water later. You know, let me just clear up my schedule a little bit. This is a bad week for me, but I'll walk on water next week. Maybe it's, oh, you know what? That looks great. Maybe somebody else should do it. I probably don't deserve this. You know, hey, you, you're really good. You like water. You should go and do. What if, what if Peter said, you know what? I'd love to walk on water, but it's just not a good good time for me, I'll come back to you when everything clears up for me. What? How silly does that sound? How silly would that be? God is inviting you into experiencing life with Him, not outside of Him, and so for the good and

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the bad, all of it, it becomes a part of it. For the disciples, they had Jesus. They fixed their eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of their faith. For us, it looks a little different. It's the Holy Spirit leading and teaching and guiding. It's asking for wisdom. It's inviting those people into it. Let me, I asked a group of people to come and help me. These, yeah, come on up here. These are our students, or not all, but these are some of our high school students. And if you have kids in the student ministry, man, our student ministry is fantastic. They're amazing. You guys line up over here. Come on, get over here. Come on. One, two, three, four, five. I might, I need a sixth one. So, oh, I know. Actually, you stay there. You stay there. Get up here. Yeah, come on up here, come on up here. Okay, so these are our students. Come on, get up here. So our student ministry is phenomenal. They're kicking off summer camp. It actually has now sold out like two or three times. We keep going and getting more spots, and then they keep selling it out, and they just keep inviting their friends. So if you want to be a part of something amazing, join the student ministries or volunteer. I've also, by the way, side note, last couple of weeks I've been serving in our children's ministry too, and it is phenomenal. Now, that being said, it's a little bit like the ministry of like, you know, puppies in a box at one of those pet stores? It feels a little like that. I'll tell you what, I have learned more about my kids and our church and our ministry by serving in the children's ministry. If you are a parent who enjoys the benefit and the blessing of a cup of coffee and sitting here without your kids, I would encourage you to give two hours a week, once, once, why are you guys switching? You don't wanna stand by me? (congregation laughing) Consider serving in our children's ministry. It will make your experience with, you will understand your kids more and you will be loving your church for years to come. So here's what I see it as. For us, oftentimes it is, it's fix your eyes on Christ, the author and perfecter of our faith. But what does that look like for us? It's the Holy Spirit that leads and teaches and guides, is an advocate for us. And so he speaks to us, but yet it's difficult sometimes to understand that anyone ever had a hard time praying? Praying turns into an early nap? Or you're like, I was praying and I just didn't get anything out of this. Or what are you saying? I'm not sure. Here's what I see it as, it's something like this. So, these guys, so you are going to be, I saw you switch, I know what you did. You're gonna be the voice of God, congratulations, okay? And you're gonna start reading this. This is just the Sermon on the Mount, these are the words of Jesus, so start reading it. It's not a test, I'll help you sound out the big words. That's God. - Blessed are the poor. - The, to he, no that's the, no. No, so you're gonna start reading that, and then here, take two more steps, three, there. So, you're gonna read that. This is the voice of God in our lives, okay? Leading us, teaching us, guiding us. But oftentimes, so keep, read it loud and proud. But sometimes other distractions happen. Don't you get distracted from me, okay? There are other things that happen that will take away from this. You're gonna do Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star. Stand up here. And then all of a sudden somebody goes and they go, ♪ Twinkle, twinkle little star ♪ You were the one who switched. I gave you all the words. And then all of a sudden, you get in a fight at home and you have another one, count from 100 and all the way back down. There you go, and then after that, you get in a fight at work because you aren't performing in the way that you should. Say the alphabet as many times as you can. And then after that, all of a sudden

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you look and your bank account is empty. Oh no, happy birthday, many, many times. And then you get sick or there's a distraction and then there's wind and waves, Sing I'm a Little Teapot with the hand motions, please. Loud, I can't hear you. Does your brain ever sound like this? Keep going. Now, there are times, keep going, I'm gonna tell you, there are times where the voices are quiet. Shh, keep going, you keep going. And one in the back. it, but there are times where you, it's so clear and you can hear what God is saying in your life. Keep going. Oh, sorry. Because God doesn't sleep or slumber. Let's keep going. And then there are times when the other voices are so loud that you can't even believe it. Happy birthday to you. Now keep going. Now I want you to do this. Focus on this voice for just a second. When he was angry with the brother, sister, we were subject to judgment. You can hear it, right? It's there, he didn't go away. It's just a little harder to hear. So we've got to do everything that we can to sometimes quiet these other voices, recognizing that God's still strong voice will oftentimes not be the loudest one in your life. That's what we ended on? Take him to court, all right. Let's give these guys a big hand. Thank you guys so much. (congregation applauding) Thank you, you guys are awesome. Phenomenal. Our family ministry is the best, you guys, they're rad. So I don't know, and maybe you're like, that dude's brain is really noisy. It is, it's really noisy. And I think it's all the more true. I mean, again, I've got three teenagers in my house. I hear the chatter going on in their mind. And in the same breath, they can be laughing and joyful and then weeping and crying. It's what's going on up there. But in the wind and the waves, God meets you in that. And just because of wind and waves, it does not change who God is in his faithfulness. Hope in Jesus is what compels us to step out of the boat. Faith is what keeps us up. And as our faith increases, as that gets stronger, as we fix our eyes on Jesus, Fear then becomes a distant memory as we deeply abide in who God wants us to be and to be in Him. I'm gonna pray for us. I'm going to ask for a few things, for our faith to increase, but for us to also be, to just recognize God, we oftentimes limit God's capacity in our lives. And that doesn't mean sometimes that the outcomes are gonna be different. What it means though is that he's gonna meet you where you are at and allow you water walking life and experiences. So Father, would you today, may it even be our prayer of a declaration of saying, it is your strength, your power, your capability, your ableness to strengthen our faith. Could that be our prayer and our cry? That in the wind and waves that we are standing in today, would you be more than able to meet us in that and to do something in and through us? In whom we pray, amen.