

Chris Murphy  
February 19, 2023  
Scripture: Matthew 14: 22-36  
Sermon Title: Stepping Out in Faith

Prayer...

Introduction: I still remember my first sermon. I was sixteen years old.

Preaching for the first time felt like stepping out in faith. The passage was the same one I read today.

Do you every remembering God calling you to step out in faith? What was the situation? What happened? How did God show up?

**Four Scenes or Acts in this Story. Think of it like a play.**

**Act 1:** Jesus on the mountain and the disciples are in the boat alone and the wind is against them. This reminds me of how life feels at times.

God is somewhere and we humans are struggling to keep moving across the lake of life.

**Act 2:** Jesus walks on water and approaches the boat. The disciples feel like they see a ghost. Sometimes it is hard for us to see Jesus when we are feeling scared and alone. We need him to come closer.

**Act 3:** Peter asks to step of the boat and walk to Jesus. Peter steps out in faith and begins to sink, but Jesus lifts Peter up and brings him back to safety. This is the story of the connection between grace and faith.

(Pause here to remember that Jesus himself needed grace, love, and support. **Remember the transfiguration** when Moses and Elijah and the Spirit of God meets with Jesus on the Mountain.)

Matthew 17:1-8

17 After six days Jesus took with him Peter, James and John the brother of James, and led them up a high mountain by themselves. 2 There he was transfigured before them. His face shone like the sun, and his clothes became as white as the light. 3 Just then there appeared before them Moses and Elijah, talking with Jesus.

4 Peter said to Jesus, “Lord, it is good for us to be here. If you wish, I will put up three shelters—one for you, one for Moses and one for Elijah.”

5 While he was still speaking, a bright cloud covered them, and a voice from the cloud said, “This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased. Listen to him!”

6 When the disciples heard this, they fell facedown to the ground, terrified. 7 But Jesus came and touched them. “Get up,” he said. “Don’t be afraid.” 8 When they looked up, they saw no one except Jesus.

**Act 4:** Jesus enters the boat with Peter and the winds cease. Jesus brings peace to the water and the boat is able to cross to the other side where Jesus continues to spread the Gospel and does miracles of healing. Reminds me of my journey now. I am doing my best to step out in faith, but I will need Jesus to bring me into the boat. Important for me to remember that Jesus is the captain of the boat that is Newberg

First Presbyterian Church. He uses me to take the wheel sometimes, but we need him to hold the wheel with us and to guide this ship that is our church. We cannot lead this ministry without the power and love of Jesus. God is reminding me to make Jesus my first love. The revival continues in Wilmore Kentucky and Asbury University. It is spreading to other colleges. I believe we are going to see a movement of young people that will compare with the Jesus People movement of the 1970's. It will spread to Newberg and George Fox University. How might we as a church respond to this revival? Let us be open to the Spirit. How might God be inviting you to continue to step out in faith as we prepare our hearts for the season of Lent. Remember grace leads to faith and then back to grace. This is what we learn from the spirituality of Jesus. Faith culminates in our capacity to show love in our world. May God's revival of love shape us and our town.

## God Is Love- 1 John 4: 7-21

7 Beloved, let us love one another, because love is from God; everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. 8 Whoever does not love does not know God, for God is love. 9 God's love was revealed among us in this way: God sent his only Son into the world so that we might live through him. 10 In this is love, not that we loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the atoning sacrifice for our sins. 11 Beloved, since God loved us so much, we also ought to love one another. 12 No one has ever seen God; if we love one another, God abides in us, and his love is perfected in us.

13 By this we know that we abide in him and he in us, because he has given us of his Spirit. 14 And we have seen and do testify that the Father has sent his Son as the Savior of the world. 15 God abides in those who confess that Jesus is the Son of God, and they abide in God. 16 So we have known and believe the love that God has for us.

God is love, and those who abide in love abide in God, and God abides in them. 17 Love has been perfected among us in this: that we may have boldness on the day of judgment, because as he is, so are we in this world. 18 There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear.

We the Kingdom Band has a song called “Dancing on the Waves” that teaches us about stepping out in faith. May God guide us as we step out in faith and dance with Jesus.

AMEN