

Step Up, Step In, Step Out 6.12.14

Matthew 14:22-33

Peter's progression – He Stepped up, he stepped in, and he stepped out!

"I am looking for someone to share in an adventure that I am arranging, and it's very difficult to find anyone.' I should think so — in these parts! We are plain quiet folk and have no use for adventures. Nasty disturbing uncomfortable things! Make you late for dinner!" — J.R.R. Tolkien, The Hobbit

Do you observe that many believers have the same mindset when it comes to faith challenges?

- a. "Being on the tightrope is living; everything else is waiting" --Karl Wallenda
- b. Jean Paul Sarte, a French existentialist philosopher, stated that there are no issues in life that are significant enough to risk ourselves for, that life is mere existence without purpose, meaning.

Talk about the contrast between the two statements above and how they may apply to the Christian walk and spirit-filled life

1. Step Up and Out (of Your Comfort Zone)

Discuss this: "Faith is the heroic effort of your life. You fling yourself in reckless confidence on God...Jesus Christ demands that you risk everything you hold by common sense--and leap into what He says....Christ demands of the man who trust Him the same reckless spirit....that is daring enough to step out of the crowd and bank his faith on the character of God." -- Oswald Chambers, *My Utmost for His Highest* –

2. Step into the water Joshua 1:9 Just as that moment of truth came for Peter, it also came for the Priests at the river Jordan in Deuteronomy 3 – it had to be a faith step!

Romans 14:23 - Hebrews 11:6 **This is an adventure of faith, it is a faith walk that requires total abandonment to God!**

3. Step out and grow! (Mature, Grow Up!) The New Testament is very clear that God's will for every believer is spiritual maturity. The apostle Paul

says, "We are not meant to remain as children ... but to grow up in every way into Christ the head" (Ephesians 4:14, Phillips). The goal of spiritual growth is to become like Jesus.

So how does spiritual growth happen? How do we become mature in Christ? Churches are filled with people who have attended for decades but show little development in discipleship. What are the causes of spiritual atrophy?

Discuss Eph 4:11-16 and Heb 5:12-14 As a group, **honestly** discuss your state of spiritual contentment or discontentment:

4. Step Out and Serve

1. **Make serving a Spiritual Discipline**
2. **Serving reflects your faith** James 2:20
3. **Serve In excellence** 1 Cor 10:31
4. **Serve with a right attitude, a CHRIST attitude** Phil 2:5-7 Amplified

Peter, Aeneas, Dorcas and miracles Acts 9:32-43 There is still life changing, healing, and "raising the dead" power in the name of Jesus and the Holy Spirit! How can we avail ourselves of this power? Are we willing to step out and put our faith on the line for His kingdom?

1 Peter 1:15-22 The Message

Conclusion - "The boat is safe, and the boat is secure, and the boat is comfortable. The water is high, the waves are rough, the wind is strong, and the night is dark. A storm is out there, and if you get out of your boat, you may sink."But if you don't get out of your boat, you will never walk because if you want to walk on the water, you have to get out of the boat.

Now to him who able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, forever and ever! Amen. --Ephesians 3:20, 21