

Breaking out of our Comfort Zones.

Matthew 14:22-32

Guided Growth with Pastor Keith @ CBC Sunday May 31st

Change is Stressful, Painful, and Inevitable; so painful in fact that many resist change until it becomes more painful to accept the status-quo than to change. When circumstances force us to detour from this predictable path, we tend to grow anxious; and try (ASAP) to get back to the more familiar path. God calls us to a transformed life! (Ro. 12:1,2; 2 Cor 3:18; 5:17-20)

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Since such Transformation (Change) seldom takes place on the comfortable paths; God designs (or allows) divine detours! Scott Peck (The Road Less Traveled) observed that:

“Our finest moments are likely to occur when we’re feeling deeply uncomfortable, unhappy, or unfulfilled. It’s in such moments, propelled by our discomfort, that we’re likely to step out of our ruts and start searching for different and truer answers.”

No one ever accomplished much for God on the well-worn paths of comfort. Noah, Abraham, Joseph, Moses, Gideon, Elijah, Esther, Peter, Paul, JESUS all walked difficult paths! God still calls us to break away from our comfortable Paths and walk Trails of Transformation. (Heb. 12:1-3)

Isaiah 43:19-21 *“Behold, I will do a new thing; ... I will make a way in the wilderness, ...”*

A Comfort Zone Is Anything That Keeps Us From Following God's Paths.

To move beyond our Comfort Zones we must:

1. FACE OUR FEARS. Mt 14:22-32 vs 26 *“they cried out for fear”*

Fear will paralyze us and keep us in our comfort zones! (The “safety” of the boat)

A. Fear Of The Unknown Mt 14:24

- 1) This was a new experience. (Is. 43:19)
- 2) It’s easy to get stuck in the rut of the familiar. (Joshua 3:4)
- 3) This is why Israel kept wanting to return to Egypt. Ex 14:12

*Most would rather remain in the monotony (or misery) of the familiar,
Than to face the uncertainty of a new path.*

B. Fear Of Ridicule And/Or Rejection.

- 1) This is what keeps many in the boat.

“What will _____ think of me?” Pr. 29:25 *“The fear of man bringeth a snare (trap) but whoso putteth his trust in the LORD shall be safe.”* (šāgab: strong, secure, inaccessible)
Ps. 118:8 *“It is better to trust in the LORD than to put confidence in man.”*

C. Fear Of Failure Mt 14:29-31

- 1) Peter is referenced 81 times, 39 times he's making a mistake.
- 2) This is what caused Israel to turn back from the Promised land. Nu. 13; Ps. 78:40,41
- 3) This is what initially kept Esther from speaking out. Esther 4:11-16

How might our fears be limiting our Great God?

2. FOCUS ON JESUS Mt 14:28-30

A. When we focus on the storms of life, we’ll inevitably sink!

B. When we shift our focus back on Christ, He helps deliver us!

- 1) Widow of Zarephat 1 Kgs 17:13 *'fear not;...but make me thereof a little cake first.'*
- 2) Abraham *"looked for a city which hath foundations whose builder and maker is God."* Heb. 11:10
- 3) Moses *"endured, as seeing him who is invisible."* Heb 11:27

C. This shift of Focus requires Faith! (Many refuse)

- 1) The Religious. Jn 5:39-40 *"Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me. And ye will not come to me, that ye might have life."*

- 2) The Rich Young Ruler. Mk 10:17-23

He was unwilling to break away from the comfort of his wealth. (See Mk 8:34-38)

Heb. 12:3,4 *"looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith. For consider Him..."*
(Analogiz'omai: to estimate accurately)

Ro 8:31 *"If God be for us, who can be against us?"*

Conclusion:

What comfort zone may be keeping you from Committing to following Christ?

- 1) Fear (of the unknown)? Ps. 118:8 *"It is better to trust in the LORD than to put confidence in man."* (Or Money) (Mt. 6:33; 1 Tim. 6:9,10)

- 2) Relationships Mk 10:37 *"He that loveth father or mother ...son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me."*

- 3) Complacency Phil. 3:14,15 *"I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. Let us therefore, as many as be perfect, (telios: mature) be thus minded"*

Hundreds (over 500) spent time with the resurrected Christ. (1 Cor 15:6; Acts 1:3)

"To whom also he shewed himself alive after his passion by many infallible proofs, being seen of them forty days, and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God:"

In Acts 1 they gathered for Jesus' final words. He "commands them" to wait in Jerusalem for the promised Spirit and that, when He came,

He would enable them to be witnesses. (Acts 1:3-8)

Only 120 obeyed and stayed together until on Pentecost,

The promise was fulfilled. (Acts 1 and 2) and 3000 came to Christ!

Where were the other 380?

Dreams (God's and ours) Die in Comfort Zones!

Application: Today is Pentecost!

Which group of believers would you be in if you were in Jerusalem?

What might God want to do through us in the coming days?

Will we be willing to follow Him on *"The Road Less Traveled"*