

*The Walk on Water Challenge Outline  
(Turnpike Wesleyan – May 2, 2021)*

*Introduction*

So often in our lives we move around **cautiously**, hoping that we'll never have to face any obstacle or challenge that calls us out of our **comfort** and **security**.

We cannot afford to allow our **spiritual** routines and our **religious** traditions to bind us up and prevent us from developing a lifestyle of extreme **faith**.

Today's challenge is to move beyond an **ordinary** perception of **faith** and to **embrace** a new **reality**; a reality where you have the courage to step out of your comfort zones and begin walking towards Jesus Christ.

**Matthew 14:22-33**

Immediately after this, Jesus insisted that his disciples get back into the boat and cross to the other side of the lake, while he sent the people home. After sending them home, he went up into the hills by himself to pray. Night fell while he was there alone. Meanwhile, the disciples were in trouble far away from land, for a strong wind had risen, and they were fighting heavy waves. About three o'clock in the morning Jesus came toward them, walking on the water. When the disciples saw him walking on the water, they were terrified. In their fear, they cried out, "It's a ghost!" But Jesus spoke to them at once. "Don't be afraid," he said. "Take courage. I am here!" Then Peter called to him, "Lord, if it's really you, tell me to come to you, walking on the water." "Yes, come," Jesus said. So Peter went over the side of the boat and walked on the water toward Jesus. But when he saw the strong wind and the waves, he was terrified and began to sink. "Save me, Lord!" he shouted. Jesus immediately reached out and grabbed him. "You have so little faith," Jesus said. "Why did you doubt me?" When they climbed back into the boat, the wind stopped. Then the disciples worshiped him. "You really are the Son of God!" they exclaimed.

The only thing that distinguished the **Water-walking** exploits of Peter from the **Boat-potatoes** he left behind was **faith**. He exercised his, the others didn't.

Faith is the catalyst for a life of **adventure**. Fear is the catalyst for a life of **missed opportunities** and **regrets**. Every human story, yours and mine included, is about the struggle between **faith** and **fear**.

There are at least **three** big ideas that emerge from this Water-walking event in Peter's life.

***Principle #1: Water-walkers realize that walking on water begins with Obedience.***

One of the biggest lessons we can learn from Peter's shoreline experience is that adventures of faith always begin in **obedience**.

And it usually never starts with obedience to really **big** things, like walking on water, but usually **smaller**, less noticeable nudges that God gives us to just **step** into the boat.

***Principle #2: Water-walkers accept Fear as the price for growth.***

How do you think Peter felt when he finally had both feet on the water? I think Peter was **scared** to death, because he knew that if it were up to him he'd **sink**.

That night on the water Peter learned, and we should to, that it's not the water, winds, and waves we should fear, but the **absence** of the **Savior** we find in the boat. We should be willing to face our fears and leave anything **behind** in order to move closer to Jesus.

***Principle #3: Water-Walkers know that Comfort Zones create barriers to experiencing God.***

The only person on the boat that night who never had to imagine what might have been was **Peter**. The other eleven guys had no **story** to tell; they had no experience to **treasure**; no **encounter** with Jesus to call their own. They were just **spectators**, casual observers to the great adventure of faith.

Faith is available to each one of us. The book of Ephesians tells us that it's a free **gift** from God. The writer of Hebrews tells us that without faith it's **impossible** to please God. James, Jesus' own brother, writes that faith without actions is **dead**.

Why, then, do we allow our **fear** to overshadow our **faith**? When will our water-walking adventures begin?

Many of our stories will lie **unwritten** unless we exercise our faith and **step** out of the boat.