

Letter from Pastor Gary - July 10, 2020

Dear Friends,

Peter answered him, "Lord, if it is you, command me to come to you on the water." He said, "Come." So Peter got out of the boat and walked on the water and came to Jesus. But when he saw the wind, he was afraid, and beginning to sink he cried out, "Lord, save me." Jesus immediately reached out his hand and took hold of him, saying to him, "O you of little faith, why did you doubt?" (Matthew 14:28-31, ESV)

Jesus came to His disciples when the weather was unsteady. He knew their fear. Yet He called Peter to step out of the boat and onto the sea. And because Peter "got out of the boat", he became the 2nd person in history to walk on water. I want to call forth the "water-walker" in each of you!

Jesus' call to leave the boat is a call to step out of our comfort zones and trust Him more. When we take that step of faith, defying our fear, resisting our love of comfort, Jesus is able to do extraordinary things in and through us. He used Gideon to lead the Israelites in victory over the powerful Midianites. He used Moses to deliver a nation out of slavery. He used a shepherd boy to defeat a giant and then appointed him as king. He used uneducated fishermen to spread the gospel all over the known world.

There are no limits to what God can and will do when we step out of our comfort zone and trust Him more. But like Gideon, Moses, Jeremiah, and others, when God invites us to get out of our boats, fear, anxiety, and love of comfort, keep us firmly planted in the boat. How do we overcome these things and become water-walkers?

We can boldly follow Jesus when we fix our eyes on Jesus, fully recognize who He is, and remember He controls all things. Peter began to sink when he took his eyes off Jesus, and Jesus once again rescued Peter from the storm. Occasionally, we will sink, but if we fix our eyes on Jesus and move forward in faith, we will learn to trust Him more and each storm will feel less threatening because our trust will become more firmly rooted in the One who calls us to boldly step out of the boat. Is Jesus calling YOU to get out of your boat, out of your comfort zone, and boldly follow Him into something new? A new career? Enrolling in seminary? Sharing Christ with a neighbor? Proposing marriage? Returning to church? Well, maybe it's time to get out of the boat.

"But I'm scared, Padre!" Jesus knows that our present circumstances are uncertain and challenging. But still He calls us to step out in faith because without faith, we cannot please Him.

As NYC enters Phase 3 of reopening, our guidelines to attend FBCF remain the same. We have room for 80 worshipers in the Spanish and English services and 45 worshipers in the Chinese

service. If you are in good health, I encourage you to join us this Sunday at FBCF. We would love to see you!!! Although there are many restrictions on our gathering (social distancing, wearing masks, having to get dressed for church, not being able to sing during worship, no childrens' classes, no coffee!), it is good for Christians to gather together. Just go to our website (www.fbcflushing.org) and register for one of the services. A full list of our safety procedures can be found on our website.

But if you are high risk or care for someone who is high risk or have been medically directed to avoid crowds, I urge you to stay home and watch us online. Please do not feel any pressure to come out on Sunday. Faith does not operate independently of wisdom. Our services will still be available ONLINE for those who prefer to wait a little longer before returning. We love you and your well-being is our highest priority!

We have wonderful services planned for Sunday, July 12:

Spanish Service (1st floor; 9:00 AM): "The Identity of a true Christian" Acts 22:1-16 Pastor Adolfo Ocampo; Watch Live at www.facebook.com/Primera-Iglesia-Bautista-de-Flushing-NYC-Ministerio-Hispano-103654884345775/

Chinese Service (3rd floor; 11:00 AM): "Living in the reality of Revelation" Revelation 6 Rev. Abraham Koo; Watch Live at www.facebook.com/fbcflushingchinese/ And on YouTube at <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCLgjRNQKpOyikirQdtbms-A>

English Service (1st floor; 11:00 AM): "Lifting the Veil" Mark 9:2-14 Pastor Gary Domiano
Watch Live at www.facebook.com/fbcflushing/

Choosing Faith Over Fear!

Pastor Gary

Mark 4:40