
OUTLINE

- I. After Jesus fed five thousand men with five loaves and two fish, look what happened:

Jesus constrained his disciples to get into a ship, and to go before him unto the other side, while he sent the multitudes away. [23] And when he had sent the multitudes away, he went up into a mountain apart to pray: and when the evening was come, he was there alone. [24] But the ship was now in the midst of the sea, tossed with waves: for the wind was contrary.

Matthew 14:22-24, emphasis mine

- A. Jesus' words about going to the other side were spoken by the Creator (Col. 1:16).
 - B. He is the one who spoke that very lake into existence—all of His words carried that same creative power.
 - C. If the Lord has ever told you something, He meant every single bit of it.
 - D. The disciples didn't think about who had told them to do this.
 - E. Jesus was the parent force, and He said, "Get in and go to the other side!"—the disciples didn't understand whom they were dealing with.
- II. The disciples had glimpsed who Jesus was, but they weren't keeping it foremost in their thoughts.
- A. If they had really thought about who had told them to do this, they wouldn't have been so overwhelmed.
 - B. In the midst of the storm, the disciples could have stood on the Lord's word to them and said, "He didn't tell us to go to the middle of the lake and run the risk of drowning!"
 - C. They had what they needed to accomplish Jesus' instructions; they just reverted to being carnal and forgot all the supernatural lessons taught that day.
- III. Most people would say, "You can't fault the disciples. Look, the winds were really bad!" but again, that's because they magnify physical, natural things instead of God.

HOW TO BECOME A WATER WALKER-Lessons in Faith

- A. When the Lord spoke to the disciples, He didn't say, "Guys, I'm sorry; I shouldn't have left you out on the sea by yourself."
- B. I believe the Lord expects us to do better than most of us are doing; we have His promises but just aren't believing them.
- C. Many people identify with the disciples and say, "I understand exactly how they felt; it's hard to maintain your faith when you're in the midst of a storm!"
- D. Although the Lord understands and has compassion on us, that isn't normal; it may be normal according to those who don't believe God, but it isn't the normal Christian life.
- E. We need to recognize and focus on whom we serve, the command He's given us, and what He's already done.
- F. Instead of being overcome by our problems, we can overcome our problems by His promises.
- G. If the disciples had put absolute faith in what Jesus said, they could have walked on the water.

IV. John's account of Jesus walking on the water shows us another important detail:

Then they willingly received him [Jesus] into the ship: and immediately the ship was at the land whither they went.

John 6:21, brackets mine

- A. The boat and all its inhabitants were instantly transported to the other side, where Jesus originally told the disciples to go.
 - i. It's very possible that if they had stood and believed, this would have happened for them even before Jesus showed up on the scene.
- B. At times, God will tell us to do things that go against the normal flow of nature.
- C. God lives in the supernatural realm, and if we are truly following Him, we will too.
- D. If we haven't ever been in a situation like that, where we've gotten in over our heads, it's probably because we're playing it too safe.
- E. We need to step out of the boat and start walking on the water!

DISCIPLESHIP QUESTIONS

1. “*Jesus constrained his disciples to get into a ship, and to go before him _____*” (Matt. 14:22).
 - A. “*And wait*”
 - B. “*And swim across*”
 - C. “*Unto the other side*”
 - D. All of the above
 - E. None of the above

2. What did the disciples not understand?

3. *Discussion question:* How do you react when you don’t focus on what God has told you to do?

4. Why were the disciples so overwhelmed by the storm?

5. Why did the disciples revert to being carnal?

6. *Discussion question:* How do you keep Jesus foremost in your thoughts?

7. Why do most people not find fault with the disciples?

8. True or false: When the Lord spoke to the disciples, He said, “Guys, I’m sorry; I shouldn’t have left you out on the sea by yourself.”

9. Instead of being overcome by your problems, you can overcome your problems by_____.

10. *Discussion question:* What could happen in your life if you put absolute faith in what Jesus said?

11. True or false: It’s very possible that if the disciples had stood and believed, this miracle would have happened for them even before Jesus showed up on the scene.

12. God lives in the supernatural realm, and if you are truly following Him, _____.

13. If you haven’t ever been in a situation like that where you’ve gotten in over your head, it’s probably because of what?
- A. You’re a great swimmer
 - B. You’re playing it too safe
 - C. You’re a great time manager
 - D. All of the above
 - E. None of the above

14. *Discussion question:* What does “stepping out of the boat” look like for you?

SCRIPTURES

MATTHEW 14:22-33

And straightway Jesus constrained his disciples to get into a ship, and to go before him unto the other side, while he sent the multitudes away. [23] And when he had sent the multitudes away, he went up into a mountain apart to pray: and when the evening was come, he was there alone. [24] But the ship was now in the midst of the sea, tossed with waves: for the wind was contrary. [25] And in the fourth watch of the night Jesus went unto them, walking on the sea. [26] And when the disciples saw him walking on the sea, they were troubled, saying, It is a spirit; and they cried out for fear. [27] But straightway Jesus spake unto them, saying, Be of good cheer; it is I; be not afraid. [28] And Peter answered him and said, Lord, if it be thou, bid me come unto thee on the water. [29] And he said, Come. And when Peter was come down out of the ship, he walked on the water, to go to Jesus. [30] But when he saw the wind boisterous, he was afraid; and beginning to sink, he cried, saying, Lord, save me. [31] And immediately Jesus stretched forth his hand, and caught him, and said unto him, O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt? [32] And when they were come into the ship, the wind ceased. [33] Then they that were in the ship came and worshipped him, saying, Of a truth thou art the Son of God.

COLOSSIANS 1:16-17

For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: [17] And he is before all things, and by him all things consist.

JOHN 1:1

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

JOHN 1:3

All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made.

HEBREWS 1:3

Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high.

MATTHEW 16:16

And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.

MARK 6:45-52

And straightway he constrained his disciples to get into the ship, and to go to the other side before unto Bethsaida, while he sent away the people. [46] And when he had sent them away, he departed into a mountain to pray. [47] And when even was come, the ship was in the midst of the sea, and he alone on the land. [48] And he saw them toiling in rowing; for the wind was contrary unto them: and about the fourth watch of the night he cometh unto them, walking upon the sea, and would have passed by them. [49] But when they saw him walking upon the sea, they supposed it had been a spirit, and cried out: [50] For they all saw him, and were troubled. And immediately he talked with them, and saith unto them, Be of good cheer: it is I; be not afraid. [51] And he went up unto them into the ship; and the wind ceased: and they were sore amazed in themselves beyond measure, and wondered. [52] For they considered not the miracle of the loaves: for their heart was hardened.

MARK 4:39

And he arose, and rebuked the wind, and said unto the sea, Peace, be still. And the wind ceased, and there was a great calm.

1 JOHN 5:4

For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith.

JOHN 6:15-21

When Jesus therefore perceived that they would come and take him by force, to make him a king, he departed again into a mountain himself alone. [16] And when even was now come, his disciples went down unto the sea, [17] And entered into a ship, and went over the sea toward Capernaum. And it was now dark, and Jesus was not come to them. [18] And the sea arose by reason of a great wind that blew. [19] So when they had rowed about five and twenty or thirty furlongs, they see Jesus walking on the sea, and drawing nigh unto the ship: and they were afraid. [20] But he saith unto them, It is I; be not afraid. [21] Then they willingly received him into the ship: and immediately the ship was at the land whither they went.

OUTLINE

I. Jesus was in the same storm, so He knew what was going on with His disciples:

And he saw them toiling in rowing; for the wind was contrary unto them: and about the fourth watch of the night he cometh unto them, walking upon the sea, and would have passed by them.

Mark 6:48

- A. Even though it seems clear that the Lord came to the disciples' rescue, presented Himself, and even came close enough for them to see Him, the Scriptures say that He would have passed them by.
- B. The Lord revealed Himself to them, but it was their responsibility to call out to Him by faith and to reach out and make a demand on His miracle-working power.
- C. The disciples' responsibility to respond in faith to Jesus' presence is a perfect parallel to how God provides miracles for us today.

II. It doesn't matter what our situations are—God knows what we're going through, and He's touched with the same feelings.

- A. For example, Saul had never personally persecuted the Lord Jesus Christ when He walked the earth in His physical body, but Jesus cried out to him, saying,

Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?

Acts 9:4

- i. Saul (Paul) was persecuting the post-Resurrection followers of Jesus.
- B. This shows us how personally our Lord takes things.
- C. Whatever we do to a member of the body of Christ, we do to Him.

Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me.

Matthew 25:40, emphasis mine

- D. At times we may think, *Nobody knows the trouble I have*, yet the Word says,

Your Father knoweth what things ye have need of, before ye ask him.

Matthew 6:8

- III. The Lord knows exactly what you're going through (Heb. 4:15).
- A. God is with you to deliver you from whatever situation you're in.
 - B. But just as He appeared to His disciples and would have passed them by, it's up to you to "*come boldly unto the throne of grace, that [you] may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need*" (Heb. 4:16, brackets mine).
 - C. Crying out in desperation and pity, saying, "God, don't You love me? Where are You? Do You exist? Do You care?" isn't making a demand on God.
 - D. If anything, you're doubting His promise that He'll never leave you nor forsake you (Heb. 13:5).
- IV. Jesus didn't say, "Get into the boat and drown trying to get to the other side."
- A. They doubted His Word because they weren't aware of how powerful the promise was that He had given them.
 - B. We can only speculate about why the disciples didn't call out to Jesus in faith.
 - C. It seems that He intervened on their behalf without any response of faith on their part.
 - D. It's possible they could've died if the Lord hadn't intervened and rescued them.
- V. People who adhere to an extreme "sovereignty of God" type of teaching really get upset with the truth that Jesus would have passed them by.
- A. They say, "Nothing can happen but what God wills or allows. He orchestrates everything perfectly according to His plan."
 - B. God's Word abounds with examples that contradict this false assumption.
 - C. God wills "*above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth*" (3 John 2), yet people suffer poverty and die all the time of sickness and disease.
 - D. Also, the Lord is "*not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance*" (2 Pet. 3:9, emphasis mine); however, Jesus Himself said that

many would perish through the broad gate leading to destruction and few would enter by the narrow gate to everlasting life (Matt. 7:13-14).

VI. What God *wants* and what He *wills* can be thwarted.

- A. God is so wise and awesome that if Satan blocks His overall plan one way, the Lord will find some other person to work through and eventually get His will accomplished another way.
- B. But on an individual basis, people die without it being the Lord's will.
- C. God doesn't will for wars, heartache, tragedy, divorce, etc., to occur.
- D. People make choices.

VII. You may be in a crisis situation and needing God to do something right away.

- A. You may be begging and pleading, but if you don't reach out in faith, you might drown.
- B. You need to respond positively to God's Word so that it comes alive and stands up on the inside of you.
- C. If you don't believe God, He might just pass on by.
- D. It's not automatic that you win.

ANDREW'S RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY

For a more in-depth look at this, please refer to my teachings titled "The Sovereignty of God," "God's Not Guilty," and *Spiritual Authority*.

DISCIPLESHIP QUESTIONS

- 1. True or false: Because Jesus was in the same storm, He knew what was happening with the disciples.

- 2. When Jesus revealed Himself to them, what was it their responsibility to do?

- 3. *Discussion question:* Why do you have to respond in faith to Jesus’ presence in order to receive His miracle-working power?

- 4. It doesn’t matter what your _____ is; God knows what you’re going through and He’s _____ with the same feelings.

- 5. True or false: Jesus cried out to Saul (Paul) “Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?” because he was persecuting Jesus when He walked on the earth.

- 6. Jesus told Paul that he was persecuting Him because of what?
 - A. Paul was persecuting the post-Resurrection followers of Jesus
 - B. The Lord took His followers’ deaths personally
 - C. Whatever you do to a member of Christ’s body, you do to Him
 - D. All of the above
 - E. None of the above

- 7. *Discussion question:* Why is it always untrue for anyone to say, “Nobody knows the trouble I have”?

8. God is always with you and ready to do what for you?

9. *Discussion question:* Why is it up to you if Jesus delivers you or just passes you by?

10. Which of the following prayers makes a demand of faith on God?

- A. "God, don't You love me?"
- B. "God, where are You? Don't You care?"
- C. "God, I know I can come boldly to Your throne and find grace in time of need"
- D. All of the above
- E. None of the above

11. What caused the disciples to doubt Jesus' word that they would get to the other side?

- A. They thought they were going to drown
- B. They weren't aware of how powerful the promise was that He had given them
- C. Jesus told them that the best He could do was to try to get them to the other side
- D. All of the above
- E. None of the above

12. *Discussion question:* Describe a time in your life when you believe you could have seriously suffered, or even died, if the Lord hadn't intervened on your behalf.

HOW TO BECOME A WATER WALKER-Lessons in Faith

13. *Discussion question:* Since it's always God's will that people prosper and be in health, even as their souls prosper (3 John 2), why do people still suffer poverty and die all the time from sickness and disease?

14. True or false: Individuals may thwart God's will for their lives, but God's overall plan for humanity cannot be blocked or thwarted.

15. If Satan blocks God's plan one way, the Lord will find some _____
_____ to work through to get His will accomplished.

16. What causes war, heartache, tragedy, divorce, etc., to occur?

17. *Discussion question:* Based on this lesson, what do believers have to do so that God is able to respond and help them in a crisis (or any) situation?

SCRIPTURES

MATTHEW 14:25-26

And in the fourth watch of the night Jesus went unto them, walking on the sea. [26] And when the disciples saw him walking on the sea, they were troubled, saying, It is a spirit; and they cried out for fear.

MARK 6:48

And he saw them toiling in rowing; for the wind was contrary unto them: and about the fourth watch of the night he cometh unto them, walking upon the sea, and would have passed by them.

ACTS 9:4

Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?

MATTHEW 25:40

And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me.

MATTHEW 6:8

Be not ye therefore like unto them: for your Father knoweth what things ye have need of, before ye ask him.

HEBREWS 4:15-16

For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. [16] Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.

HEBREWS 13:5

Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.

3 JOHN 2

Beloved, I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth.

2 PETER 3:9

The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.

OUTLINE

- I. When we're overwhelmed by the storm, it can cause us to miss the Lord.

But when they saw him walking upon the sea, they supposed it had been a spirit, and cried out.

Mark 6:49

- A. We can't believe that the very thing that is overwhelming us is nothing to God.
- B. Many times, we're looking for the Lord to be as worried and upset as we are, saying, "If God provides this miracle, all the lights of heaven are liable to dim."
- C. Jesus is walking on top of the water—the very thing that's overwhelming us.

- II. The only thing that makes something a big deal is our unbelief.

- A. We tend to magnify how terrible our situation is; however, it would do us good just to look at things from God's perspective and realize that it's no big deal.
- B. The disciples were probably thinking, *Surely this is some kind of vision coming toward us; it can't be real—Jesus can't walk on top of water.*
- C. God isn't limited by the physical realm the way we are.
- D. Sometimes we live so much in the natural realm that it just seems like, "God, is there really a way out of this?" but nothing is too difficult for God.
- E. Whatever our problem is, Jesus is on top of it—

For they all saw him, and were troubled. And immediately he talked with them, and saith unto them, Be of good cheer: it is I; be not afraid.

Mark 6:50

- F. The things that are bothering us aren't bothering God.
- G. And if we appropriate what is ours in Christ, we won't need to be bothered either.

III. You might be in a situation right now where you think that there's just no way to really rejoice until you see absolute deliverance.

A. However, you can get to a place in the midst of it where you're of good cheer—

There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man.

1 Corinthians 10:13

B. If you think that your situation is unique, you're exempting yourself from the answers you need to overcome it.

C. I've proven in my life over and over that you can rejoice when there is no reason—except faith.

IV. Most people can't be of good cheer unless they see their physical problems resolve.

A. But faith doesn't work that way; you must first get into faith, resist fear, and be of good cheer while the storm is still raging and the ship is going down.

B. Jesus told the disciples to be of good cheer before He stilled the storm.

C. Anyone can be of good cheer and overcome fear once the storm stops and the boat is translated to the other side, but it takes faith to rejoice before you know what the outcome will be!

DISCIPLESHIP QUESTIONS

1. True or false: When you're overwhelmed by the storm, it can cause you to miss the Lord.
2. You can't believe that the very thing that is overwhelming you is _____ to God.
 - A. Overwhelming
 - B. Nothing
 - C. Good
 - D. Stressful
 - E. Destructive

3. *Discussion question:* Why do you think it's sometimes difficult to see Jesus walking on top of life's problems?

4. What is the only thing that makes something a big deal?

5. True or false: God is limited by the physical realm the way you are.

6. *Discussion question:* Since God isn't bothered by your problems, how do you think God would handle a problem you've had or are currently going through?

HOW TO BECOME A WATER WALKER-Lessons in Faith

7. Many people think there is no way to really rejoice until what?

8. True or false: You have to wait until a problem is solved to rejoice.

9. What are people doing when they say that their situation is unique?

10. *Discussion question:* What are other ways you exempt yourself from solutions?

11. How does faith work in a problem?

12. Jesus told the disciples to be of good cheer _____ He stilled the storm.

- A. While
- B. After
- C. When
- D. If
- E. Before

13. True or false: It takes faith to rejoice after you know the outcome.

14. *Discussion question:* What are other ways you can exercise your faith in a storm?

SCRIPTURES

MARK 6:49-50

But when they saw him walking upon the sea, they supposed it had been a spirit, and cried out. [50] For they all saw him, and were troubled. And immediately he talked with them, and saith unto them, Be of good cheer: it is I; be not afraid.

1 CORINTHIANS 10:13

There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.

1 TIMOTHY 1:18

This charge I commit unto thee, son Timothy, according to the prophecies which went before on thee, that thou by them mightest war a good warfare.

OUTLINE

- I. If you're in the midst of a storm and your boat is filling up with water fast, Jesus is saying to you,

Be of good cheer: it is I; be not afraid.

Mark 6:50
 - A. If you genuinely understand this truth, it's enough to make you shout!
 - B. The Word of God will come alive and make you stand up on the inside, and if you stand up on the inside, eventually you'll stand up on the outside too.
 - C. That's when you'll see your physical circumstances change, and you'll walk on the water.
 - D. Being of good cheer is overcoming fear while the storm is still raging.

- II. Most people would criticize us for encouraging a cancer patient by saying, "Be of good cheer."
 - A. They'd say, "Don't you understand the pain this person is going through? The doctor says they're going to die and here you are speaking 'faith.' You're showing no sympathy whatsoever!"
 - B. They don't understand that once they are calm on the inside, it's just a matter of time before things become calm on the outside.
 - C. The traditional approach to dealing with people's problems in the church today is to join people in their pity—basically, we're trying to sympathize with them.
 - D. I'm not saying that we should be insensitive, unloving, or refuse to acknowledge that someone is struggling.
 - E. But we need to do what Jesus did—He told people who were in one of the worst storms of their lives and possibly facing drowning, "*Be of good cheer: it is I; be not afraid*" (Mark 6:50).

- III. It's not wrong to show compassion toward people who are hurting, but we must go beyond that to show faith and give encouragement to people.

- A. It wouldn't have done any good if Jesus had gone out there and said, "Guys, it's terrible. I can't believe what's happening to you. This is big, really big!"
 - B. He was the only hope the disciples had, so if He had magnified the problem, expressed unbelief, and talked about how bad things were for them, they would have been in big trouble.
 - C. Jesus needed to minimize the situation, magnify God, and show that His power was so much greater than their circumstances.
 - D. He did that by walking on top of the very thing that had the potential to destroy them, saying, in effect, "Guys, don't be afraid. Be of good cheer. You ought to be happy, because you're about to see one awesome miracle!"
 - E. When our faith is quickened, we will get excited and say, "God, this is going to be one awesome miracle!"
- IV. In a sense, what Jesus meant when He said "Be of good cheer" was that although the disciples were still in a storm, they could rejoice because they were about to experience an awesome demonstration of God's power.
- A. Many people live so much in the natural that they don't ever get to a place where they rejoice in the midst of a trying situation.
 - B. Other folks have heard enough teaching on this that they might rejoice through gritted teeth as "warfare," but not from a genuine heart of faith.
 - C. You can actually get to a place where you genuinely rejoice because you just know that something awesome is going to come out of your situation, which is how Paul and Silas were in the Philippian jail (Acts 16:25-28).
- V. Paul and Silas didn't just pray and sing praises at midnight so that they could be delivered.
- A. We know this because when the Lord sent the earthquake, all the prison doors opened and every man's shackles fell off his feet, but Paul and Silas didn't leave; they just kept right on praising.
 - B. If praising God to get deliverance had been their motive, they would have left just as soon as the prison doors opened.
 - C. But they were actually praising God out of a pure heart of love.

- D. They were excited and worshiping the Lord for who He is.
 - E. They had actually moved into the place that Jesus was talking about and were of good cheer and not afraid.
 - F. Paul and Silas were rejoicing in their relationship with God, so when deliverance came, they stayed in jail, and every one of those unsaved prisoners stayed too!
 - G. For all of those ungodly people to stay in their prison cells even after they'd been loosed was the result of one powerful manifestation of the presence of God.
- VI. You can get to a place where you really are of good cheer and not afraid—even while the storms of life are raging around you.
- A. It's not just something you're trying to accomplish; you're there.
 - B. If the doctor tells you that you're going to die, just go to praising God and say, "Father, this is awesome! It would be wonderful if I went to be with You!"
 - i. You sing songs like "When we all get to heaven," but then when the doctor tells you that you're going there, you start crying.
 - ii. Did you really mean what you sang?
 - C. If you think about this properly, you'd recognize that if you die, you get to go be with the Lord, and if you receive your healing—which Jesus has already provided for you—then you'll have an awesome testimony.
 - D. It could even open up your entire ministry.
 - i. You could travel the world, telling about how awesome God is for this healing.
 - ii. But if you don't see healing manifest, you get to go be with Him.
 - E. You could be of good cheer and not afraid, regardless of your situation and its outcome.

ANDREW'S RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY

For additional encouragement concerning how to manifest your healing, please refer to my teachings titled *God Wants You Well*, *How to Receive a Miracle*, and *You've Already Got It!*

DISCIPLESHIP QUESTIONS

- 1. What would Jesus tell you when He finds you in the midst of a raging storm?
 - A. “Be of good cheer”
 - B. “You’re on your own”
 - C. “Prepare for the next life”
 - D. All of the above
 - E. None of the above

2. What needs to come alive on the inside of you for you to stand up on the inside?

3. While the storm is still raging, being of good cheer is overcoming _____.

4. True or false: It is common to tell a sick person to be of good cheer.

- 5. In the church, the traditional way of dealing with people in crisis is to do what?
 - A. Encourage them
 - B. Sympathize with their problems
 - C. Ignore them
 - D. All of the above
 - E. None of the above

6. Instead of sympathizing with people’s problems, you need to do what _____ did and tell people to be of good cheer and not be _____.

7. More than showing hurting people compassion, what must you show and give them?

- 8. What did Jesus do when He spoke to His disciples?
 - A. Magnified their problems
 - B. Expressed unbelief
 - C. Talked about how bad things were for them
 - D. All of the above
 - E. None of the above

9. Jesus _____ the situation and _____ God.

10. Many people live so much in the natural that they never get to a place where they _____ in the midst of a trying situation.

11. People who have had enough teaching about being of good cheer may rejoice, but it's through _____.

12. *Discussion question:* How have you handled storms in your own life, and what did you learn?

13. Why did Paul and Silas stay in their jail cells, praising the Lord, when the earthquake opened the prison doors?

14. True or false: Paul and Silas were excited and worshipping God for who He was to them.

15. *Discussion question:* How have you experienced the power of God?

16. *Discussion question:* How do you think you can get to a place where you really are of good cheer, even when the storms of life are raging around you?

17. If the doctor says you're going to die, you will either die and go to _____ with the Lord, or the Lord will heal you and you will have an awesome _____.

18. Regardless of the outcome of your situation, what can you do?

SCRIPTURES

MARK 6:50

For they all saw him, and were troubled. And immediately he talked with them, and saith unto them, Be of good cheer: it is I; be not afraid.

JOHN 6:21

Then they willingly received him into the ship: and immediately the ship was at the land whither they went.

ACTS 16:25-28

And at midnight Paul and Silas prayed, and sang praises unto God: and the prisoners heard them. [26] And suddenly there was a great earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison were shaken: and immediately all the doors were opened, and every one's bands were loosed. [27] And the keeper of the prison awaking out of his sleep, and seeing the prison doors open, he drew out his sword, and would have killed himself, supposing that the prisoners had been fled. [28] But Paul cried with a loud voice, saying, Do thyself no harm: for we all are here.

OUTLINE

- I. Many people go through the motions, praising God and saying some of the right things, but they're just wishing and hoping that it's going to work.
 - A. When you truly start believing, you'll find yourself abounding in thanksgiving—

*As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him:
[7] Rooted and built up in him, and stablished in the faith, as ye have
been taught, abounding therein with thanksgiving.*

Colossians 2:6-7
 - B. The way faith abounds is through thanksgiving.
 - C. When you really get into a God kind of faith, you'll find that you can persist to the point of excitement and joy.
 - D. You need to recognize who Jesus is on the inside of you; once you do this, you will experience His joy and peace and be of good cheer!

- II. The disciples voiced their reservations, but the Lord—knowing full well what they were feeling—essentially said, “No, go to the other side. It'll work!”
 - A. They were doing exactly what the Lord told them to do.
 - B. It's important for you to discern in your own situation whether the adversity you're suffering is the result of your own ignorance or disobedience.
 - C. Instead of following the Lord's instructions, Jonah got into a storm that almost cost him his life.
 - i. But that storm was totally out of God's will; it was something he shouldn't have had to experience.
 - D. You need to evaluate where you are; did you or did you not have a word from God to move in a specific direction?

III. Paul and Silas encountered great adversity while in the center of God's will—

And a vision appeared to Paul in the night; There stood a man of Macedonia, and prayed him, saying, Come over into Macedonia, and help us. [10] And after he had seen the vision, immediately we endeavoured to go into Macedonia, assuredly gathering that the Lord had called us for to preach the gospel unto them.

Acts 16:9-10

- A. Within just a few days of being in Philippi, Paul and Silas were beaten and thrown in jail (Acts 16:22-24).
- B. Following God doesn't mean that your life is going to be storm-less, jail-less, or problem-less.
- C. Although many people teach that if it's God's will, everything will just work out perfectly—that's just not true.

i. Paul wrote,

For a great door and effectual is opened unto me, and there are many adversaries.

1 Corinthians 16:9

- D. Just because you're in a storm and it looks like you're about to drown doesn't mean that you've missed God.

IV. If you are in a situation that looks as if it will overcome you, take courage.

- A. Start believing God.
- B. Make sure that you've heard from Him and are in the center of His will.
- C. Call out to God in faith and make a demand on Him and His power.
- D. Start rejoicing and be of good cheer, even before you see the storm stilled!

DISCIPLESHIP QUESTIONS

1. What is a sign that you have truly started believing?

2. Faith abounds through _____.

- A. Excitement
- B. Joy
- C. Thanksgiving
- D. Courage
- E. Wishing

3. True or false: The God kind of faith persists to the point of excitement and joy.

4. When you recognize who Jesus is on the inside of you, you will what?

5. True or false: The Lord—knowing full well what the disciples were feeling—essentially said, “No, go to the other side; it’ll work!”

6. How do you know that the disciples were in the center of God’s will during the storm?

7. Why was Jonah’s storm totally out of God’s will?

8. *Discussion question:* How can you be confident that you're in God's will?

9. True or false: Paul and Silas encountered great ease while in the center of God's will.

10. What happened to Paul and Silas within just a few days of being in Philippi?

11. True or false: If it's God's will, everything will just work out perfectly.

12. *Discussion question:* How can you know that you have heard from God?

13. What should you do if you are in a storm?

- A. Be afraid
- B. Eat pizza
- C. Take a nap
- D. Take a walk
- E. Take courage

14. What should you make sure of in a storm?

15. *Discussion question:* What does it look like to take courage?

16. *Discussion question:* How can you start believing God?

SCRIPTURES

COLOSSIANS 2:6-7

As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him:
[7] Rooted and built up in him, and stablished in the faith, as ye have
been taught, abounding therein with thanksgiving.

MATTHEW 14:22

And straightway Jesus constrained his disciples to get into a ship, and to
go before him unto the other side, while he sent the multitudes away.

ACTS 16:9-10

And a vision appeared to Paul in the night; There stood a man of
Macedonia, and prayed him, saying, Come over into Macedonia,
and help us. [10] And after he had seen the vision, immediately we
endeavoured to go into Macedonia, assuredly gathering that the Lord
had called us for to preach the gospel unto them.

1 CORINTHIANS 16:9

For a great door and effectual is opened unto me, and there are
many adversaries.

OUTLINE

- I. The Lord commanded the disciples to cross over to the other side; therefore, they were there at God's bidding.
 - A. Not all the storms we encounter are caused by our own ignorance, unbelief, or sin.
 - i. We can be perfectly led by God and still experience hardship.
 - ii. Satan will come against us.
 - B. There will be circumstances that make it seem as though we're going to drown, but that isn't always an indication that we've missed God.
 - i. The disciples were exactly where the Lord had told them to be—He was aware of their situation.
 - C. Jesus came walking on the water to them, but would have passed them by.
 - D. The Lord revealed Himself to them, but it was their responsibility to call out to Him and draw on His power by faith.
 - E. God is with us in the midst of our situations, but we must call upon Him in faith—not desperation, bitterness, frustration, or pity.
 - F. He's there to help, but we have to call out in faith.
- II. We also need to recognize that the Lord walked on top of the situation that could have destroyed the disciples.
 - A. God is not overwhelmed by our problems.

Be of good cheer: it is I; be not afraid.

Mark 6:50
 - B. Jesus told them this while the adverse situation was still going on around them.
 - i. We must operate in faith before we see our deliverance—not afterward!
 - C. Most people today call out for help in desperation, pity, anger, and frustration, but not really in faith.

- D. If we're in true faith, we'll be abounding in thanksgiving, full of good cheer, and not afraid (Col. 2:7 and Mark 6:50).
- III. If you're struggling with your emotions or fighting off some fears, it doesn't mean that you're totally not in faith.
- A. If you are still struggling with all of those things, then your faith hasn't been made perfect yet.
 - B. The good news is that you can overcome that and begin rejoicing in the midst of your problem anyway.
 - C. You don't always have to have perfect faith to be able to see your deliverance manifest, yet you should be shooting for abounding faith.
- IV. The disciples were in the boat and had spent somewhere between seven and twelve hours trying to get across the Sea of Galilee (Matt. 14:27-28).
- A. Normally, the entire trip would have taken only about two or three hours, but there they were, only halfway across the lake.
 - B. In the midst of everything, Jesus came to them, walking on the water.
 - C. They saw Him and cried out in fear.
 - D. He basically said, "Guys, be of good cheer. It's Me. Don't be afraid!"
 - E. Essentially, Peter responded, "If it's You, Lord, bid me to come to You on the water."

DISCIPLESHIP QUESTIONS

1. True or false: The disciples were following the Lord's direction by crossing to the other side by boat.
2. You can be perfectly led by God and still experience _____.
3. Where is God in the midst of your situation?

4. Why was the Lord able to walk on top of a situation that could have destroyed the disciples?

5. What did Jesus say (in contemporary language) to the disciples when He got close to them?
 - A. "I'm on My way"
 - B. "It's Me; don't be afraid"
 - C. "Be glad"
 - D. A and B
 - E. B and C
6. True or false: Jesus told the disciples to rejoice and be glad while the storm was still going on around them.
7. You must operate in faith _____ you see your deliverance.
8. In a storm, you know that you are in true faith when—
 - A. You're abounding in thanksgiving
 - B. You're full of good cheer
 - C. You're not afraid
 - D. All of the above
 - E. None of the above

9. True or false: If you are struggling with your emotions, you are not in faith.
10. *Discussion question:* Describe a time when you have seen abounding faith affect the outcome of a situation.

11. *Discussion question:* Who in the Bible had faith under pressure, and how has their example helped you grow?

12. Under normal circumstances, how long would a trip across the Sea of Galilee have taken?

13. How do you know the disciples were struggling on the Sea of Galilee?
- A. They had spent somewhere between seven and twelve hours trying to get across
 - B. They had put on their life jackets
 - C. They were all paddling
 - D. All of the above
 - E. None of the above

14. *Discussion question:* Why do you think Peter had the courage to ask the Lord to tell him to come to Him on the water?

SCRIPTURES

MARK 6:50

For they all saw him, and were troubled. And immediately he talked with them, and saith unto them, Be of good cheer: it is I; be not afraid.

COLOSSIANS 2:7

Rooted and built up in him, and stablished in the faith, as ye have been taught, abounding therein with thanksgiving.

MATTHEW 14:27-28

But straightway Jesus spake unto them, saying, Be of good cheer; it is I; be not afraid. [28] And Peter answered him and said, Lord, if it be thou, bid me come unto thee on the water.

OUTLINE

- I. Although his intent was good, notice how Peter worded this question:

And Peter answered him and said, Lord, if it be thou, bid me come unto thee on the water.

Matthew 14:28

- A. Peter desired to walk in the miraculous, but the way he asked this question was incorrect.
 - B. Perhaps it wasn't really God's plan for Peter to walk on water—this wasn't necessarily God's best.
 - C. It's possible that Peter's faith wasn't totally up to walking on the water and enduring all the unbelief that would come from that action, but Peter specifically asked, "Lord, if it's You, bid me come to You on the water."
 - D. The way Peter asked the question left Jesus no option for a different answer.
- II. It's important how you ask God questions and discern His will for your life.
- A. You need to be careful how you ask your question.
 - B. If you are believing God for something miraculous, you need to make sure it's God leading you to do it, instead of you backing Him into a corner.
 - C. Are you asking God something like, "Do You want me to serve You by being in full-time ministry, or not serve You at all?"
 - D. If that's the way you phrase your question, He's going to say, "Serve Me."
 - E. You need to be careful that you are truly being led by God in what you want to step out of the boat and believe for, and that you're not just misunderstanding, confusing, and phrasing things in an incorrect way.

DISCIPLESHIP QUESTIONS

1. True or false: Perhaps it wasn't really God's plan for Peter to walk on water.
2. Peter specifically asked, "Lord, if _____, bid me come to You on the water."
 - A. "it's You"
 - B. "it's Your will"
 - C. "I am worthy"
 - D. "I have the faith"
 - E. "You are divine"

3. *Discussion question:* How did Peter ask the wrong question?

4. *Discussion question:* How can you ask God good questions?

5. Why should you be careful how you ask God questions?

6. Why do you need to be careful that you are truly being led by God in what you want to step out of the boat and believe for?

7. *Discussion question:* How do you discern God's will for your life?

8. *Discussion question:* What are you believing God for?

SCRIPTURES

MATTHEW 14:28-29

And Peter answered him and said, Lord, if it be thou, bid me come unto thee on the water. [29] And he said, Come. And when Peter was come down out of the ship, he walked on the water, to go to Jesus.

OUTLINE

- V. Peter was affected in a supernatural way by his encounter with the Lord.
 - A. He was able to unplug from his own personal dilemma out in the boat and focus on the miraculous power and ability of God.
 - B. In order to become a water walker, you must first get out of your self.
 - C. You must unplug from your own personal problems and the fear about what's happening to you and focus on God.
 - D. You can't become so engrossed in your own problems that you lose sight of the Lord and what He can do.

- VI. Peter was just as caught up in the situation as everyone else on the boat.
 - A. However, when Jesus appeared, he started believing God for something greater.
 - B. He responded positively when the Lord told him to be of good cheer and not to be afraid.
 - C. Peter realized that God was with him and that His power was available to him.
 - D. So, he began to respond to that and look for something more.
 - E. If you're going to be a water walker, you must get your focus off your circumstances and look to God for something more!

- VII. Negative circumstances in your life have the potential to either destroy you or motivate you.
 - A. For example, I once dated a girl who was later diagnosed with leukemia.
 - B. We believed it was God's will to heal her, yet she died.
 - i. Although that negative situation nearly overwhelmed me, stunted my spiritual growth, and stopped me from doing anything for the Lord, I purposed in my heart that I would see the miraculous power of God.

- ii. Like Peter, I looked to Jesus and responded positively to His words, instead of looking at the negative circumstances.
 - C. We may have lost that battle, but I knew that someday I would see the same thing that killed that girl—leukemia—beaten, and I have, many times over!
 - D. But first, I had to get the attitude that there was more of God available than what I was presently experiencing.
 - E. Peter had to choose a different attitude than the rest of the guys in the boat; when he did, he stepped out and walked on the water!
- VIII. Peter trusted God.
- A. He looked past the things in the natural realm and focused his attention on Jesus.
 - B. Are you able to look past the circumstances in your life?
 - i. Can you get out of your boat of self-pity and look to the Lord?
 - ii. Are you able to look past your situation and see that God is victorious and well able to give you hope and encouragement?
 - C. Or are you going to sit there and let the circumstances of life overcome you?
- IX. If you are going to walk on water and see miracles in your life, you must first of all lift your head up and start looking for something else.
- A. You have to have hope that there is something more than what you're experiencing.
 - B. Get out of the frustration, discouragement, and despair—decide to overcome.
 - C. God's power is truly what delivers you, but it's activated by what you choose to believe.
 - D. Peter wasn't ready to believe God fully at that exact moment, but he at least called out to Jesus and started making a demand on God's power.
 - E. Will you do the same?

DISCIPLESHIP QUESTIONS

15. True or false: Peter was affected supernaturally when he encountered the Lord during the storm.
16. What was Peter able to focus on that allowed him to become a water walker?
- A. Himself
 - B. The miraculous power and ability of God
 - C. The storm
 - D. All of the above
 - E. None of the above
17. *Discussion question:* What happens when you become engrossed in your own problems in the storm?

18. True or false: Peter wasn't caught up in the storm; he wasn't like everyone else in the boat.
19. Peter started to believe God for something greater when _____ appeared.
20. *Discussion question:* What does Peter's response teach us about Jesus' presence in the storms of our lives?

21. What do you have to do if you're going to become a water walker?

HOW TO BECOME A WATER WALKER-Lessons in Faith

22. True or false: Negative circumstances can either destroy you or motivate you.

23. How was Andrew's response like Peter's in this situation?

24. Peter trusted God—how did he show that?

- A. He started a 501(c)3
- B. He looked at the natural realm and changed his mind about walking to Jesus
- C. He looked past the natural realm and focused his attention on Jesus
- D. All of the above
- E. None of the above

25. *Discussion question:* What are some ways you can get out of your boat of self-pity and look to the Lord?

26. According to the lesson, what do you have to have hope for?

- A. That there is something more than what you're expecting
- B. That your lottery numbers will come up
- C. That your boat won't sink
- D. All of the above
- E. None of the above

27. God's power is truly what _____ you.

28. How is God's power activated?

OUTLINE

- I. Peter had taken his attention off everything that was hindering them from making it to the other side and was looking at Jesus.

And he said, Come. And when Peter was come down out of the ship, he walked on the water, to go to Jesus.

Matthew 14:29

- A. Peter was believing that he could do miraculous things.
- B. One word from Jesus is enough to overcome whatever circumstance, situation, or problem is trying to destroy us.
- C. Sometimes we think, *I must read volumes of Scripture in order to build my faith. I have to spend fifteen hours a day studying God's Word*, when, in fact, just one scripture—one word from God—can quicken our faith.
- D. It's not always the quantity that makes the difference; rather, it's how much that one thing that God has spoken means to us.

- II. You might think that the word “*come*” isn't a very important word, but it was spoken by the Creator—the One who created everything natural, including the water and the wind.

- A. That one word had enough power in it for Peter to walk on water.
- B. Likewise, the promises God has given you have enough power for you to accomplish whatever He's told you to do.
- C. If God has called you to be a minister, then “*faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it*” (1 Thess. 5:24).
- D. Paul said,

I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who hath enabled me, for that he counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry.

1 Timothy 1:12

- E. You'll discover that when God calls you, He's already seen you as faithful, or He wouldn't have called you.

- III. If God has faith in you, then you ought to have faith in yourself.
- A. If you would meditate on this, you'd realize that when God called you, there was more to that call than what you may have recognized.
 - B. You need to put some faith in you and in the ability of God on the inside of you—you can do whatever the Lord has called you to do!
 - C. The Word of God has more than enough power, but you must step out and act on it in faith.
- IV. There were twelve guys in that boat—only one of them walked on water, but every one of them could have done that.
- A. Now, again, I'm not sure that was God's best, but Peter called out and said "If it's You, bid me come" and the Lord let him.
 - B. Every one of those disciples could have said that and done the same thing!
 - C. Yet most people never get out of the boat because of fear—they simply refuse to take that step of faith.
 - D. We need to start believing for something more and get out of the boat!

DISCIPLESHIP QUESTIONS

1. Peter had taken his _____ off everything that was hindering them and was _____ at Jesus.
2. What can quicken your faith?
 - A. Reading volumes of Scripture
 - B. One word from Jesus
 - C. Studying God's Word for hours a day
 - D. All of the above
 - E. None of the above
3. True or false: How much God says to you is not what makes the difference; rather it is how much what He says *means to you* that makes the difference.
4. True or false: The word "*come*" might not seem like a very important word—unless it is spoken to you by the Creator of the universe.
5. The word "*come*" had enough _____ in it for Peter to walk on the water.
6. What do the promises of God contain that enables you to accomplish whatever He has told you to do?

7. *Discussion question:* When God calls you, He has already seen you as faithful; what does that show you about the call of God on your life?

8. The Word of God has more than enough power, but you must _____ and act on it in faith.
9. True or false: Out of the twelve disciples who were in the boat, Peter was the only one who could have walked on the water.

10. Why do most people never get out of the boat?

11. People simply _____ to take a step of faith to get out of the boat.

12. *Discussion question:* What are some ways that you can “get out of the boat” in your life?

SCRIPTURES

MATTHEW 14:29

And he said, Come. And when Peter was come down out of the ship, he walked on the water, to go to Jesus.

1 THESSALONIANS 5:24

Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it.

1 TIMOTHY 1:12

I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who hath enabled me, for that he counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry.

1 PETER 2:24

Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed.

OUTLINE

- V. People in the boat resist those who are stepping out in faith.
 - A. It wasn't a sin for the disciples to be in the boat and start out toward the other side.
 - B. But when your boat encounters a storm—when the doctor says you're going to die—why would you still keep taking their treatment if it's not working?
 - C. Some people are scared of being different—they have to be like everybody else, yet everybody else is miserable, suffering, and dying.
 - D. Make a decision to be different.
 - E. Just believe God!

- VI. In 2 Kings 7:3-4, Samaria was under siege by the Syrians:

And there were four leprous men at the entering in of the gate: and they said one to another, Why sit we here until we die? [4] If we say, We will enter into the city, then the famine is in the city, and we shall die there: and if we sit still here, we die also. Now therefore come, and let us fall unto the host of the Syrians: if they save us alive, we shall live; and if they kill us, we shall but die.

- A. These lepers—along with everyone else in the city—were dying of starvation.
- B. When the lepers went to the Syrian camp, it turned out that the Lord had caused the Syrians to hear a noise and flee.
- C. They left all their tents, gold, clothes, and food behind.
- D. Not only were these lepers fed, but they also became rich and were honored, too, because they were the ones God used to bring the good news to the rest of the city.
- E. How long are you going to sit here—until you die?
- F. Take a step of faith in the direction you believe God wants you to go—do something!

- VII. Before you can walk on the water, you have to get out of the boat—you must be willing to depart from what everybody else is doing.
- A. You must be willing to break with tradition, get out there, and run the risk of failure.
 - B. Many people are so afraid of failure that they continue to stay in the situation they're in, which guarantees their failure will continue.
 - C. If you aren't stretching yourself and believing God for something bigger than what you can produce on your own, you're already a failure.
 - D. God is a big God—He is “*able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us*” (Eph. 3:20).
- VIII. If your life is “normal” according to the world's system, something is seriously wrong.
- A. There ought to be enough evidence to convict you if you were arrested for being a Christian.
 - B. There should be something different about you compared to your unsaved neighbor—they're dead and you're alive!
 - C. Before you can see that kind of power manifest in your life, however, you need to make a conscious decision to leave the safety of the boat and get out on the water.
 - D. Before you can be a water walker, you must be willing to step out of the boat and run the risk!

DISCIPLESHIP QUESTIONS

13. People in the boat _____ those stepping out in faith.
14. *Discussion question:* Why do you think people keep taking a treatment if it's not working?

15. *Discussion question:* Even though everybody else is miserable, suffering, and dying, why do you think you might still be afraid to be different?

16. What did the lepers find when they went to the Syrian camp?

17. Not only were these lepers fed, but they also became rich and were _____, too, because they were the ones God used to bring the good news to the rest of the city.

18. *Discussion question:* If possible, describe a time when you took a step of faith in the direction God wanted you to go.

19. Before you can walk on the water, what must you be willing to do?

- A. Run the risk of failure
- B. Depart from what everybody else is doing
- C. Break with tradition
- D. All of the above
- E. None of the above

20. What can cause people to continue to stay in the situation they're in rather than risk a change?

21. *Discussion question:* How is it true that you are already a failure if you don't believe God for something bigger than what you can produce on your own?

22. True or false: There ought to be enough evidence to convict you if you were arrested for being a Christian.

23. Why should your life be different than your unsaved neighbors'?

24. You need to make a _____ to leave the safety of the boat and get out on the water.

SCRIPTURES

2 KINGS 7:3-4

And there were four leprous men at the entering in of the gate: and they said one to another, Why sit we here until we die? [4] If we say, We will enter into the city, then the famine is in the city, and we shall die there: and if we sit still here, we die also. Now therefore come, and let us fall unto the host of the Syrians: if they save us alive, we shall live; and if they kill us, we shall but die.

EPHESIANS 3:20

Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us.

OUTLINE

- I. The Lord lit a fire in my heart and started challenging me to make some decisions.
 - A. I took a step out on the water and began walking in the realm of the miraculous; if God didn't come through, I was sunk!
 - B. Looking back on it now, those were some of the greatest decisions I've ever made in my life.
 - C. It would have been easier to stay in the relative comfort of where I was, but I wanted to believe God.
 - i. I longed to follow Him and get out where Jesus was.

- II. Peter would never have walked on the water if he hadn't first stepped out of the boat.
 - A. You have to get out of your comfort zone.
 - B. The fear of being different, the fear of running a risk, and the desire to be safe are all real faith killers.

Yea, they turned back and tempted God, and limited the Holy One of Israel.

Psalm 78:41
 - C. You limit God by not having a vision, fearing the unknown, thinking small, fearing change, being unwilling to take a risk, fearing failure, not taking a step of faith, being lazy, and staying in the boat.
 - D. You need to take the limits off God!

- III. The fruit grows out on the limb!
 - A. Most of us want to hold on to the trunk and still have all the fruit that comes from being out on the limb, but it doesn't work that way.
 - B. We need to get out where we are bobbing up and down in the breeze.

- C. When we get out of the boat and start believing God for something big, we will start seeing miracles.
 - D. I have faith that the best is yet to come—I'll never go back to playing it safe.
 - E. I'm going for it!
- IV. I think the people who are the biggest failures are those who do nothing.
- A. If you shoot at nothing and hit it every time, that's failure!
 - B. Peter had to get beyond his immediate circumstances and start believing God for something bigger.
 - C. Some people refuse to lose sight of the shore—they won't get in over their ankles.
 - D. One of the aspects of truly getting out of the boat is not knowing how deep the water is.
 - E. In order to get out of the boat and walk on water, you must be willing to trust the results—the future, the unknown—to God.
- V. You have to be willing to take a risk.
- A. If you're the type of person who wants your whole life planned out and simply refuses to take a risk, you'll never walk on water.
 - B. If you insist on knowing exactly where you'll be, what you'll be doing, and who you will be doing it with twenty years from now, you'll never see God's best.
 - C. It takes faith to see the real, supernatural power of God.
 - D. If it's God, He'll call you to do something that's beyond your ability—that just comes with the territory!
- VI. God may be calling you to do something that would cause you to lose the security of your hometown and some other familiar places.
- A. If you were to serve God full force, you might lose some friends.
 - B. Are you willing to let God's will pass you by just because you're afraid to run the risk?

- C. I lost some lifelong friends when I made a commitment to serve God; it grieved me at the time, but since then, God has given me better friends.
 - i. The promise of the hundredfold return is for those who step out of the boat (Mark 10:28-30).
- D. It's possible to see what you're leaving, but not what you're missing.
- E. You'll always be more blessed following the Lord than you ever would be not following Him, but you must be willing to get out of the boat!

ANDREW'S RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY

You need to take the limits off God! My teaching series titled *Don't Limit God* will show you how you can do that.

DISCIPLESHIP QUESTIONS

1. True or false: Walking in the realm of the miraculous means that if God doesn't come through, you will sink.

2. True or false: It is easier to stay in the relative comfort of where you are.

3. *Discussion question:* What lights a fire in your heart?

4. *Discussion question:* What discomfort do you possibly have to overcome to make that desire a reality?

5. Peter would never have walked on the water if he hadn't first what?

- A. Prayed about it
- B. Fasted
- C. Received approval from the other disciples
- D. Stepped out of the boat
- E. Wrote in his journal

6. What are faith killers?

7. According to the lesson, what are some ways to limit God?

8. *Discussion question:* How do you think you limit God in your life?

9. The fruit grows out on the _____!

- A. Roots
- B. Trunk
- C. Other fruit
- D. Leaves
- E. Limb

10. What happens when you get out of the boat and start believing God for something big?

11. *Discussion question:* What steps do you need to take to get out of your boat?

12. Who are the biggest failures?

- A. Those who do nothing
- B. Those who make mistakes
- C. Those who don't succeed
- D. Those who go halfway
- E. Those who don't do enough

13. What did Peter have to get beyond to start believing God for something bigger?

14. What must you be willing to trust God with in order to get out of the boat?

15. *Discussion question:* To step out of your boat, what must you personally need to trust God with?

16. You'll never walk on water if what?

17. What does it take to see the real, supernatural power of God?

18. True or false: If it's God, He'll call you to do something that's beyond your ability.

19. *Discussion question:* What are you insistent on knowing about your life that you need to give to God?

20. God may be calling you to do something that would cause you to lose what?

- A. Peace
- B. Hope
- C. Joy
- D. Security
- E. Vision

21. Who is promised the hundredfold return (Mark 10:28-30)?

22. *Discussion question:* What do you find security in other than God?

23. *Discussion question:* By not giving up your security, what do you think you may be missing out on?

20. D. Security
21. Those who step out of the boat
22. *Discussion question*
23. *Discussion question*

SCRIPTURES

PSALM 78:41

Yea, they turned back and tempted God, and limited the Holy One of Israel.

MARK 10:28-30

Then Peter began to say unto him, Lo, we have left all, and have followed thee. [29] And Jesus answered and said, Verily I say unto you, There is no man that hath left house, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my sake, and the gospel's, [30] But he shall receive an hundredfold now in this time, houses, and brethren, and sisters, and mothers, and children, and lands, with persecutions; and in the world to come eternal life.

OUTLINE

- I. Peter may not have done it perfectly, but I believe God was thrilled when Peter stepped out of the boat and walked on the water.
 - A. There have been times when I've started trying to believe God and made so many mistakes.
 - B. I've stumbled and fallen along the way.
 - C. I don't think the Lord would fault me or come against me for trying to obey Him.
 - D. I've missed it and made mistakes—but God loves faith!

But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.

Hebrews 11:6

- E. Even though I may have failed at times, the Lord just encouraged me and urged me on!
- II. You may fail.
 - A. When you get out of the boat, you run the risk of sinking.
 - B. Peter didn't go all the way under the water; but he began to sink (Matt. 14:30), and Jesus had to rescue him.
 - C. If you fail, Jesus will be there—He will encourage you to keep trying.
 - i. The kingdom of God isn't going to totally rise or fall based on your success or failure.
 - D. If you fail at believing God, you're still a success: You tried.
 - E. If you're doing it out of your own presumption, because you aren't waiting on God, His way, and His timing—that's a different situation.
 - F. But if you're doing it out of a pure heart, then go for it!

III. Faith is what pleases God!

- A. If we could somehow or another “succeed” without trusting God, we’ve failed.
- B. We might be considered a great success in the eyes of others, but God will look at us and say, “You failed to do what I told you to do.”
- C. God never bases His opinion of faithfulness only on the outcome but, rather, on whether or not we were following His leading.
- D. Although Peter failed, I admire him for being able to look beyond himself, get out of the boat, step out on the water, and trust Jesus.

DISCIPLESHIP QUESTIONS

1. What does God love (Heb. 11:6)?

2. Even though Andrew may have failed at times, the Lord just _____ him and _____ him on!

3. *Discussion question:* Share a time in your life when you made a mistake and how God encouraged you.

4. What happens when you get out of the boat?

5. True or false: If you fail, you're all on your own.

6. *Discussion question:* What difference does your heart attitude make regarding your success or failure?

7. If you could somehow or another _____ without trusting God, you've _____.

8. *Discussion question:* Why does it not matter if you are a great success in the eyes of others?

9. True or false: God never bases His opinion of faithfulness only on the outcome.

10. What does God base His opinion of faithfulness on?

- A. What Andrew says
- B. Whether or not you were following His leading
- C. Whether or not you meant well
- D. The majority vote
- E. Whether or not you've read your Bible and paid your tithe

11. *Discussion question:* Why can Peter be admired today, even though he failed?

SCRIPTURES

HEBREWS 11:6

But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.

MATTHEW 14:30

But when he saw the wind boisterous, he was afraid; and beginning to sink, he cried, saying, Lord, save me.

OUTLINE

- I. This is one reason we need to take all of the Gospels' accounts of one story and put them together—

And when Peter was come down out of the ship, he walked on the water, to go to Jesus. [30] But when he [Peter] saw the wind boisterous, he was afraid; and beginning to sink, he cried, saying, Lord, save me. [31] And immediately Jesus stretched forth his hand, and caught him, and said unto him, O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt? [32] And when they were come into the ship, the wind ceased. [33] Then they that were in the ship came and worshipped him, saying, Of a truth, thou art the Son of God.

Matthew 14:29-33, brackets mine

And the sea arose by reason of a great wind that blew. [19] So when they had rowed about five and twenty or thirty furlongs, they see Jesus walking on the sea, and drawing nigh unto the ship: and they were afraid. [20] But he saith unto them, It is I; be not afraid. [21] Then they willingly received him into the ship: and immediately the ship was at the land whither they went.

John 6:18-21

- A. Only Matthew shows Peter making this request of Jesus and walking on the water.
- B. Only John records that when Jesus entered into the ship, not only did the wind cease, but also the ship and all of its occupants were immediately translated to the other shore.
- C. Mark recounts some things Jesus said about hardness of heart; if we just had Mark's account, we wouldn't know that Peter walked on the water and that the boat was translated with the occupants to the other shore.
- D. Even though the events still would have been miraculous, we would have missed some of the information.
- E. We get a little different slant from each Gospel; in order to get the full story, we need to put them all together.
- II. Peter got out of the boat and walked on the water, but Matthew 14:30 specifically says,

But when he saw the wind boisterous, he was afraid; and beginning to sink, he cried, saying, Lord, save me.

- A. The wind that took his attention away from Jesus and caused him to begin to sink was a non-factor.
 - B. In the natural, he couldn't have walked on the water if it had been a perfectly calm day.
 - C. When Peter took his eyes off Jesus and began to look at the wind and the waves, he started focusing on the natural realm; then the natural realm probably began to flood his senses.
 - D. Peter had spent his whole life learning that it's better to stay in the boat, so when he saw the wind and the waves, it brought all those things back to his remembrance and caused him to doubt.
- III. When Peter cried out "*Lord, save me,*" Jesus immediately "*stretched forth his hand, and caught him, and said unto him, O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt*" (Matt. 14:31).
- A. Notice how Jesus said that Peter had "*little faith.*"
 - B. Most people believe that to do something really miraculous, they have to have big faith, great faith, or tons of faith, but the Lord said Peter had little faith.
 - C. As long as that little faith was focused on Jesus, it was enough to walk on water.
 - D. The key to the Christian life isn't "big" faith but, rather, "little" unbelief.
- IV. When Jesus and three of His disciples came down from the Mount of Transfiguration, there was a man who had brought his demonized son to Jesus to cast the demon out.
- A. Since the Lord was up on the mountain with Peter, James, and John, the man asked the other disciples to cast the demon out; they tried, but couldn't.

And when they [Jesus and the three disciples returning with Him] were come to the multitude, there came to him a certain man, kneeling down to him, and saying, [15] Lord, have mercy on my son: for he is lunatick, and sore vexed: for oftentimes he falleth into the fire, and oft into the water.

Matthew 17:14-15, brackets mine

- i. The word “*lunatick*” means that the boy had some type of seizure—while convulsing the boy, the demon would throw him into the fire and into the water.
 - B. Jesus didn’t say, “I’m sorry. This isn’t your responsibility. You don’t have the power to deal with this. I should have been here for you. Don’t feel bad about it.”
 - C. Instead, the Lord replied, “*O faithless and perverse generation*” (Matt. 17:17).
 - D. He rebuked them, basically saying, “How long am I going to be here?”
 - E. Jesus wanted His disciples to be able to carry on His ministry.
 - F. Today Jesus would be saying the same thing: “You’re supposed to be healing the sick, cleansing the lepers, and raising the dead. You don’t have to send people to psychiatrists and welfare. You ought to be meeting the needs of people!”
- V. The disciples asked a very important question—

And Jesus rebuked the devil; and he departed out of him: and the child was cured from that very hour. [19] Then came the disciples to Jesus apart, and said, Why could not we cast him out?

Matthew 17:18-19

- A. In Matthew 10, the disciples received a commission from the Lord, went out, came back, and didn’t ask any questions like “Why didn’t it work?”
 - i. The absence of questions implies that they’d seen 100 percent success.
- B. But in Matthew 17, they did the same thing they had done before, but without the same results.
- C. Have you ever prayed for something that you really believed was God’s will, but didn’t see it come to pass?

- D. Some people just don't believe that God does miracles today; those people aren't asking "Why didn't it work when I prayed?" because they didn't expect God to move.
- E. The believers who are the most upset and susceptible to condemnation or feelings that God failed them are those who know that faith works, have believed, or have seen others set free; yet they did the same thing this time as before and didn't see anything come to pass.
- F. Therefore, the disciples' question—and Jesus' answer—are both very important:

Jesus said unto them, Because of your unbelief.

Matthew 17:20a

- i. Jesus didn't say that it was because they didn't believe or because of their "little faith" (as the *New International Version* and others incorrectly translated it); that's what most people believe.
- ii. It's possible to believe and yet have unbelief at the same time.

DISCIPLESHIP QUESTIONS

1. Only Matthew shows Peter doing what?

2. According to the Gospel of John, what happened when Jesus entered into the ship?

3. Mark recounts some things Jesus said about what?

4. *Discussion question:* What other Bible stories need all four Gospel accounts of them to paint a whole picture?

5. When Peter took his eyes off Jesus and looked at the wind and waves, what did he start to do?

6. Peter had spent his whole life learning that it's better to do what?
- A. Walk on water
 - B. Fly
 - C. Multitask
 - D. Stay in the boat
 - E. Talk to strangers
7. *Discussion question:* What have you learned to do all of your life that keeps you from stepping out?
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-
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8. Jesus said that Peter had _____.
- A. Weak faith
 - B. Little faith
 - C. No faith
 - D. Strong faith
 - E. A lot of faith
9. True or false: Little faith focused on Jesus is enough to walk on water.
10. The key to the Christian life is _____.
- A. Little unbelief
 - B. Big faith
 - C. Strong faith
 - D. No faith
 - E. Little belief
11. *Discussion question:* What is the difference between little faith and unbelief?
-
-
-
12. The word "*lunatick*" means that the boy had some type of _____.

13. What was Jesus' reply when he found out the disciples could not cast the demon out?

14. *Discussion question:* What needs can you supernaturally or naturally meet for the people in your life?

15. The fact that the disciples didn't ask questions like "Why didn't it work?" implies what?

16. The believers who are the most upset and susceptible to condemnation or feelings that God failed them when they don't see things come to pass are those who know what?

17. True or false: You can believe and yet have unbelief at the same time.

18. *Discussion question:* What are some areas in your life in which you have both faith and unbelief?

SCRIPTURES

MATTHEW 14:29-33

And he said, Come. And when Peter was come down out of the ship, he walked on the water, to go to Jesus. [30] But when he saw the wind boisterous, he was afraid; and beginning to sink, he cried, saying, Lord, save me. [31] And immediately Jesus stretched forth his hand, and caught him, and said unto him, O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt? [32] And when they were come into the ship, the wind ceased. [33] Then they that were in the ship came and worshipped him, saying, Of a truth, thou art the Son of God.

JOHN 6:18-21

And the sea arose by reason of a great wind that blew. [19] So when they had rowed about five and twenty or thirty furlongs, they see Jesus walking on the sea, and drawing nigh unto the ship: and they were afraid. [20] But he saith unto them, It is I; be not afraid. [21] Then they willingly received him into the ship: and immediately the ship was at the land whither they went.

HEBREWS 12:2

Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.

MATTHEW 17:14-20

And when they were come to the multitude, there came to him a certain man, kneeling down to him, and saying, [15] Lord, have mercy on my son: for he is lunatick, and sore vexed: for oftentimes he falleth into the fire, and oft into the water. [16] And I brought him to thy disciples, and they could not cure him. [17] Then Jesus answered and said, O faithless and perverse generation, how long shall I be with you? how long shall I suffer you? bring him hither to me. [18] And Jesus rebuked the devil; and he departed out of him: and the child was cured from that very hour. [19] Then came the disciples to Jesus apart, and said, Why could not we cast him out? [20] Jesus said unto them, Because of your unbelief: for verily I say unto you, If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place; and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you.

OUTLINE

- I. The father in Mark 9:20-23 was beginning to despair and doubt that the deliverance he desired would happen.

And they brought him [the demonized boy] unto him [Jesus]: and when he saw him, straightway the spirit tare him; and he fell on the ground, and wallowed foaming. [21] And he asked his father, How long is it ago since this came unto him? And he said, Of a child. [22] And ofttimes it hath cast him into the fire, and into the waters, to destroy him: but if thou canst do any thing, have compassion on us, and help us. [23] Jesus said unto him, If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth.

Mark 9:20-23, brackets mine

- A. This man must have had some strong faith to have brought his demonized son to Jesus—if he hadn't been believing for something, he wouldn't have gone to all that effort.
- B. This father came expecting something, but “*hope deferred maketh the heart sick*” (Prov. 13:12); he was beginning to waver in his faith.
- C. Basically, this man was putting the responsibility back on the Lord when he said, “Jesus, if You can do anything.”
- D. The Lord turned it right around and put the responsibility back on him, saying, “*If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth*” (Mark 9:23).

- II. We need to notice the father's response—it's significant:

And straightway the father of the child cried out, and said with tears, Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief.

Mark 9:24

- A. Apparently we can have both faith and unbelief at the same time!
- B. The healing of Jairus's daughter reveals the same truth.

While he yet spake, there came from the ruler of the synagogue's house certain which said, Thy daughter is dead: why troublest thou the Master

any further? [36] As soon as Jesus heard the word that was spoken, he saith unto the ruler of the synagogue, Be not afraid, only believe.

Mark 5:35-36

- C. Why would Jesus tell him to “*only believe*” if believing automatically excludes doubting?
- D. Because we can believe and doubt at the same time!

For verily I say unto you, That whosoever shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea; and shall not doubt in his heart, but shall believe that those things which he saith shall come to pass; he shall have whatsoever he saith.

Mark 11:23

- E. Jesus told us to believe, speak in faith, and then doubt not in our hearts.

III. Most Christians don’t even take into account the negative effect of unbelief.

- A. They just think that the antidote to unbelief is faith, but that’s not what the Lord was saying.
- B. Unbelief is a negative, counterbalancing force that cancels out faith.
- C. In Matthew 17, the reason the disciples couldn’t cast the demon out wasn’t because they didn’t have faith—Jesus told them that the problem was their unbelief, which counteracted and negated their faith:

And Jesus said unto them, Because of your unbelief: for verily I say unto you, If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place; and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you.

Matthew 17:20

- D. You just need a pure faith minus unbelief!

IV. Most Christians have the false concept that unbelief is something they can’t really deal with.

- A. It’s just there, and all they have to do is increase their faith level to overcome it.
- B. This is contrary to everything Jesus taught.

- C. You've probably seen faith work, but then you prayed for someone else, expecting the same result, but didn't see it.
- D. It's really confusing, because you know you have faith—but do you have unbelief?

ANDREW'S RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY

Most of what the Lord taught Andrew about the situation with the man in the wheelchair is included in his *Hardness of Heart* teaching.

DISCIPLESHIP QUESTIONS

1. Even though the father in Mark 9 was beginning to doubt that his son would be delivered, how did he show that he had strong faith?

2. *Discussion question:* The father came to Jesus for help, so why did Jesus put the responsibility back on him (Mark 9:23)?

3. *Discussion question:* What can you learn from the father's response to Jesus (Mark 9:24)?

4. What same truth does the healing of Jairus's daughter reveal?

5. Jesus said to _____, _____ in faith, and then _____ not in your heart.

HOW TO BECOME A WATER WALKER-Lessons in Faith

6. *Discussion question:* In light of what Jesus said in Mark 11:23, discuss how receiving from God is a combination of believing, speaking, and not doubting.

7. What do most Christians not even take into account?

- A. The stock market
- B. The negative effect of little faith
- C. The negative effect of unbelief
- D. All of the above
- E. None of the above

8. True or false: Faith is the antidote to unbelief.

9. What does unbelief do to your faith?

10. *Discussion question:* What does “pure faith with little unbelief” look like in everyday life?

11. True or false: Unbelief is something you can't really deal with.

12. Trying to increase your faith is _____ to everything Jesus taught.

13. *Discussion question:* What are some areas in your life where you are experiencing confusion because you have faith but you may also have unbelief?

SCRIPTURES

MARK 9:20-24

And they brought him unto him: and when he saw him, straightway the spirit tare him; and he fell on the ground, and wallowed foaming. [21] And he asked his father, How long is it ago since this came unto him? And he said, Of a child. [22] And oftentimes it hath cast him into the fire, and into the waters, to destroy him: but if thou canst do any thing, have compassion on us, and help us. [23] Jesus said unto him, If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth. [24] And straightway the father of the child cried out, and said with tears, Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief.

PROVERBS 13:12

Hope deferred maketh the heart sick: but when the desire cometh, it is a tree of life.

MARK 5:35-36

While he yet spake, there came from the ruler of the synagogue's house certain which said, Thy daughter is dead: why troublest thou the Master any further? [36] As soon as Jesus heard the word that was spoken, he saith unto the ruler of the synagogue, Be not afraid, only believe.

MARK 11:23

For verily I say unto you, That whosoever shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea; and shall not doubt in his heart, but shall believe that those things which he saith shall come to pass; he shall have whatsoever he saith.

MATTHEW 17:20

And Jesus said unto them, Because of your unbelief: for verily I say unto you, If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place; and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you.

JAMES 2:16

And one of you say unto them, Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled;
notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the
body; what doth it profit?

OUTLINE

- I. When Jesus' disciples asked "Why couldn't we cast the demon out?" Jesus answered, "Because of your unbelief!"
 - A. Faith is simply trusting in God; it is having thoughts, feelings, and emotions that are consistent with the Word of God.
 - B. Unbelief is thoughts, feelings, emotions, and actions that are opposed to what God's Word says.
 - C. The atmosphere of unbelief in a given area or group of people can affect even someone who is operating in faith perfectly, like Jesus—

And he could there do no mighty work, save that he laid his hands upon a few sick folk, and healed them. [6] And he marvelled because of their unbelief.

Mark 6:5-6
 - D. It's not just a matter of the power we exert; it's also a matter of all the negative things around us.
 - E. When Elijah, Elisha, and Peter raised people from the dead, they all sought seclusion (1 Kin. 17:17-24, 2 Kin. 4:32-37, and Acts 9:36-41).
 - F. They had faith, but they didn't want any unbelief around to counter their faith.
- II. We must take into account the unbelief of other people.
 - A. When Jesus encountered a man in Bethsaida who was blind, He had to lead him away from all of the unbelief (Luke 10:13 and Mark 8:22-26).
 - i. Even when He had gotten the man out of the town, He knew He hadn't gotten "all of the town" out of the man and had to pray for him twice.
 - B. If we are going to be really strong and see our faith produce, we need to cut off the inroad of unbelief into our lives.
 - C. Unbelief comes through hearing things opposed to God's Word just like faith comes by hearing things that are in agreement with God's Word.

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- III. As long as Peter looked to Jesus, he walked on water, but when he took his eyes off the Lord, the howling wind and tall waves overwhelmed him with unbelief.
- A. Peter didn't instantly sink; the Word says that he *began* to sink (Matt. 14:30).
 - B. Likewise, unbelief doesn't come all at once—it comes gradually through the way we think.
 - C. Peter had enough sense to turn to Jesus and call out for help.
 - i. He could have called back to the guys in the boat and totally given up all faith.
 - D. The Word implies that they walked back together; Peter walked on the water again, but with Jesus, looking unto Him.
- IV. Lack of faith didn't cause Peter to sink—unbelief did.
- A. The reason most Christians never walk on water is because they aren't really looking at Jesus the way they should.
 - B. If they start walking in a miracle but struggle and begin to sink, it's because they have taken their eyes off Jesus.
 - C. It's not that they don't have faith; it's just that their faith is being negated and counterbalanced by their unbelief that is pulling in the opposite direction.

DISCIPLESHIP QUESTIONS

1. Faith is simply _____ in God.

2. What is unbelief?

3. *Discussion question:* What are some ways that you can deal with your unbelief?

4. True or false: An atmosphere of unbelief can affect someone who is operating in faith.

5. *Discussion question:* Why is the spiritual atmosphere an important part of walking in miracles?

6. People don't consider the unbelief of _____.

- A. Their dog
- B. Their ancestors
- C. Others
- D. All of the above
- E. None of the above

7. How does unbelief come?

8. *Discussion question:* Why do you think faith and unbelief are strengthened by what you hear?

9. True or false: Peter instantly sank when he took his eyes off the Lord.

10. Unbelief comes _____ through the way you think.

11. *Discussion question:* What are some thought processes of unbelief?

12. *Discussion question:* Where do you look for help—instead of looking to Jesus?

13. True or false: Lack of faith caused Peter to sink.

14. Why do most Christians never walk on water?

15. *Discussion question:* How does unbelief negate and counterbalance faith?

SCRIPTURES

ROMANS 12:3

For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith.

MARK 16:18

They shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover.

MARK 6:5-6

And he could there do no mighty work, save that he laid his hands upon a few sick folk, and healed them. [6] And he marvelled because of their unbelief. And he went round about the villages, teaching.

MARK 5:22-24

And, behold, there cometh one of the rulers of the synagogue, Jairus by name; and when he saw him, he fell at his feet, [23] And besought him greatly, saying, My little daughter lieth at the point of death: I pray thee, come and lay thy hands on her, that she may be healed; and she shall live. [24] And Jesus went with him; and much people followed him, and thronged him.

MARK 5:35-43

While he yet spake, there came from the ruler of the synagogue's house certain which said, Thy daughter is dead: why troublest thou the Master any further? [36] As soon as Jesus heard the word that was spoken, he saith unto the ruler of the synagogue, Be not afraid, only believe. [37] And he suffered no man to follow him, save Peter, and James, and John the brother of James. [38] And he cometh to the house of the ruler of the synagogue, and seeth the tumult, and them that wept and wailed greatly. [39] And when he was come in, he saith unto them, Why make ye this ado, and weep? the damsel is not dead, but sleepeth. [40] And they laughed him to scorn. But when he had put them all out, he taketh the father and the mother of the damsel, and them that were with him, and entereth in where the damsel was lying. [41] And he took the damsel by the hand, and said unto her, Talitha cumi; which is, being interpreted,

Damsel, I say unto thee, arise. [42] And straightway the damsel arose, and walked; for she was of the age of twelve years. And they were astonished with a great astonishment. [43] And he charged them straitly that no man should know it; and commanded that something should be given her to eat.

1 KINGS 17:17-24

And it came to pass after these things, that the son of the woman, the mistress of the house, fell sick; and his sickness was so sore, that there was no breath left in him. [18] And she said unto Elijah, What have I to do with thee, O thou man of God? art thou come unto me to call my sin to remembrance, and to slay my son? [19] And he said unto her, Give me thy son. And he took him out of her bosom, and carried him up into a loft, where he abode, and laid him upon his own bed. [20] And he cried unto the LORD, and said, O LORD my God, hast thou also brought evil upon the widow with whom I sojourn, by slaying her son? [21] And he stretched himself upon the child three times, and cried unto the LORD, and said, O LORD my God, I pray thee, let this child's soul come into him again. [22] And the LORD heard the voice of Elijah; and the soul of the child came into him again, and he revived. [23] And Elijah took the child, and brought him down out of the chamber into the house, and delivered him unto his mother: and Elijah said, See, thy son liveth. [24] And the woman said to Elijah, Now by this I know that thou art a man of God, and that the word of the LORD in thy mouth is truth.

2 KINGS 4:32-37

And when Elisha was come into the house, behold, the child was dead, and laid upon his bed. [33] He went in therefore, and shut the door upon them twain, and prayed unto the LORD. [34] And he went up, and lay upon the child, and put his mouth upon his mouth, and his eyes upon his eyes, and his hands upon his hands: and he stretched himself upon the child; and the flesh of the child waxed warm. [35] Then he returned, and walked in the house to and fro; and went up, and stretched himself upon him: and the child sneezed seven times, and the child opened his eyes. [36] And he called Gehazi, and said, Call this Shunammite. So he called her. And when she was come in unto him, he said, Take up thy son. [37] Then she went in, and fell at his feet, and bowed herself to the ground, and took up her son, and went out.

ACTS 9:36-41

Now there was at Joppa a certain disciple named Tabitha, which by interpretation is called Dorcas: this woman was full of good works and almsdeeds which she did. [37] And it came to pass in those days, that she was sick, and died: whom when they had washed, they laid her in an upper chamber. [38] And forasmuch as Lydda was nigh to Joppa, and the disciples had heard that Peter was there, they sent unto him two men, desiring him that he would not delay to come to them. [39] Then Peter arose and went with them. When he was come, they brought him into the upper chamber: and all the widows stood by him weeping, and shewing the coats and garments which Dorcas made, while she was with them. [40] But Peter put them all forth, and kneeled down, and prayed; and turning him to the body said, Tabitha, arise. And she opened her eyes: and when she saw Peter, she sat up. [41] And he gave her his hand, and lifted her up, and when he had called the saints and widows, presented her alive.

LUKE 10:13

Woe unto thee, Chorazin! woe unto thee, Bethsaida! for if the mighty works had been done in Tyre and Sidon, which have been done in you, they had a great while ago repented, sitting in sackcloth and ashes.

MARK 8:22-26

And he cometh to Bethsaida; and they bring a blind man unto him, and besought him to touch him. [23] And he took the blind man by the hand, and led him out of the town; and when he had spit on his eyes, and put his hands upon him, he asked him if he saw ought. [24] And he looked up, and said, I see men as trees, walking. [25] After that he put his hands again upon his eyes, and made him look up: and he was restored, and saw every man clearly. [26] And he sent him away to his house, saying, Neither go into the town, nor tell it to any in the town.

HEBREWS 12:2

Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.

MATTHEW 14:30

But when he saw the wind boisterous, he was afraid; and beginning to sink, he cried, saying, Lord, save me.

OUTLINE

- I. Miracles don't require huge faith—just a pure and simple faith.
 - A. When the disciples asked Jesus to increase their faith, He responded in Luke 17 very much the same as in Mark 11.

And the apostles said unto the Lord, Increase our faith. [6] And the Lord said, If ye had faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye might say unto this sycamine tree, Be thou plucked up by the root, and be thou planted in the sea; and it should obey you.

Luke 17:5-6

- B. In other words, Jesus was saying, “Guys, you don't need more faith. Your faith is sufficient.”
 - C. The problem isn't that you don't have enough faith—it's the fact that you aren't using what you already have (Luke 17:7-8)!
 - D. If you could understand this, it would answer some of the questions you've had, questions like, “I know I believed, so why didn't it work?”
 - E. It's not because you weren't believing; it's because you were believing and disbelieving at the same time!
 - F. If you believe that God heals, that's enough to see the dead raised—as long as you don't submit to all of the negativism, doubt, and unbelief that come from your senses.
- II. Traditionally, people have taught that “*this kind*” (Matt. 17:20-21) refers to a demon that would only go out by prayer and fasting:

And Jesus said unto them, Because of your unbelief: for verily I say unto you, If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place; and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you. [21] Howbeit this kind [of unbelief] goeth not out but by prayer and fasting.

Brackets mine

- A. This scripture is not saying that certain demons are stronger than others.
 - B. Neither is it saying that certain demons won't respond to Jesus and faith in His name.

- C. The subject of the sentence in verse 20 is unbelief; it was their unbelief that was the problem.
- D. There are some types of unbelief that are hard to deal with; it takes fasting and prayer to get them out (Matt. 17:21).

III. Unbelief can come from ignorance—lack of knowledge.

- A. Some people have been taught that there isn't a spiritual world or anything beyond the natural realm.
- B. That ignorance is unbelief, and it will hinder faith.
- C. The antidote to this kind of unbelief is simply to tell them the truth.
- D. If they embrace it over a period of time, the truth will set them free:

And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.

John 8:32

IV. The second type of unbelief is one that comes through wrong teaching.

- A. It's not a lack of knowledge, but wrong knowledge.
- B. The antidote for this type of unbelief is the same—telling people the truth.
- C. We have to get the wrong teaching out and then start the process of embracing the right teaching.
- D. We tell someone the truth, and it will set them free if they believe it.

V. The third kind of unbelief—natural unbelief—comes through the five senses.

- A. It was this type of natural unbelief that Jesus was talking about in the case of the demonized boy (Matt. 17:17-21).
- B. Apparently the disciples had seen demons cast out before, but they hadn't seen a manifestation quite like that (Mark 9:20).
- C. Their senses—what they saw and heard—began giving them thoughts, feelings, and emotions contrary to what God had promised them (Matt. 10:1 and Luke 9:1).

- D. They had faith, which is why they spoke and were perplexed about not seeing the healing come to pass, but they were still too sensitive to their physical senses.

VI. Your five senses aren't evil—God gave them to you for good things.

- A. You need your five physical senses to function in this world.
- B. However, at times, God will call on you to do things that are contrary to your five physical senses.
- C. You need to spend time receiving from the spirit realm; that way, you will develop your “sixth sense.”
- D. Then your mind can be trained to respond to faith the same way it responds to your five senses.

VII. Your five senses can be exercised to discern things beyond just their physical, natural ability to where you develop this sixth sense of faith.

But strong meat belongeth to them...who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.

Hebrews 5:14

- A. If you spend time with the Lord in fasting and prayer, you can train your mind to respond to faith.
- B. You'll have physical proof that the Word of God works, and over a period of time, faith will become like a sixth sense to you.
- C. You can get to where you rely on faith like a blind person relies on hearing and feeling to still be mobile and get around.
- D. You can get to where you aren't limited to your five senses—but it doesn't happen easily.

DISCIPLESHIP QUESTIONS

1. What kind of faith do miracles require?

2. When the apostles asked Jesus to increase their faith, He basically said that _____.
A. Their faith was already sufficient
B. He was angry
C. He had been waiting for them to ask
D. All of the above
E. None of the above

3. Faith doesn't work when you are _____ and _____ at the same time.

4. True or false: The "this kind" described in Matthew 17:21 refers to an especially difficult demon.

5. There are some types of _____ that only go out by prayer and fasting.

6. *Discussion question:* Why do you think Jesus said prayer and fasting instead of some other solution?

7. True or false: Some people lack the knowledge that a spiritual world exists.

8. *Discussion question:* In what areas of your life have you experienced unbelief due to ignorance, or lack of knowledge?

9. True or false: Another type of unbelief is a result of wrong teaching.

10. *Discussion question:* In what areas of your life have you had to overcome unbelief due to wrong teaching?

11. A third kind of unbelief comes through your senses and is called _____.

12. What can natural unbelief cause that makes it harder to believe?

- A. Thoughts and feelings
- B. Emotions contrary to the promises of God
- C. Faith
- D. A and B
- E. B and C

13. *Discussion question:* How have your physical senses come against your faith?

14. True or false: Your five senses are evil.

15. *Discussion question:* In what ways can you spend time receiving from the spiritual realm and develop your “sixth sense”?

16. *Discussion question:* How is faith like a “sixth sense”?

17. *Discussion question:* Why is it not easy to get to where you aren’t limited to your five senses?

SCRIPTURES

LUKE 17:5-8

And the apostles said unto the Lord, Increase our faith. [6] And the Lord said, If ye had faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye might say unto this sycamine tree, Be thou plucked up by the root, and be thou planted in the sea; and it should obey you. [7] But which of you, having a servant plowing or feeding cattle, will say unto him by and by, when he is come from the field, Go and sit down to meat? [8] And will not rather say unto him, Make ready wherewith I may sup, and gird thyself, and serve me, till I have eaten and drunken; and afterward thou shalt eat and drink?

MATTHEW 17:17-21

Then Jesus answered and said, O faithless and perverse generation, how long shall I be with you? how long shall I suffer you? bring him hither to me. [18] And Jesus rebuked the devil; and he departed out of him: and the child was cured from that very hour. [19] Then came the disciples to Jesus apart, and said, Why could not we cast him out? [20] And Jesus said unto them, Because of your unbelief: for verily I say unto you, If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place; and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you. [21] Howbeit this kind goeth not out but by prayer and fasting.

JOHN 8:32

And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.

MARK 9:20

And they brought him unto him: and when he saw him, straightway the spirit tare him; and he fell on the ground, and wallowed foaming.

MATTHEW 10:1

And when he had called unto him his twelve disciples, he gave them power against unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal all manner of sickness and all manner of disease.

LUKE 9:1

Then he called his twelve disciples together, and gave them power and authority over all devils, and to cure diseases.

HEBREWS 5:14

But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.

OUTLINE

- I. Notice that Hebrews 5:14 says that their senses were exercised “*by reason of use*”:

But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.

Hebrews 5:14

- A. In other words, you have to exercise.
 - B. You don’t just get up and start preparing for a marathon the morning of the race.
 - C. Many Christians do everything in the natural realm, spending virtually no time praying and fellowshiping with God or fasting and denying their senses—then they get into some crisis situation and give it all they have.
 - D. They’re 100 percent sincere and genuinely dedicated, but it’s too little, too late.
 - E. Some people even die, not because they were believing wrong, but because their senses had too much control over them.
- II. Fasting is simply a denying of the five senses.
- A. If you’re controlled by your five senses and that sixth sense of faith isn’t the most dominant sense you have, fasting is how you can change that.
 - B. When you start fasting, your appetite will begin complaining and trying to regain control; but if you persist, your appetite will learn to submit.
 - C. Then if sickness attacks your body, you’ve trained yourself to say, “What I believe is just as real as what I see, taste, hear, smell, and feel.”
 - D. You’ll be able to stand until you see the manifestation of your healing.
 - E. But if you haven’t been spending time in the spiritual realm, if you’ve just been totally occupied and dominated by the physical realm, your senses will control you, instead of you controlling them.

III. You must get to where you are focused on the Lord and His Word.

- A. When Peter was focused on Jesus, he didn't have any problems, because he wasn't considering anything contrary to faith; but once he felt like he'd nearly made it, he took his attention off of the Lord and started sinking (Matt. 14:30-31).
- B. You can't afford to take your eyes off Jesus!
- C. Spend time in the Word and prayer, denying your five senses and fellowshiping with God.
- D. There will be tangible proof that God is there and that He's talking to you.
- E. When you spend time in the presence of the Lord, your heart becomes sensitive to Him.

IV. Prayer and fasting is the only way to deal with natural unbelief:

Howbeit this kind [of unbelief] goeth not out but by prayer and fasting.

Matthew 17:21, brackets mine

- A. You can get rid of the other two types of unbelief—ignorance and disbelief—just by hearing the truth and believing it.
- B. But the only way you can overcome your five senses and the unbelief they feed you is through fasting and prayer, spending time in God's presence.
- C. You can't wait until the morning of your trial to overcome this kind of unbelief.
- D. When you're believing God for a miracle and keep your eyes straight before you, not only can you be a water walker, but you can also walk all the way to the other shore!

DISCIPLESHIP QUESTIONS

1. True or false: Hebrews 5:14 says that their senses were exercised by grace alone.

2. Some people die because of what?

3. *Discussion question:* Besides fasting, what are some ways you can exercise your senses?

4. If you persist in fasting, your appetite will learn to _____.

- A. Dominate your senses
- B. Submit
- C. Manipulate you
- D. All of the above
- E. None of the above

5. Fasting trains you to say what?

6. *Discussion question:* What other battles besides sickness do you think fasting prepares you for?

HOW TO BECOME A WATER WALKER-Lessons in Faith

7. True or false: You must get to where you are focused on your circumstances.

8. Why is that when Peter was focused on Jesus, he didn't have any problems?

9. What happens when you spend time in the presence of the Lord?

10. *Discussion question:* What are some ways you can focus on the Lord and His Word?

11. You _____ wait until the morning of your _____ to overcome this kind of _____.

12. *Discussion question:* What would it look like for you to walk all the way to the other shore?

SCRIPTURES

HEBREWS 5:14

But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.

MATTHEW 4:4

But he answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.

MATTHEW 14:30-31

But when he saw the wind boisterous, he was afraid; and beginning to sink, he cried, saying, Lord, save me. [31] And immediately Jesus stretched forth his hand, and caught him, and said unto him, O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?

MATTHEW 17:21

Howbeit this kind goeth not out but by prayer and fasting.