

# MINISTER'S MESSAGE

SUNDAY MARCH 1, 2020

KNOX PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

## “What’s Water Walking?”

Based on Matthew 14:25-31

*There is something – Someone – inside us who tells us there is more to life than sitting in the boat. You were made for something more...There is something inside your that wants to walk on the water – to leave the comfort of routine existence and abandon yourself to the high adventure of following God.*

~John Ortberg

So what possessed Peter to get out of the boat? It was a dark and stormy night on the water. Disciples they might be, but fishermen were decidedly a superstitious lot with a great fear of the dark and an even greater fear of the water. So on this night of nights, all their worst fears seemed to come alive around them;

- The wind began to whistle through the sail;
- The waves began to lap against the boat;
- The rocking back and forth became intense;
- The thunder in the distance grew louder.

It was a sailor’s nightmare. And then Peter decided to get out of the boat.

Was it a reckless moment? Was it fear of drowning that drove him to hysteria?

**Or**

Was it a test? Was it a test of this newly found role of ‘disciple’ that inspired Peter to get out of the boat? An opportunity to test within himself, his resolve, his faith, his devotion to the Messiah; a chance to prove himself to the others and to Christ, that we was a good and faithful follower?

“IMMEDIATELY  
JESUS  
REACHED OUT  
HIS HAND AND  
CAUGHT HIM.

“YOU OF  
LITTLE  
FAITH,” HE  
SAID, “WHY  
DID YOU  
DOUBT?”. ”

~MATTHEW 14:31

**Or**

Perhaps a little more thought provoking  
Was he testing Christ?

*“Lord, if it’s you,” Peter replied, “tell me to come to you on the water.” (v28)*

Commanding Christ?  
Demanding something from the Messiah?

Hmmm...

It hadn’t worked out so well earlier in the day when the disciples had demanded Christ send the hungry crowd home at suppertime:

*“Send the crowds away, so they can go to the villages and buy themselves some food.” Jesus replied, “They do not need to go away. You give them something to eat.” (v15-16)*

You would have thought they had learned their lesson the first time.

The simple message of Matthew’s story is this:  
**Keep your eyes on Jesus and you can walk on water.**

Let the noise of the world and the static of distraction and your fears to control you, you will sink. But keep your heart and your soul and your mind focused on the whispers of Christ, and you will accomplish more than you ever imagined. It’s about trust. I am reminded of the chorus:

*Turn your eyes upon Jesus  
Look full, in his wonderful face  
And the things of earth will  
grow strangely dim  
In the light of his glory and  
grace*

~ Lauren Daigle

The more difficult message of Matthew's story is this:

**Trusting is not demanding.**

And we are a world that likes our every desires and whims to be satisfied quickly. Peter demanded a miracle from Christ: to walk on the water like Him.

*Jesus said, "Come." (v28)*

And he did walk on water, until fear overtook him, and he stopped believing: in himself, and in Christ's ability to do the impossible. "If you want to walk on water, the you have to believe in Me" Jesus might of said. This too is about trust. But just twisted a little differently.

You have to trust.

[a head thing]

You have to believe.

[a heart thing]

And that's were the water begins to lap at our feet. Because it's easier to tell ourselves that we trust, than to make our hearts believe that we can walk on water.

But you can walk on water. You can do more, and be more than you ever thought possible.

Lent has begun. And we approach our table today, with a contemplative heart that knows the dark journey we begin to undertake this day. This season weaves its way around the difficult and damaged parts of our sorrows and failures in search of healing and hope for our bruised and battered spirits. This is a difficult journey and one we cannot do alone. We must trust that Christ walks with us on this road. We must believe that He can heal our hurts and revive our spirit.

We trust in the table before us.

But can you believe in it?  
Can you believe that you can walk on water?

Amen.



*The material in this Lenten Series is based on the book, "If you Want to Walk on Water, You Have to Get Out of the Boat" by John Ortberg.*