



**Face the Issue:**

There is a current commercial series for a cell phone service provider. The theme is that “just OK” is not good enough. It says you would not trust a “just OK” surgeon or a “just OK” tattoo artist so you shouldn’t trust a “just OK” cell phone service.

Here is a question for us. What is our trust level in Christ? Is he “just OK” and we really only trust him just so far?

Every day when we wake up, the great question is, “Is there somebody in charge of this thing, and can that somebody be trusted?” We live in a world full of people who try to psyche themselves up, chanting, “I believe, I believe, I believe,” over and over. Sociologists tell us that people have begun to put their faith in faith: “If I just believe hard enough,” we tell ourselves. The real question is, “Is somebody controlling this thing, and can that somebody be trusted? Are his competence and his character such that I can, with confidence, place my life in his hands?”

*Why is faith in faith futile?*

*What should be the substance of our faith?*

**Into the Word:**

There is a wonderful story in the Bible of Peter deciding that he could trust Jesus. It is the story of Jesus calling Peter out of the boat to walk on the water with Him. If you are not familiar with this story, read it in Matthew 14:22–33.

We have another term for “getting out of the boat” when it comes to our lives. It is discipleship. A disciple is not simply somebody who believes in certain things so he will get into heaven. A disciple is someone who says, “It is my ultimate goal to live the way that Jesus would live if he were in my body. We cannot incidentally become a disciple. We have to choose. We have to completely trust.

In the story of Peter, he sank because of fear. That is an aspect of discipleship that a lot of people don’t like. A life of following Christ is a commitment to the constant recurrence of the experience of fear. It’ll happen over and over again.

To be a disciple is to be a learner or a student. It is to choose to grow in Christ. And growth means entering new territory, getting out of the boat. Every time you do that, you experience fear.

**Read Matthew 16:24–27.**

*According to this passage, what is demanded of us if we choose to follow Jesus?*

*What do you think it means to take up our cross? What is our cross?*

*How do we save our lives by losing them (v. 25)?*

*Which of the following keeps you from being a wholehearted disciple of Jesus?*

- *Desire for comfort*
- *Desire for security*
- *Desire for prosperity*
- *Fear*
- *Other*

*How can you overcome that roadblock to discipleship?*

**Apply The Word**

When people get out of the boat, amazing things happen. Imagine if all Christians in Gordon County were to say, “Jesus, command me. I’m yours.” Can you imagine the power of God that would be released in this area?

Jesus is still looking for people to get out of the boat. If you do, you will face problems. A storm is out there. Your faith will not be perfect, and you will sink.

But when we fail—and we will fail—Jesus will be there. He will pick us up. He will not leave us alone. And every once in a while we’re going to walk on water.

*Going back to the last question about what is holding you back from “getting out of the boat.” Pray for courage, strength, and wisdom to confront this obstacle.*