

# If You Want to Walk on Water, You Have to Get Out of the Boat!

(lesson on spiritual growth)

➤ = next PowerPoint Slide

## ➤ Intro:

- **story:** Peter and apostles, late at night crossing the Sea of Galilee, saw Jesus walking on the water, asked Jesus if he could walk on water also, Jesus said “come”, got out of the boat, and walked on the water toward Jesus

## ➤ - pic. / analogy:

- **boat** is where you are now
- **water** is the next step you need to take in your spiritual development
- **to get to where you need to be**, you have to get out of the boat

- **What does this analogy teach us about spiritual growth?**

## ➤ To grow spiritually, you have to **walk by faith, not sight** – get out of the boat

- **illus.:** Peter, when he had this very simplistic approach, everything was fine

- **sought** to walk on the water, **asked** Jesus
- **got out of the boat, walked** on water – imagine what that would be like, to experience personally, to watch

- **2 Cor. 5:7** we walk by faith, not sight

- **not pay attention to worldly things** that would inhibit us, tell us spiritual growth impossible
- **not trust people or worldly things**
- **trust God and His word**, all things are possible with Him

- **Rom. 1:16; 10:17; 1 Th. 2:13**

- **Rom. 1:5; 16:26** purpose of God’s word is to bring about obedience – walk by faith = obey

- **Rom. 1:16** power of the gospel is **obedience resulting in salvation**
- **Acts 6:7** Christians are the ones who are **obedient to the faith**

- **spiritual growth: walk by faith, obey** – step out of the boat and walk on the water

- **illus. song #326: Trust And Obey**, near end of vs. 4

- What He says, we will do; Where He sends, we will go; Never fear, only trust and obey

- To grow spiritually, you **can't be content with where you are now** – get out of the boat
  - **illus.:** Peter saw Jesus, and was immediately dissatisfied with being in the boat, wanted to be with Jesus, had the faith and courage to walk on the water and go toward Jesus
    - Peter the only apostle who wanted to be with Jesus badly enough, willing to get out of the boat, during a storm, to do it
    - could all of the apostles have gotten out of the boat that night, if they wanted to badly enough
  - we can't be content with where we are right now in life
    - must have a desire to change, move to next level, grow spiritually
    - must love God so much we want to step outside our comfort zone
  - **Heb. 13:12-14** we have to go outside the camp – go outside the boat and walk on the water
    - cannot be satisfied (content) with the camp (city, boat) we live in today, go out
  - therefore our contentment is based on spiritual things, not physical things
    - if we're spiritually content, physical things don't matter
    - **2 Cor. 12:10** content with weaknesses, with insults, with distresses, with persecutions, with difficulties, for Christ's sake
    - **1 Tim. 6:8** content with food and covering
  - to grow spiritually, not content with physical things, only spiritual (spiritual progress)
  
- To grow spiritually, your **faith must overcome your fears** – get out of the boat / stay out
  - **illus.:** Peter successfully walked on the water until his fear became greater than his faith, and he began to sink
    - before Peter got out of the boat, Jesus said, “Take courage, it is I; do not be afraid.”
    - after he began to sink, Jesus asked “You of little faith, why did you doubt?”
  - we are going to be afraid sometimes, but our faith has to be stronger than our fear
    - we can't allow fear to paralyze us into inaction – apathy
    - we can't allow fear to turn us back from the right things, to go with the crowd in doing the wrong things
  - **1 Jn. 5:4** victory that has overcome the world – faith
    - **1 Jn. 5:1-4** faith - love (agape) - obedience to God - service to God - victory over the world (sin)
    - **1 Cor. 13:4** love never fails
  - **illus.:** **Matt. 1:20** God told Joseph, not be afraid to take Mary as your wife
    - analogy: had to get out of the boat and walk on the water – overcome social trials and peer pressure of marrying a pregnant woman who was allegedly conceived by the Holy Spirit
    - faith, love, overcame fear, victory
  - if we have faith and love, as God commands, we'll get out of the boat, walk on the water, and grow spiritually

- To grow spiritually, you have to **stay focused on Jesus** – get out of boat / stay out
  - **illus.:** Peter saw Jesus, was focused on Him, stepped out of the boat and walked on the water, but as soon as his focused changed to worldly things (waves, wind) he began to sink
  - **R- Heb. 12:1-2** our focus has to be on Jesus (fixing our eyes), **not on things of the world** (encumbrances, sin, entangles us) – focused on the reward in heaven where Jesus is
  - **analogy: keep focused on Jesus, like runner focused on the finish line**
    - the minute we take our focus off Jesus, we begin to sink into the world
    - to keep walking on the water of life, we must focus on Jesus and ignore the distractions of sin that want to pull us down
    - **2 Tim. 2:4** not entangle self in the affairs of everyday life
  
- To grow spiritually, you **can't stop trying** – get out every day, over and over
  - **illus.:** Peter succeeded at first, then failed the night he walked on the water, but he never gave up, kept trying, kept improving, was the leading apostle and was given the keys to the kingdom
    - from failure we learn our weaknesses and shortcomings, whereby it is revealed what we must do to grow
  - **illus.:** Paul strove to grow spiritually every day
    - **1 Cor. 15:31** “I die daily”
    - **analogy: Paul got out of the boat every day, to become a better Christian**
  - **Phil. 3:7-8, 10-11, 12-14** press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus
  - **analogy: as Christians, we must get out of the boat every day, and do better in our service to God**
    - never stop trying, never stop pushing ourselves

### Summary / Inv.

- **review PP** – Are you stepping out of the boat every day?
- **inv.:**
  - if not a Christian, you have to put your focus on Jesus, take a chance on Him and step out of the boat
    - What must you do?
  - if you are a Christian but you've put your focus back on the world, you have to put it back on Jesus, so you can again walk on the water
    - What must you do?
- **song #326: Trust And Obey**, near end of vs. 4
  - What He says, we will do; Where He sends, we will go; Never fear, only trust and obey