

Sermon Discussion Guide:

Dealing with Doubt

Sunday, May 5, 2024

Scripture: **Matthew 14:22–33**

OVERVIEW

We, as Christians, are people of faith, but we also struggle with doubt and uncertainty. **Doubt is often an experience God uses to strengthen our faith.**

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. In Matthew 14, Jesus had just miraculously fed five thousand and then sent his disciples to cross the Sea of Galilee by boat during the night. If you had just witnessed the miraculous feeding of the five thousand and were then directed by Jesus himself to cross the sea by boat, do you think you would have been faith-filled and fearless if your boat was battered by the wind and waves? Why or why not?
2. Where do our doubts come from? What things (emotions, thoughts, and circumstances) lead you to doubt God, doubt Christianity, or doubt your salvation?
3. Re-read verses 25 and 26 aloud and try to imagine yourself in the boat. How would you have reacted to seeing Jesus walking on the water toward you during the storm? What would have scared you more—the stormy sea or seeing Jesus walking toward you on it?
4. Continue to imagine you are in the boat when Jesus told his disciples to take heart (have courage), assured them it was him (not a ghost), and gently encouraged them not to fear (verse 27). How would you have reacted to hearing Jesus' voice and encouraging words in the middle of the storm?
5. Which version of Peter can you most identify with? Making the audacious request for Jesus to command you to walk on the water with him, having the faith to actually walk on the water to Jesus, or becoming fearful when focusing on the power of the wind and starting to sink?
6. When your doubts come, do you cry out like Peter, "Lord, save me?" How can we learn from this part of Peter's example?
7. Are you encouraged by Jesus "immediately" reaching out his hand and taking hold of Peter (verse 31)? Are you encouraged by Jesus causing the wind to cease when he entered the boat (verse 32)? How can these things apply to you?
8. When Jesus says "You of little faith, why did you doubt?", we should imagine hearing these words spoken tenderly and compassionately. If, instead, you imagine hearing these words spoken scoldingly, why do you think that is?
9. How can our doubts be used by God to strengthen our faith rather than shipwreck our faith? What can you do to undermine your doubts and strengthen your faith?