

Romans 10:5 Moses writes concerning the righteousness that comes from the law, that "the person who does these things will live by them."

6 But the righteousness that comes from faith says, "Do not say in your heart, 'Who will ascend into heaven?'" (that is, to bring Christ down)

7 "or 'Who will descend into the abyss?'" (that is, to bring Christ up from the dead).

8 But what does it say? "The word is near you, on your lips and in your heart" (that is, the word of faith that we proclaim);

9 because if you confess with your lips that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.

10 For one believes with the heart and so is justified, and one confesses with the mouth and so is saved.

11 The scripture says, "No one who believes in him will be put to shame."

12 For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek; the same Lord is Lord of all and is generous to all who call on him.

13 For, "Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved."

14 But how are they to call on one in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in one of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without someone to proclaim him?

15 And how are they to proclaim him unless they are sent? As it is written, "How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!"

Matthew 14:22 Immediately he made the disciples get into the boat and go on ahead to the other side, while he dismissed the crowds.

23 And after he had dismissed the crowds, he went up the mountain by himself to pray. When evening came, he was there alone,

24 but by this time the boat, battered by the waves, was far from the land, for the wind was against them.

25 And early in the morning he came walking toward them on the sea.

26 But when the disciples saw him walking on the sea, they were terrified, saying, "It is a ghost!" And they cried out in fear.

27 But immediately Jesus spoke to them and said, "Take heart, it is I; do not be afraid."

28 Peter answered him, "Lord, if it is you, command me to come to you on the water."

29 He said, "Come." So Peter got out of the boat, started walking on the water, and came toward Jesus.

30 But when he noticed the strong wind, he became frightened, and beginning to sink, he cried out, "Lord, save me!"

31 Jesus immediately reached out his hand and caught him, saying to him, "You of little faith, why did you doubt?"

32 When they got into the boat, the wind ceased.

33 And those in the boat worshiped him, saying, "Truly you are the Son of God." Loving creator, shine as a light before me that you may be seen and not I. Give me words that I may speak, give us ears that we may hear, and through your Holy Spirit help us understand.

Amen.

It is really great to be back here after having had some time off. One of the last things I did before heading off on my vacation was Vacation Bible School. I really enjoy this time, as I said in my messenger article for this month it is a privilege to share our faith with children, and to get to tell our story, often to people who have never really heard it before.

My role this year was as storyteller. I took the stories that we had and opened them up to the children. I had a lot of fun with this. I dressed up in Biblical garb and told the stories in first person form, something I had never really done before. I enjoyed it so much I wanna try this approach out on all of you.

So, today I am going to do what I did during vacation bible school. I would put on a robe and tell the kids who I was. Of course these children are no fools and they knew it was just Pastor Bob dressed up in a costume and many of them enjoyed telling me so.

So, here I am; I in Peter, one of Jesus' disciples. I just have to tell you about what happened last night.

I have been following Jesus for a while, and I know I should not be surprised, but he surprises me all the time.

We were out on the lake last night when I was surprised once again.

Jesus had sent us on ahead in the boat at the end of the day yesterday. We were making our way across Galilee and the weather had turned on us. Many of us know the Lake also known as the Sea of Galilee, well, we had been fishermen and spent our whole lives on this lake. Things can change quickly and the wind had turned on us and we were not making much headway.

It was about four in the morning, just before dawn, when we were all startled. It looked like a ghost or a phantom was out on the lake. But when we began to cry out in fear Jesus called to us and said, "Don't be afraid it is me."

This was a new one for me. I have seen lots of things on this lake, but this was a first time I ever saw anyone walking on the water. As soon as he spoke to us we knew it was him. He was always doing things that were unexpected, even miraculous.

Once I realized it was him, I said "Lord if it is you speak to me and I will join you on the water." Then Jesus spoke the word I hoped he would and he said "Come." Just one word, a single word, come, and I went to join him.

I didn't even stop to think. I put one foot out onto the water and then stepped out. I seemed to be doing it; I was walking on the water. I was not even thinking about walking on water until the wind kicked up and then I suddenly realized what I was doing. No one can walk on water.

As soon as I thought that I began to sink. I wasn't walking on the water any more, but Jesus was still on the water. So I called to him, "Lord save me."

He came to me, reached out his hand and lifted me up, and then he scolded me for not having faith.

Why didn't I believe? I should know better by now. I mean what had we just seen?

I told you he had us get in the boat and sent us on ahead last night. Well, yesterday morning, when Jesus found out that his cousin John had been killed, he went out to pray, but as usual there was a crowd that followed him. He spent the whole day healing the sick and taking care of others. And then when we tried to get him to send them off to get food he told us to feed the people.

He is always saying this kind of thing, things that seemed impossible. We did not have enough food to feed thousands of people and yet he said you feed them.

I was looking at the five fish and two loaves of bread we brought for ourselves and thought this is impossible. But that is my problem, I think too much.

After Jesus blessed the loaves and fish he told us to hand them out to the people. Everyone was amazed. The whole crowd ate and we still had leftovers.

I am always surprised when he does these things, you might think that I would start to get used to it. Even after all that when he walked on the water it seemed more like a dream than reality.

When I first started following Jesus I knew that he was different. I knew that the things that he said were different than anything I had ever heard before. When he said a word it was like a whole new word had just been invented with new meanings and new purpose. He said things with authority and I wanted to follow him because he was so different. I listen to the words he said, but they really were just words to me as I look back on it now.

After the experiences that we've had the last couple weeks I realize that he is not just the messiah we expected. We were expecting an earthly ruler, yes, one who was anointed by God which is what messiah means, but one who was just a human being like we were. What I can see now is that he is not just another human leader like David or Moses, he is the Word of God. When he speaks it is God's word. He is God's Word.

I should expect these kind of things to happen when he is with me. People are healed, lives are transformed, the hungry are fed, and when he calls for us to walk on water we can really do it.

You may find all this hard to believe, but I was there and saw all this. I don't care, I know it is true and I'll keep telling people about what Jesus has done as long as I live, and when I'm gone, I hope someone writes these things down.

Thanks for listening to my story.
May God bless you and keep you, now and always.