
Alright, well I want to welcome everybody across all of our campuses, those of you tuning in online, as well as our evening services—really glad to have you today. You guys doing okay? Good to see you today.

We are really excited because next Sunday, February 23, we're going to be launching our Northeast campus in the Fishers area. In fact there is a whole team at Fall Creek Intermediate School this morning and they are just doing what we call a soft launch. Here are a few images from this morning of our Northeast campus. We're just praying for campus pastor, Nick Durm, and his whole team, all of the volunteers who are there.

So if you live on the northeast side of Indy, I want to encourage you to check out the Northeast campus. Better yet, I want to encourage you to be on mission with us. So, jump in on a serving team, invite friends and family to come to our Northeast campus that launches next weekend.

I want to encourage you to pull out your calendar, your phone, and write in Wednesday, March the 4, at 7 p.m. That's going to be our next worship night. And we're going to do all campuses gathering together here at our Northwest campus for a night of worship. We've been looking for a reason to get all of our campuses together, because it's pretty amazing that in four years we've gone from one campus to six. And we want to get everybody together again and worship together.

We're going to be doing a series in March called *We Are TPCC* and we're going to be launching new t-shirts. We haven't had a new t-shirt in a while. This is a little glimpse of it. I won't show you the back but there's a really cool back to it. You've got to come, alright?

Get your t-shirt and we're going to blow the roof off of this place as we come together as one, united church. We're just going to be thanking God for what he's done. We're going to be looking to him for where he wants to lead us next. So I want to encourage you to be here for our worship night, alright?

Well, today we are in week three of a four-part series of messages that we're calling FOBO, which stands for fear of better options. And the theme verses for this series are found in Proverbs, chapter 3, verses 5 through 6.

It just simply says this: "Trust GOD from the bottom of your heart; don't try to figure out everything on your own." I don't know about you, that's hard for me, because I want to figure out everything on my own. And I think that I can figure out everything on my own.

It says, instead, "Listen for GOD's voice in everything you do, everywhere you go; he's the one who will keep you on track."

Now, I believe in the wisdom of these verses and I believe this to be true, but it's a little bit of a different thing to figure out how to apply the wisdom of these verses to your life. How do you do that? How do you listen for God's voice in this life? How do you know he's the one who has kept you on track?

Those are really, really great questions that we're just trying to explore together, because when it comes to the world in which we live, there are all kinds of options in front of us. We live in a world of options. And we love us some options, don't we? It's like, "Don't limit me to two things. Show me a whole smorgasbord of options to choose from."

In my high school economics class, my teacher was this older, really sweet guy by the name of Mr. Savage. It's such an awesome last name. And he was a savage. He had like these big hearing aids—a little bit hard of hearing. He was a super sweet guy and we kind of messed with him a little bit. I'm not exactly super proud of this, but it was funny. Instead of calling him Mr. Savage, we would oftentimes raise our hands call him Mr. Cabbage, which was cruel, but we thought it was funny—apparently you didn't.

His wife was this little, Hawaiian lady who worked part time at McDonalds. They were just this amazing couple. And I'll never forget. He invited the manager of the McDonalds that his wife worked at to come in and speak to our high school economics class.

I don't remember the guy's name. I don't remember his talk. But I do remember him being really excited about this brand new marketing campaign that McDonalds was getting ready to launch at the time that was going to coincide with a brand new, state of the art movie that had never been seen before about dinosaurs, called *Jurassic Park*. This is pre-Chris Pratt, so I'm dating myself a little bit.

And he said, "We're going to be launching this marketing campaign at McDonalds to coincide with the launch of this new movie. And what we're going to be doing is, we're going to give customers the option—instead of just medium and large drinks and fries—we're going to give them the option of an extra-large drink and fries. And then a size above that and we're going to call it dino-sizing." And dino-sizing later became known as super-sizing. And 500 *Jurassic Park* movies later—it's still a thing, because we love us some options.

In fact, if there is anything that the restaurant industry has learned is that you should have it your way. We just fully expect to step up to the counter and the person on the other side of the glass is going to give us what option we want in our burrito, or bowl; our pizza, or flatbread; our footlong or wrap.

Did you know that many fast food restaurants now-a-days have what they call a secret menu? Are you aware of the secret menu? Because, if you're not you're learning something today in church. The secret menu has items on the menu that the regular menu doesn't have, because the regular menu is for regular people. But the secret menu is for special people, or at least the people who google secret menu before they go to the restaurant.

So, if you have a craving for a starburst smoothie or a peanut butter bacon cheeseburger, which are real things by the way, on the secret menu, then you can have it your way, because we love us some options.

And it's not just food, but we customize everything now-a- days. Have you noticed? But more and more research is beginning to kind of show us that all of these options aren't necessarily helping us make better decisions. In fact, they are just leading to greater and greater indecision, because with all of these options in front of us, we're feeling overwhelmed and a bit anxious and a little bit depressed. Because, with all of these options, how do you decide?

"What if I pick that option and it's the wrong one? What if I go down that path and I end up in a spiritual or emotional cul-de-sac? What if I choose the wrong one? What if I pick the wrong career or go through the wrong degree? Then what?" And how do you know?

And you add on top of all of that the pressure that we feel as we compare our choices and decisions with everyone else's. Because at a distance and through a filter, have you noticed that everybody else just seems to know what to do?

And they just seem to know what choices to make and what decision that they need to go after, and it just seems like everything they touch turns to gold. And their lives are advancing, "But I feel stuck." And they just got the promotion, "But I'm still at entry level." And their families just seem so perfect and their kids just made the travel team.

And I'm scrolling through social media on Valentine's Day just seeing all of these cute, amazing couples. It just makes me want to yak. And I don't care what Pastor Ryan says, there is the one and they've found it and I feel a little bit left out.

So how do you know?

All of this is a perfect storm for some serious FOBO, fear of better options, because I'm constantly in my head and I'm over-thinking, I'm over-analyzing, and where do I go and what do I do and how do I know if God is speaking? And how would you even begin to know if that is his voice? How can you sense God's direction in your life?

Maybe we might phrase it this way: How do I know God's will for my life? And how much does God really care? The granular decisions—like the big decisions, I get. Maybe God has an opinion about them, but when it comes to the smaller decisions, like, does God really care? Does he really have something to say? Does he really want to speak into my life?

So, "If God would just tell me, then I would do it." Have you ever said that? "If God would just send me a text message, and just spell it out, that would be great. I would do it." The question that I have is, "Would you?"

"If God would just show up and sit down next to me on a park bench somewhere and just have a conversation with me, looking and talking a lot like Morgan Freeman, because that's kind of

how I envision God to look and to talk, and if he were just to tell me, ‘This is what you should do,’ I would gladly do it.”

And I guess the question is: Would you? Like would you do what God told you to do?

If he were to rip open the sky and go, “Peek-a-boo, here I am. This is what you should do, and this is where you should go,” would I really?

So I want to look at a passage of Scripture today that can offer a little bit of insight into this in Matthew, chapter 14. So if you have a Bible or a device with a Bible on it, go ahead and turn there.

I want to look at a passage that is somewhat familiar, and for good reason, because it’s a pretty amazing story. In fact, if you don’t know the Bible super well, if you haven’t been in church in a while, you probably will be somewhat familiar with this passage.

And the setting here, like what just took place before what we’re getting ready to read is that Jesus and the disciples have just fed 5,000 people, which I don’t know—I’ve never done that personally, like I’m just guessing, that would take it out of you. That would be a long day. And I would expect them to want to get back to their hotel room or wherever they were staying and get a good night sleep: We’ll debrief about it later at breakfast the next morning.

But that’s not what happens. They actually have a really, really long night. And the question that I have as I read this is: Why? Like, why?

Now, before we read the passage, I just want to say this, really quickly. When it comes to hearing God’s voice and sensing his direction for your life, I’ve got some good news and I’ve got some bad news.

The good news is simply this. God is speaking. Just in case you were wondering, just in case you had that question, God has spoken, God is speaking, and God will speak. He is speaking right now. He is offering guidance and direction for your life. Does God care about the big decisions and the small decisions—you bet he does.

How is God speaking? Well he speaks through his word, he speaks through his Spirit, and he speaks through what we might call that still, small voice in your life. He speaks through the counsel of godly men and women in your life. He is always speaking. He is always providing direction. That’s the good news!

Bad news—bad news: Are you ready for the bad? I don’t think this will get any claps. The bad news is you may not always like what he has to say. The bad news is that he might say something that makes you a little uncomfortable. The bad news is that what he says might actually require you to take a step of faith that you don’t want to take. The bad news is that it might be a little painful.

There have been lots of times in my life where I've been praying and praying and praying, "God would you please speak? Would you please speak?" And I just get this sense that he goes, "Aaron, I have spoken. I am speaking. You just don't like what I have to say. So I'm just going to keep saying it until you get it."

So, it's with that in mind that I want to look at Matthew, chapter 14, beginning in verse 22. It says, "Immediately after this," immediately after what? The feeding of the 5,000, "Jesus **insisted**," I want you to hold on to that word, because this doesn't say that Jesus suggested or Jesus had an idea. Jesus said: No, no, no, I'm insisting, "that his disciples get back into the boat and cross to the other side of the lake, while he sent the people home. After sending them home, he went up into the hills by himself to pray. **Night fell** while he was there alone.

"Meanwhile, the disciples were **in trouble** far away from land, for a **strong wind** had risen, and they were **fighting heavy waves**." A storm came up. "About three o'clock in the morning," that's how long they had been out there, they're in the middle of the night, "Jesus came toward them, walking on the water. When the disciples **saw him** walking on the water, they were **terrified**." I would be too, "In their fear, they cried out, 'It's a ghost!'"

Now, I just want to point out really quickly, this had to be a pretty massive storm, because these guys—most of them anyway—were pretty experienced fishermen. They knew these waters pretty well. This would not have been their first storm. But, for whatever reason, this one took them by surprise. For whatever reason, this one sent them into a panic. And they see Jesus and they are so afraid, and their vision is so limited, that they don't assume that it's Jesus, they assume it's a ghost.

And then it says, in verse 27, "But Jesus **spoke** to them at once." And the first words out of his mouth were, "'Don't be afraid,' he said. 'Take courage.'" He didn't say be encouraged. He said take it. Take the courage that I am giving to you, because, "'I am here!'" That's the basis of the courage. "Then Peter called to him, 'Lord, if it's really you, tell me to come to you, walking on the water.'"

And I love that so much, because we all know that guy. We all know that guy. He's something pretty extraordinary. He's never been trained, or has the experience to do something, but he thinks he can do it. Maybe you're that guy. You're like, "I think I can bench 350." "I think I can ride a bull." "I think I can weld that back together."

"Well, why do you think that? You ever done it before?"

"Nah."

"Why do you think you can do it?"

"I saw somebody else do it, that's how I can know."

And I love Peter's willingness to jump in and do this. And I love Jesus' response here. It's even better. He goes, "'Yes, come.'" Jesus could have said: Peter, you don't know what you are

asking. Peter, I've got the whole deity thing going for me. Peter, you can't do this. You're not God. But instead Jesus says, "Yes, come." That's actually a whole sermon in and of itself, just the kind of confidence that Jesus has in Peter.

So, I love this. It says, "So Peter went over the side of the boat and walked on the water toward Jesus." That's amazing. "But," verse 30, "when he **saw** the **strong wind** and the **waves**, he was **terrified** and began to **sink**. 'Save me, Lord!' he shouted. Jesus immediately **reached out** and **grabbed him**. 'You have so little faith,' Jesus said."

Really? To which, if I had been in Peter's situation I would have said, "I just walked on water. I think that qualifies me for having some faith." But then Jesus said this, He goes, "'Why did you doubt me?' When they climbed back into the boat, the wind stopped." Did you notice that little detail? That's when the wind and the waves stopped. I would have wanted the wind and the waves to stop before I walked on the water. But they stopped after.

And then here's the disciples' response. "Then the disciples **worshiped** him. 'You really are the Son of God!'"

First thing I want to point out to you is how out of control this whole situation would have felt like to the disciples. It would have felt out of control. I don't know if you've ever been in a position when you are not in control. Every time you get on a plane, a boat, or in a car and you're not driving...

There have been lots of times when I've been in a situation like that and I feel like I could drive this better, I wish I was in control and I'm just getting knocked around by the wind and the waves, the traffic, or the sporadic driver, or whatever it is.

And maybe for you, right now, this is a little bit of what life feels like. It just feels out of your control. And the wind and the waves, right now, are blowing against your marriage. Or they are blowing against your health. Or they are blowing against your finances or your emotions. And you're doing everything within your power to try to keep things under control, but no matter how hard you try to keep things under control, you're just reminded that you're not in control.

And you thought you made the right decision, and you thought you made the right choice, and you thought you were honoring God by that option, but the wind and the waves, they just continue to rage, no matter how hard you try. And it's making you angry and it's making you confused, and frustrated, and sad. And when you get angry, confused, frustrated, and sad then it just blurs your vision even more and you begin to wonder if this whole following God thing is really worth it, because if the storm won't calm down by following God, then what good is following God anyway?

As I was studying this passage this last week, I kind of had a random thought. And right in the middle of studying it, I just asked this question. Why is this even in here? Why is this passage even in here? Why is this story even necessary for us to know? Because Jesus didn't preach a sermon or a lesson, nobody got fed, or healed. There weren't even any religious leaders for Jesus to beat upon, and that's always a good time.

No, all it really is is that Jesus sent the guys away because he needed to pray. It's the middle of the night. They get caught in a storm. Jesus walks out to them on the water. He tells Peter to come to him. Peter sinks. The end. Why is this in here? What is it that God is trying to teach us through this?

Why are the disciples in a boat in the middle of the night in a storm that they can't control? How about this question? Why is Jesus walking out to them on the water at 3 a.m. anyway? How about this question? Who put them in the boat in the first place? Jesus.

Look at verse 22. It says, "Jesus **insisted** that his disciples get **back into the boat** and cross to the other side of the lake, while he sent the people home."

Jesus put them in the boat, seemingly for no good reason—seemingly. And oftentimes that's kind of where we go with it, isn't it? At least for me, when life doesn't seem to be working out, when my spouse doesn't respond the way that I wanted her to, if I lose the job, or if the diagnosis comes back as something really, really scary and the wind and the waves are raging and I can't make sense of it, then I just simply reduce it to: Well, God's the one to blame. He's the one who has put me here. He's the one who has abandoned me here, and I don't know what to do with it.

There are four biographies of Jesus' life: Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. And one of the other biographers, a guy named Mark, actually records this same story and he includes a little detail that Matthew doesn't for whatever reason. And it actually, I think, sheds some light on why this is in here and why Jesus put them in the boat.

Check out Mark's telling of this same story. Mark includes this. He says, "About three o'clock in the morning Jesus came toward them, walking on the water." Now check this out. "**He intended to go past them,**" what is that about? Like, is Jesus racing them? Is he trying to get across to the other side of the lake before them? Is he show-boating here? Is he walking by there doing the moonwalk, set belt? (I did not have a chance to practice that by the way, which is why that was so poorly executed, alright?)

Is this one of those things in which you go to the store and you turn down the aisle of the grocery store and you see a person that you hope didn't see you, because you don't want to get caught up in a conversation with them, because you know that conversation will be at least 30 minutes? And you see him and you're like, "Whoa." And then they see you and you're like, "Oh, hey there you. Didn't see you over there."

Is this one of those things? Jesus is walking by and he's intending to pass them by like he didn't want the disciples to see him and he's like: Oh, hey fellas. Fancy seeing you out here in the middle of the sea that I put you out on. Is that what's going on?

It says, "...but when they saw him walking on the water, they cried out in terror..."

Why is this in here?

I think part of the reason is that they were learning what you and I have to learn. It's simply this. Obedience is never a guarantee that God will spare us from adversity. And oftentimes this is where I get tripped up, because I wrongly assume that God will reward my obedience by making all of my problems go away. And that's never been part of the deal. If you notice, the storm didn't end until Peter got back into the boat.

The verb for to pass by, what Mark tells us, is actually a Greek word. It's pronounced: parerchomai. And don't be too impressed by my enunciation of that, because I learned in Greek class that if you don't know how to enunciate it just say it confidently and real fast and it will sound like you know what you are talking about, alright? So, parerchomai. It simply means:

to pass by

That's the word. That's the verb. And it's actually a Greek word that is used in the Greek translation of the Old Testament, something called the Septuagint, and it was used to describe a technical term referred to as a theophany. Now hang with me, because this is super important.

A theophany is this:

those defining moments when God makes a striking and temporary appearance in the earthly realm to a select individual or group **for the purpose of communicating a message.**

The purpose of this passage was not that Jesus was going to calm the storm or to make the disciples' fear go away. The purpose of the passage is that Jesus wanted the disciples to experience his power and his presence in their lives.

Wow, I thought I would at least get an Amen or a clap or something—that's good. That's the whole week's study right there, that one moment. And you missed it.

The purpose of the whole passage isn't that God would just make the waters calm down, the purpose of the whole passage is that when we are frantically looking for God to direct us, he would say: I'm here. Trust me and follow me one step at a time.

And there are a couple of examples of that term in the Old Testament. One is when God puts Moses in the cleft of a rock and he kind of shields Moses' eyes so that he wouldn't blind Moses when he passed him by.

Then there is another example when God told Elijah to stand on the mountain, "For the Lord is about to pass by." It's the exact same verb that Mark uses to describe Jesus' intention to pass them by.

And there is a pattern to all of these examples. God is trying to get their attention. And he will use any means necessary. For Moses it was a burning bush. For Saul it was a blinding light. For the disciples it was scary darkness, and the wind, and the waves. What about for you?

Each time he is getting ready to call each of them to do something extraordinary. He's going to impact their lives in a big way. And in each situation, every single person God was calling felt afraid. And each time they said "Yes," they experienced the power and the presence of God in their lives.

So Jesus came to the disciples intending to pass them by, he wasn't blowing them off, he wasn't show-boating, he wasn't doing some neat trick, he was revealing his divine presence and power that they were about to experience. The same presence and power that is available to you and to me if we are willing to take a step.

That's really the question. Will you step into it?

See, there were 12 people in the boat. They were all literally and figuratively in the same boat. They saw the same thing. They experienced the same thing and they felt the same thing. It was dark for all of them. Yet, only one of them took a step into the presence and power of Jesus.

I can't say that I blame the other 11. I mean, if you're in the middle of a storm out in the middle of the sea, in the middle of the night being in the boat seems safer than being outside of it, except when you are with Jesus.

I love Peter's question. It offers us a lot of insight. See, Peter just didn't dive out of the boat. Peter stopped first and he asked this question: "Lord, if it's really you, tell me to come to you, **walking on the water.**"

And I think there were a lot of questions that Peter could have asked in that moment. I think he could have said: Hey, Jesus. If that's really you, could you come a little closer? Jesus, if that's really you, could you turn the lights on, and could you turn the waves down, and calm the wind so that way we can get a clear vision of who you are? And then I'll actually take a move outside of the boat. Could you show yourself to me Jesus?

But that's not what he said. He says: Jesus, tell me that it's you. Tell me to come to you and I'll walk on the water. I think that's really an important distinction to make because Peter is not a thrill seeker. This is not a story about extreme sports. This is a story about obedience, which by the way is at the very root of making better decisions in your life.

It seems that before Peter was going to get out of the boat, he first wants to make sure that Jesus thinks this is a good idea. And then he makes the move. He asks for Jesus' feedback.

Here's an important question when you're trying to discern what path to take and what option to choose, it's are you asking for feedback from a variety of sources? Are you taking the time to listen more than you are to talk and to explain yourself?

See, your quiet time with God, whenever you take that—whether it's early morning or midday or late day, it doesn't really matter—it's not just about what you read and it's not just about what you say, it's about taking the time to really listen.

And God speaks through his word, and God speaks through his Spirit, and God often speaks through the voices of multiple people. In fact, Scripture tells us that plans fail from lack of counsel, but with many advisors they succeed.

So, how is God speaking collectively?

One of the things that I'm learning to do, continue to have to learn to do it, is when I'm faced with a decision and I don't know what to decide or where to go, I just start asking lots and lots of questions and then I just shut up and I listen instead of interjecting what I think or maybe defending or explaining. And oftentimes I don't necessarily like the feedback that I get, but it still informs and directs my path.

This is what Peter was doing. And you and I, maybe we need to learn to do more of it. He was discerning between what we might call and authentic call of God and then maybe just a foolish or selfish impulse.

Can we be honest? This happens a lot in the church. Oftentimes, we use these little words right here: God is calling me... And we use those to justify pretty much any decision that we want to make. And we've got to be so careful about that.

Now, I want to be very clear here. Please don't misunderstand me. I believe that God does call and God does speak and maybe that's very well how he's leading you, but I've heard a lot of people abuse and misapply those little words.

Meaning, I've heard people use those terms to justify breaking a commitment. I realize I'm breaking a commitment. "I know that I'm hurting these people, but God is calling me." Is he?

I've heard people use those terms to walk out on a marriage. I've heard people use that phrase to neglect their kids. I've heard people use that phrase to hurt people who were depending upon them.

And Peter wants to be really sure here, he says: Lord if it's you tell me to come, because big decisions require big wisdom and discernment. Big decisions require listening more than talking.

Here's another question that we all need to ask when it comes to making better decisions. It's simply this one right here:

What's your "boat"?

What is your boat? Because chances are you need to define what your quote/unquote boat is and then you'll know what the next step that you need to take is, because God's always calling you out of it.

So your boat represents safety and security whatever it is, apart from God himself. Your boat is whatever you run to to cope when life gets really scary and unpredictable. Your boat is whatever gives you the illusion of control. Your boat is whatever makes you so comfortable that you don't want to give it up and it's actually keeping you from joining Jesus on the waves.

Your boat is where you go to sit and nurse your insecurities and hide from making courageous calls and tough decisions. Your boat is often the secrets that you are hiding from everyone else. You want to know what your boat is? Your fear will usually tell you.

The question is:

What is it that produces the most fear in me, especially when I think about leaving it behind and stepping out in faith? Chances are that's what I need to do.

So, Peter steps over the side and for a few incredibly glorious moments he's doing it, man. He is actually walking on water. Could you imagine what that would have looked like? He probably didn't look very graceful. He probably is looking like a deer on ice skates or something. I'm sure that it didn't look very graceful, but the disciples would have all been dumbfounded. And he's doing it!

Until what? He takes his eyes off of Jesus. The storm was the same. The storm never dialed down and then picked back up again. He takes his eyes off of Jesus. That's when he began to sink. It wasn't like Jesus turned the lights on and then as Peter is walking then he turned the lights out and he didn't know where to go. No, the storm was the exact same. The only thing that changed in the passage is where Peter was looking. And he took his eyes off of Jesus and he focused them on his circumstances and that's when he began to sink.

And I love Jesus' response. There is so much grace and compassion in it. He just reaches out and he catches him, and he just simply asked the question, and I don't think it was accusatory, I think that it was just informational. He just goes, "You of little faith." And Jesus is equating this to faith, not to irrational belief; he's equating faith to vision. Where are you looking and who are you trusting?

This made no rational sense naturally speaking. There was no way that Peter should have been walking on the water. The x factor here was the presence of Jesus and Peter took his eyes off of him. In other words he broke his trust in the one who was holding him up.

Several years ago I remember hearing about Mother Teresa and there was a young man who walked up to her and he asked if she would pray for him. And she said, "Sure. What can I pray for you about?" And he said, "Well, I'm facing a lot of big decisions in my life and I was wondering if you would pray that I have clarity to make these decisions."

I don't know about you, but that seems like a pretty decent prayer request. In fact, I think I've probably asked that at one time or another. And that's why Mother Teresa's response to him is so shocking. She said, "No. I will not pray that you have clarity for your decisions."

Man, that's amazing. As a pastor I've had people ask me to pray for them all of the time and I don't think I've ever told them no. And people have asked me to pray for some pretty weird things, "Pastor, would you pray for my hamster?" "Would you pray for my iPhone? It's not working right." "Would you pray for my hang nail?"

And I'm always like, "Sure." Like, "Where's your hamster? I'll pray right now." And I'm not even joking about that, alright? I've never told anybody no. I've never said, "No. I'm not going to pray for that." I've never done that.

She told him no. But what she said next was so key. She said, "I've never had clarity. What I have had is trust." She said, "I will not pray that you will have clarity for your decisions. I will pray that you will have trust, because trust is way better."

Here's the challenge in preaching a series of messages on making better decisions. I know how some of you are wired up. Some of you want me to actually give the exact things to do, list them all out in alphabetical order for how to make decisions. And the honest answer to that is: I can't make those decisions for you. Honestly, I don't know.

There are lots of decisions in my life right now that I want clarity on, and I don't have clarity. But God is saying to me through that still, small voice, through his word, through the counsel of godly people, "I want you to trust me. I want you to trust me. Where are you looking? Where are your eyes?"

I know when I was teaching all of my kids to swim when they were really little, they would get up to the side of the pool. And they're contemplating jumping in and they were so scared and one of the things that I noticed is that their fear would increase as their eyes would begin to dart all around.

I was right there in front of them talking to them, but they were not looking at me. They were looking behind me, and they were looking at the water, and they were looking behind them and in every single instance, as I'm encouraging them to jump, I would always say, "Look at me. Look at me. Keep your eyes fixed on me and jump."

And right now I know that maybe some of you are in a storm and it seems like the rational thing for you to pray for is, "God, calm the storm." Right now some of you are facing lots of indecision and it seems like the rational thing to pray for is, "God, would you give me clarity?" I know right now some of you are saying, "God, I'm looking for some answers." And I just want you to know that Jesus is saying to you: I am the answer.

It's like, "I'm looking for some solutions here, God." And he goes: I am the solution. "I'm looking for some direction here." And he goes: I am the direction. And would you take a step out of

your boat, whatever that is, and would you just begin to keep your eyes on me. It is a shaky walk, one foot at a time.

Do you want to know what a faithful life of a person who is following after God in the midst of a world that is uncertain as it is—do you want to know what it looks like? It's slippery. That's what it looks like. None of this calm, steady Eddy, like, "I know what I'm doing. Nothing to see here, it's one foot in front of the other."

No, no, no. It is one shaky step at a time. Stop looking at your feet. Stop looking at the waves. Stop looking at the wind. Stop being consumed by the darkness and keep your eyes fixed on Jesus in front of you. If you do, you will do the next best thing. You will make the next best decision.

See, the easy thing would be to leave. I'm going to stay. The easy thing would be to lose heart and to blame. I'm not going to do that. The easy thing would be to just give up. I'm not going to give up. I'm going to stay in it. The easy thing to do would be to say, "I don't think this thing is working out." No, I'm going to stay and let God bear some fruit in my life. And that takes a while, by the way. That's the hard thing.

God is speaking. You may not always like what he has to say, but he offers you his presence and his power and he wants you to experience that today.

Father, we come to you right now and I ask that here in these next few moments that we would not go anywhere, that we would not try to beat the traffic out the door, that we would not try to just get on with our day without just stopping long enough to listen. So we just want to hear from you.

Please speak into my life.

But more than your offering specific direction; first offer your presence and your power. And we so desperately need to experience that. So we're just going to be quiet for just a moment or two, because we want to hear from you. And we are not asking for clarity. We're praying for trust. We ask this in your name: Amen.