

## session 7 study guide

# stepping out in faith

### message

There is a popular saying that states, “Faith isn’t faith until it’s all you’re holding on to.” The Christian walk often requires that we step out in faith, trusting that God will provide for us. It isn’t easy, but if we cling to the promises He has made throughout the Bible, we can gain comfort from the examples of His faithfulness that we read about.

The passage you are about to read out of the book of Matthew takes place after Jesus has spent a long day teaching and healing. In the verses prior to this story, Jesus has just performed the miracle of the loaves and fishes, transforming five loaves and two fish into enough food for the multitudes in the crowd. It is now evening time, and Jesus sends the crowds away and departs with His disciples.

As you read, keep the following questions in mind: (1) Why does Jesus perform miracles? (2) How would you have responded if you had been in the boat?

*Immediately Jesus made the disciples get into the boat and go on ahead of him to the other side, while he dismissed the crowd. After he had dismissed them, he went up on a mountainside by himself to pray. When evening came, he was there alone, but the boat was already a considerable distance from land, buffeted by the waves because the wind was against it.*

*During the fourth watch of the night Jesus went out to them, walking on the lake. When the disciples saw him walking on the lake, they were terrified.*

*“It’s a ghost,” they said, and cried out in fear.*

*But Jesus immediately said to them: “Take courage! It is I. Don’t be afraid.”*

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

*“Come,” he said. Then Peter got down out of the boat, walked on the water and came*

*toward Jesus. But when he saw the wind, he was afraid and, beginning to sink, cried out, "Lord, save me!"*

*Immediately Jesus reached out his hand and caught him. "You of little faith," he said, "why did you doubt?"*

*And 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" (Matthew 14:22-33).*

### **dig**

1. In spite of the busyness of His day, what does Jesus make time to do (see v. 23)?

---

---

---

---

2. What does this passage say about Peter's faith?

---

---

---

---

3. What does it mean to "step out in faith"?

---

---

---

---

4. If you had been Peter and Jesus had invited you to step out in faith from the boat to the water, what would you have done?

---

---

---

---

---

5. Why do you think Jesus performed miracles?

---

---

---

---

---

6. Often times, the miracles Jesus performed had an impact on both the individual to whom they were directed as well as on those who saw or heard what had happened. What was the direct result of this miracle?

---

---

---

---

---

**apply**

1. Write down your own definition of “faith.”

---

---

---

---

---

2. In this story, Peter demonstrated his faith in Jesus by stepping out onto the water and walking toward Jesus. When have you had to step out in faith in your life?

---

---

---

---

---

3. Peter had trusted in Jesus and was upheld. But then, the Bible says that Peter saw the wind and became afraid. He began to sink, and cried out, “Lord, save me!” (v. 30). What had changed?

---

---

---

---

---

4. Seconds before, Peter had been walking on the water with Jesus. Now he found himself sinking. Had Jesus stopped holding up Peter?

---

---

---

---

5. When it comes to stepping out, do you struggle with doubts? Become fearful? Have a go-for-it attitude? Tentatively do it? Gripe about it? Wait for someone else and then follow him or her? Describe how you handle this call to obedience.

---

---

---

---

---

6. Think of an area of your life in which Jesus is calling you out onto the water. Maybe it is something you feel Him calling you to get involved with or someone whom you sense you are supposed to reach out to. What is holding you back from taking that step of faith and walking toward Jesus?

---

---

---

---

---

7. Sometimes it can be hard to know if you should really step out in faith. God's voice is not described as a megaphone announcement or a blaring signal, but as "a still small voice" (1 Kings 19:12, *KJV*). So, how do you know if you are truly hearing God's call?

---

---

---

---

---

Here's a checklist for knowing if you should step out in faith on a particular action:

- ☐ Will it glorify God? In 1 Corinthians 10:31, Paul writes, "Whatever you do, do it for the glory of God."
- ☐ Is it biblical? Is the action you are considering consistent with God's teachings? In John 14:23, Jesus states, "If anyone loves me, he will obey my teachings."
- ☐ Do the significant people in my life support it? Oftentimes God uses important people in our lives to help us understand His will.
- ☐ Do I sense God's leading? Are you sensing a nudge, an urging, an instruction from God to move forward in faith?

8. What do the following verses reveal about faith?

Ephesians 2:8: \_\_\_\_\_

---

---

Mark 10:13-15: \_\_\_\_\_

---

---

Colossians 2:6-7: \_\_\_\_\_

---

---

James 1:5-8: \_\_\_\_\_

---

---

Ephesians 3:16-18: \_\_\_\_\_

---

---

**reflect**

1. On a scale of 1 to 10, how would you rank your faith in Jesus?

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
Limited											Strong

2. How can you work to strengthen your faith?

---

---

---

---

---

---

3. In Mark 10:15, Jesus says that “anyone who will not receive the kingdom of God like a little child will never enter it.” Why do you think it is often easier for children than adolescents or adults to have faith?

---

---

---

---

---

4. Respond to the following statement: *Doubt is a feeling, but faith is a choice.*

---

---

---

---

---

---

5. Can you still be a Christian and have doubts?

---

---

---

---

---



6. Have you ever had doubts in your faith? How did you react or respond?

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

Everyone has doubts—it is a natural part of our spiritual life. Here is a list of suggestions on how to handle doubts:

- ◆ **Don't panic when doubt arrives.** Expect it to arrive from time to time and be prepared to deal with it.
- ◆ **Be honest about your doubts.** Don't be ashamed. Even Peter, one of Jesus' closest disciples, had doubts.
- ◆ **Don't ignore your doubt.** Ask God and fellow believers to help you work it out.
- ◆ **Stay in fellowship with others.** Don't drop out. Remember that God can use the people in your life to reveal His truth.
- ◆ **Seek God.** Through reading the Bible, prayer and worship, we allow time for God to speak to us.
- ◆ **Be open.** Don't be afraid to think new thoughts and test new avenues of faith.
- ◆ **Confess.** Continued, unconfessed sin can bring doubt into our lives. Ask God to forgive sins that are troubling you.

## meditation



Now faith is being sure of what we hope for  
and certain of what we do not see.

HEBREWS 11:1