

Welcome to Kev's on-line eGroup

The e-Glue that helps with the glitter

Part 1: Detailed sermon notes

Part 2: eGroup study questions

Here Comes Church – “In the know”

- Interested in serving at Elevation Church: See: www.elevationchurch.cc
- Please consider joining an eGroup (small group) so you don't have to walk this walk alone – See www.elevationchurch.cc. The “e” stands for empowerment - because getting the instructions from God without having the empowerment to live them out will frustrate you. These groups are our way of putting some very wonderful people in front of you feed you spiritually.
- Stay out of “isolation silos” - you are an easy target for the enemy – and you don't have the benefit of friends to support you. Embrace the power of numbers.
- Interested in leading an eGroup? See: www.elevationchurch.cc
- Don't over-think it – Invite someone to church – “Who do you know that is close to you that is far from God?”
- What are your Gr8ful eight?
- K-Love and Elevation Workshop at Red Rocks in CO in August 2025
- Elevation Nights is back: Elevation Nights is hitting the road again and we're coming to a city near you from October 21st through the 30th, 2025 - we're going to be in St. Paul, Omaha, St Louis, Louisville, Duluth, Tampa, Miami, and Orlando.

Matthew 14:22-33

Jesus Walks on the Water

²² Immediately Jesus made the disciples get into the boat and go on ahead of him to the other side, while he dismissed the crowd. ²³ After he had dismissed them, he went up on a mountainside by himself to pray. Later that night, he was there alone, ²⁴ and the boat was already a considerable distance from land, buffeted by the waves because the wind was against it.

²⁵ Shortly before dawn Jesus went out to them, walking on the lake. ²⁶ When the disciples saw him walking on the lake, they were terrified. "It's a ghost," they said, and cried out in fear.

²⁷ But Jesus immediately said to them: "Take courage! It is I. Don't be afraid."

²⁸ "Lord, if it's you," Peter replied, "tell me to come to you on the water."

²⁹ "Come," he said.

Then Peter got down out of the boat, walked on the water and came toward Jesus. ³⁰ But when he saw the wind, he was afraid and, beginning to sink, cried out, "Lord, save me!"

³¹ Immediately Jesus reached out his hand and caught him. "You of little faith," he said, "why did you doubt?"

³² And when they climbed into the boat, the wind died down. ³³ Then those who were in the boat worshiped him, saying, "Truly you are the Son of God."

³⁴ When they had crossed over, they landed at Gennesaret. ³⁵ And when the men of that place recognized Jesus, they sent word to all the surrounding country. People brought all their sick to him ³⁶ and begged him to let the sick just touch the edge of his cloak, and all who touched it were healed.

Isaiah 55:6-11

Seek the LORD while he may be found;
call on him while he is near.

⁷ Let the wicked forsake their ways
and the unrighteous their thoughts.

Let them turn to the LORD, and he will have mercy on them,
and to our God, for he will freely pardon.

⁸ "For my thoughts are not your thoughts,
neither are your ways my ways,"
declares the LORD.

⁹ "As the heavens are higher than the earth,
so are my ways higher than your ways
and my thoughts than your thoughts.

¹⁰ As the rain and the snow
come down from heaven,
and do not return to it
without watering the earth
and making it bud and flourish,
so that it yields seed for the sower and bread for the eater,

¹¹ so is my word that goes out from my mouth:
It will not return to me empty,
but will accomplish what I desire
and achieve the purpose for which I sent it.

Awesome opening prayer on August 25, 2025 by Pastor Steven Furtick: “Thank you for meeting us in the secret place, Lord. Thank you for speaking to our hearts that - it's going to be all right, that we're going to make it, and that you're working your purpose out. Thank you for reminding us today how big you are, God. That mountain is nothing to you. You're a big God, a great God, a worthy God, a holy God, a mighty God. I give you praise. Who are you, great mountain, to stand before my God? I give you praise, Lord. I worship you today. I'm not ashamed to praise you. I'm not ashamed to celebrate you. After everything you've done for me, I owe you the praise. I owe you hallelujahs. I owe you 10,000 more hallelujahs. If I had 10,000 tongues, it still wouldn't be enough. Lord, every need in this room, every name in this room, you know. We know the name that is above every name, the name of Jesus. In his name today we have gathered, touching and agreeing that it shall be done. Your kingdom come on earth as it is in heaven in our lives. Touch down now, God. I know technically that's not how it works, but just bring heaven to earth for a few moments. Thank you, Lord, for letting us get out of the hell of our own heads and our own minds and just worship you and say you're holy. Lord. We came with one purpose and one purpose only: to praise your holy name. Great is your name, greatly to be praised. In Jesus' name, amen.”

Part 1: Detailed sermon notes

Kev's guys on-line eGroup study notes

Elevation Sermon Notes – “Sinking In The Storm” by Pastor Steven Furtick - August 25, 2025

Sermon Highlights

- Fear comes from focus, so does faith. Change your focus, increase your faith.
- We get triggered, and then we get trapped. The truth can keep you out of the trap.
- Drop your thoughts so God can drop His.
- You've got to get alone with God to get aligned with God.
- You have no idea what God has on the other side of the storm.
- While Peter was sinking, Jesus was syncing.
- Maybe the thing you're afraid of is the thing God is using to answer your prayer.

Scriptures

Matthew 14:22-33

Isaiah 55:6-11

Sermon Discussion

- “Drop your thoughts so God can drop His.” What thoughts do you need to release so God can replace them with His truth?
- “Fear comes from focus, so does faith. Change your focus, increase your faith.” Where have you seen your faith grow simply by shifting what you're focused on, even when the situation didn't change?
- “While Peter was sinking, Jesus was syncing.” Share a habit or practice you've learned from a past storm that can help you stay in sync with Jesus.
- “They thought it was a ghost — Maybe the thing you're afraid of is the thing God is using to answer your prayer.” When have you been afraid of something that turned out to be an answered prayer?
- “You've got to remember to get alone with God to get aligned with God.” Where do you need God's alignment most in this season?”

Prayer Prompt: Pastor Steven said, “Change your focus, increase your faith.” What do you have coming up this week that will try to compete with God for your focus? Thank God for this week's message and the conversation. We pray that we are able to our their focus on what matters most. We pray for protection from any distractions or temptations that may compete for their focus and for discipline to keep God at the forefront of their minds this week.

Kev's guys on-line eGroup study notes

Elevation Sermon Notes – “Sinking In The Storm” by Pastor Steven Furtick - August 25, 2025

- Elevation Nights is hitting the road again and we're coming to a city near you. From October 21st through the 30th, we're going to be in St. Paul, Omaha, St. Louis, Louisville, Duluth, Tampa, Miami, Orlando.
- **Awesome opening prayer: “Thank you for meeting us in the secret place, Lord. Thank you for speaking to our hearts that- it's going to be all right, that we're going to make it, and that you're working your purpose out. Thank you for reminding us today how big you are, God. That mountain is nothing to you. You're a big God, a great God, a worthy God, a holy God, a mighty God. I give you praise. Who are you, great mountain, to stand before my God? I give you praise, Lord. I worship you today. I'm not ashamed to praise you. I'm not ashamed to celebrate you. After everything you've done for me, I owe you the praise. I owe you hallelujahs. I owe you 10,000 more hallelujahs. If I had 10,000 tongues, it still wouldn't be enough. Lord, every need in this room, every name in this room, you know. We know the name that is above every name, the name of Jesus. In his name today we have gathered, touching and agreeing that it shall be done. Your kingdom come on earth as it is in heaven in our lives. Touch down now, God. I know technically that's not how it works, but just bring heaven to earth for a few moments. Thank you, Lord, for letting us get out of the hell of our own heads and our own minds and just worship you and say you're holy. Lord. We came with one purpose and one purpose only: to praise your holy name. Great is your name, greatly to be praised. In Jesus' name, amen.”**
- This is the final week in our series That's What I Thought. You are sad. You are so sad to see this series come to an end, but I feel that you have no more need of teaching about your mind and your thoughts. I think we have preached all the crazy out of you. If you're standing next to your spouse, look at them and say, "Pastor is delusional." Stand up on your feet. I'm going to read the Scripture right now.
- I'm so glad you're here today. A special welcome to two of our locations. Our Matthews location is celebrating a 16-year anniversary today. Praise the Lord. Our Uptown location is celebrating 17 years of ministry today. That's amazing.
- That's as old as my middle son, y'all. I look at my son Graham sometimes and say, "I've got campuses older than you, boy." Yeah, it's good. Remember, Officer Van Allman, when we used to drive around? We would do Butler High School, Uptown, and get back over to Providence - But Josh is a police officer, so he was driving, like, 110 miles an hour. Happy birthday to Josh Van Allman, by the way. Those are some good memories, man. You and me in that Nissan Maxima just doing ministry at the speed of God. I mean, just running in there huffing and puffing, like I am right now after jumping and spinning around.
- By the way, if any of you want to be preachers one day, I would not advise jumping and spinning before you preach. It is very disorienting. But I just got excited about what God can do all of a sudden.
- I got to thinking. What if God answered a prayer that some grandmother has been praying for her granddaughter suddenly today?

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Elevation Sermon Notes – “Sinking In The Storm” by Pastor Steven Furtick - August 25, 2025

- What if God gave you clarity on something you've been confused about suddenly today? What if you were walking out today and one of the greeters was handsome and single suddenly today? So, I'm excited about Jesus. I want to preach about Jesus today from Matthew, chapter 14, verses 22-35. The first Bible story I ever preached for our last sermon in the series That's What I Thought.
- If the Lord wants me to keep going, I will, but my plan is today to take some of the things we've been preaching about and minister them to your heart. Welcome to all of our locations. Put it in the comments on YouTube. "That's what I thought." This is our final installment.
- Yeah, this is the first Bible story I ever preached, so I always try to preach it at least once a year just to check in and see how dumb I was the last time I preached it or what new thing God will show me. I'm glad you're here today. Welcome. Welcome to the presence of God. Welcome to a new beginning. Welcome to a space where grace reigns supreme and where Jesus is Lord and King. Welcome to a place where you can hear his Word.
- Now, the Bible says a word... We were just singing about this word in verse 22, so it's appropriate. "Immediately..."
- "Immediately Jesus made the disciples get into the boat and go on ahead of him to the other side, while he dismissed the crowd. After he had dismissed them, he went up on a mountainside by himself to pray. Later that night, he was there alone, and the boat [with the disciples] was already a considerable distance from land, buffeted by the waves because the wind was against it.
- Shortly before dawn Jesus went out to them, walking on the lake. When the disciples saw him walking on the lake, they were terrified. 'It's a ghost,' they said, and cried out in fear. But Jesus immediately said to them: 'Take courage! It is I. Don't be afraid.' 'Lord, if it's you,' Peter replied, 'tell me to come to you on the water.' 'Come,' he said. Then Peter got down out of the boat, walked on the water and came toward Jesus. But when he saw the wind..." It was blowing the whole time, but when he focused on it, what was against him... "When he saw the wind, he was afraid." Fear comes from focus. So does faith. Change your focus, increase your faith. That's why you feel faith when you're in here, because you are focused in here. When he focused on what was against him rather than the one who was coming toward him named Jesus, he began to sink and cried out, "Lord, save me!" Here it is again. "Immediately Jesus reached out his hand and caught him. 'You of little faith,' he said, 'why did you doubt?' And when they climbed into the boat, the wind died down. Then those who were in the boat worshiped him, saying, 'Truly this is the Son of God.'" Go back to that other verse real quick in verse 30. "But when he saw the wind, he was afraid and, beginning to sink, cried out, 'Lord, save me!' Immediately Jesus reached out his hand and caught him."
- **I want to talk to you today from this subject, because this is how some of you have been feeling. I want to talk about Sinking in the Storm. This is the way it feels at times in our emotions and in our lives and in our circumstances. Sinking in the Storm.**
- Let's welcome our global eFam joining up with us right now. Come on, y'all. I know you're getting seated, but let's welcome our entire church family all over the world. Let us know where you're watching from.

Kev's guys on-line eGroup study notes

Elevation Sermon Notes – “Sinking In The Storm” by Pastor Steven Furtick - August 25, 2025

- **I want to talk to you today about sinking in the storm, the feeling you get sometimes that you're overwhelmed; the feeling you get sometimes that there's too much month and not enough money, too much need and not enough "me" to meet it all; that spread-thin feeling; that feeling you get, and it doesn't always announce itself. All of a sudden, there is a storm, and you find yourself sinking in the storm. Ain't it crazy how you can be singing in the church and just a few days later find yourself sinking in the storm? This place is a place that God has prepared for us to prepare us for the storms of our lives. You cannot be a student of Jesus without storms as your classroom. Anything else would make you arrogant. Anything else would make you write a parenting book and your oldest kid is 3. You're three months pregnant talking about how to raise teenagers God's way. What's wrong with you? Go through a storm, and then you'll have something to say. In this season of your life, God is calling you to be a student of your storm.**
- What does this have to do with thinking? Well, it's amazing to me how quickly I can go from stepping on the water, so to speak, to sinking. I can really shift quickly from being focused on God to falling down and finding myself in emotional states that do not resemble the fruit of the Spirit. Okay, just me. Just me.
- Look at your neighbor and say, "It can happen quick." It can happen real quick. If your neighbor is looking like they don't know what I'm talking about, cut them off in traffic on the way out and see how quickly they go from lifting their hands to lifting one finger. It can happen just that quick. Can't it?
- Just even your phone can buzz in your pocket, and it might not even be the person you don't want to hear from with the news you don't want to hear, but just the buzz itself can disrupt your peace. Can't it? Just even the buzz in your pocket can feel like a shock collar, just reminding you that your challenges are out there in the world. Sometimes it can happen just that quick. Now, I'm so glad Jesus is a savior, because I'm a sinner, so I need one.
- I have sinful thoughts. All of my thoughts aren't holy thoughts, good thoughts, pure thoughts, so I need Jesus for my sinful thoughts, which can become sinful actions, which can become sinful patterns, which may not send me to hell but may make my life on earth feel like a living hell.
- I'm so grateful that Jesus is a savior. I am also so thankful that he is not a surface-level Savior, that he doesn't just save me from hell when I die but he saves me from the hell in my head as he transforms my mind and brings me through life's challenges. I need salvation in my soul. That's my mind, my will, my emotions. I need Jesus to teach me how to think. In this passage we just read, there's a conversation between the student of Jesus and Jesus the Savior.
- Jesus is watching him sink in the storm. By the way, have you been feeling like you're sinking in a storm lately in your life? It doesn't even have to be bankruptcy. It doesn't even have to be something so catastrophic that everybody would take up money for you if knew about it. It doesn't have to be the worst thing that ever happened in your life.
- I've just found that a lot of times I find myself in a funk or maybe even a full-blown feeling of depression. In those moments when God is watching me sink into those states, I'm grateful that he does not give me surface-level answers like church people do. Church people will tell you, "Rejoice in the Lord always," but they ain't rejoicing in the Lord. They've only been rejoicing in the Lord because they had a good week. Catch them next week, and they might have a different answer. It can happen that quick.

Kev's guys on-line eGroup study notes

- Jesus watching Peter fall in the middle of a storm that had been raging all night... Remember, God Wants More For You he has been going through this all night. He steps out, and he's walking, and he's sinking, and he cries out, "Lord, save me." I think that's such an important phrase.
- One great theologian who just went to be with the Lord, Dr. John MacArthur, used to say, "A lot of us refuse Jesus as Lord, but we want to use Jesus as Savior."
- So, I think it's important that he called him Lord before he called on him to save him.
- I'm trying to say that God wants far more for your life than to just save you from stupid stuff you do. He wants far more for your life than to just clean up the messes you make because you never spend time with him. God wants far more for your life than to have to redeem years you waste because you never get aligned with him. So now Peter calls out, "Lord, save me," and the Bible says, "Immediately Jesus reached out his hand and caught him." Now, we focus a lot (and I really preached this a lot at age 16) on how Peter had the faith to step out when Jesus said, "Come." Somebody shout, "Come." That's a command.
- **When Jesus gives a command, you can obey it with confidence. When Jesus gives a command, you don't have to start doing the math on how it's going to work out. When Jesus gives a command, he already has the details in mind for how he will meet that need before you even know about the need. So, when he says, "Come," take a step. Then we talk so much about the command that we neglect the question that I think is just as powerful as the command. He said, "Come." Peter is coming. He said, "Walk." Peter is walking. He gave the word, and Peter is walking not on water but on one word from Jesus.**
- I could preach a whole message about walking on one word.
- Just one word that God gives you, and you can hang on through something you never would have made it through without that word. One word from Jesus, the command to come. But then comes the question. After he caught him, he said, "You of little faith, why did you doubt?" Because if I can get beneath the surface of why you're sinking, I can maybe stop it from happening so quickly next time.
- **A lot of times, we sink into things, and we don't stop and ask why. A lot of times, we get triggered by something, and after you get triggered, see, you get trapped. You don't even realize how you got triggered until you're already trapped. I'll break it down for you. I can see we need a little real-life example right now.**
- When Holly and I first got married, we went on a cruise. I saved up for the cruise. It was a Princess cruise, which is a little step up from some of the other cruises you can buy. I was so proud of that cruise and so broke after I paid for it. Three days on the cruise, she was very quiet one day. When she got quiet on that cruise, it triggered something inside of me that I didn't know, because I equated quiet with bored. So, when she got quiet, I started to get angry because she was quiet. For Holly, quiet means relaxed. Quiet means "Nobody is telling me to do anything. I don't have to talk. I love you. We're together just being..." This is what she was saying: "Your essence alone is so captivating we don't even need a conversation." But I interpreted her quiet as boredom. We would fight for years in our marriage anytime she would get quiet. I would think, "You don't like it here? This isn't good enough for you? Your dad took you on better vacations? What, you don't need my vacation?" "No, I'm relaxed." See, just in such a stupid illustration like that, you see how years can go on, because I'm reading her mind with information that is not true data, and I am triggered by something that isn't even true.

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- But by the time I recognize what I'm triggered by, I'm already trapped in it, and now we're fighting. So now it's not that we never get triggered in our marriage, but here's what we do. And I want to teach you how to do this. We catch it quicker. We catch it quicker. Touch your neighbor and say, "Catch it quicker." Before you blow up on them, before you go off on them, before you hit "send" on the text, proofread it. Hire yourself as a copy editor and check that thing one more time.
- Do you really want to say, "You never..."? Do you really want to say, "You always..."? Do you really need six exclamation points? Is it really worth that emoji? Is that emoji worth the emotional expense of what you are going to spend the next week cleaning up? All of that could have been canceled if you would have caught it quicker, read the text, woke up in the morning with fresh eyes, and said, "I think I'll just have a conversation." But we get triggered, and then we get trapped.
- That's why the Lord sent a preacher to you today to give you truth: because the truth can keep you out of the trap. "Preach the Word, Larry Stevens Furtick, Jr." I believe I will. So, when you start sinking, you get beneath the surface, and this is what we need to learn to do.
- Now, they'll tell you that in therapy. If you go to therapy, they'll talk about triggers and traps and cognitive distortions. "You sound like you've been in therapy, Pastor Steve." No comment.
- We need therapy. We also need theology to produce real faith and real change in our lives. So, I want to show you something that I couldn't end the series without showing you from Isaiah 55 and overlay it for this situation you're facing in your life, the situation Peter faced, where he's stepping, stepping, stepping, doing pretty good, and then sinking, and doesn't even really understand why.
- **Look at Isaiah, chapter 55. I was debating where to start, because the whole passage is so rich, but for the sake of time, I think I'll start around verse 6 or 7. I'll start at 6. Isaiah 55, verse 6. (Yeah, I did it on purpose.) Now listen to me. This is an invitation to all of you who have been sinking in the storm. The Lord offers you an invitation. The wind is the trigger, and the sinking is the trap. Sometimes you feel like you're drowning in it before you even know what it is. But this is the word of the Lord, and this will be very rich to you for the trials you're going through. The Lord says, "Seek the Lord while he maybe found; call on him while he is near."**
- Let's read that again. "Seek the Lord while he may be found; call on him while he is near." I'm coming back to that. "Call on him while he is near." "Let the wicked forsake their ways and the unrighteous their thoughts." This is interesting language. I'll read the whole passage, but that's where I want to camp out, around verse 6 or 7. "Let the wicked forsake their ways and the unrighteous their thoughts. Let them turn to the Lord, and he will have mercy on them, and to our God, for he will freely pardon. 'For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways,' declares the Lord. 'As the heavens are higher than the earth, so my ways are higher than your ways.'" God says, "I know how to do my job." God says, "I know who to let leave you."
- God says, "I know who to bring into your life that is a challenge for you. You keep praying to be a masterpiece, and every time I send someone to be the sandpaper, you push them away. But I know what tools to use to turn you into the disciple I want you to be."

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- He says, "My ways are higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts. As the rain and the snow come down from heaven, and do not return to it without watering the earth and making it bud and flourish, so that it yields seed for the sower and bread for the eater, so is my word that goes out from my mouth..."
- I hear Jesus saying, "Come," when I read Isaiah 55. I feel the echo of this prophecy in Matthew, chapter 14. I feel the power of one word from God. He says, "So is my word."
- Just one word. "So is my word." The full counsel of the word of God has value, but just one singular word that goes from my mouth... "It will not return to me empty, but will accomplish what I desire and achieve the purpose..." "Many are the plans, but it is the purpose for which I sent it that will be accomplished." So, why did Jesus send a disciple into a storm that he knew was going to happen? And why does God allow challenges to our faith instead of just bolstering us with the Bible so that we avoid them? Isaiah, [chapter 55, gives an interesting strategy. Okay. Let me teach you what Isaiah is teaching here. He says you can seek the Lord, you can call on him, but you have to be willing \(verse 7\) to forsake your ways and your unrighteous thoughts.](#)
- [Now, that's interesting language. To say that I'm going to forsake a thought... That's crazy to me, because when you say forsake something, it's something you have become very attached to. You don't forsake something you don't even know. You don't even know it. To forsake something is to walk away from something that it is assumed you have responsibility for. So, when God says, "I will never leave you nor forsake you..." Forsaking has baked into it the idea that I am responsible for this. I'm not saying it right. How do I say it? You can drop a thought. Like this. You can drop a thought. He said, "Forsake your ways, because my ways are higher, and your thoughts that are not from God." How many times have I been drowning in my mind and in my life because of the thought that I wouldn't drop about my situation? How many times have I clung to an offense while I'm drowning in my bitterness? I am asking God to help me forgive, but if I don't drop... Let me do it again. If I don't drop the thought, I drown. That's what I'm trying to say.](#)
- [Now I said it the way I want to say it. Tell your neighbor, "Drop it or drown." Those are the only two options you have right now. You can't afford to play around with this right now, because there's too much at stake at this juncture of your life right now. It's drop it or drown. You've got to stop thinking childishly about this and waiting on people to come around and make it right, and you've just got to get your heart right with God. You've got to let him show you what he's going to do from the place you're at, not the place you wanted to be. Punch your neighbor. Say, "Drop it." Drop it so you don't drown. Drop it so you don't keep sinking. Drop it so it doesn't weigh you down. Drop it so you don't miss the next season that God wants to give you, crying about the season you lost. You'd better drop this thing. The thing about dropping a thought is it's kind of hard for me to drop my thought until I understand that God can also drop a thought.](#)

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- This is one thing I'm ready to preach today. This is one thing that me and God have in common. We can both drop thoughts. I can take a thought in my mind. I can take a tempting thought. I can take a bitter thought. I can take an angry thought. I can take a victimized thought. I can take a catastrophizing thought. I can take a wicked thought. I can take a thought, and I can look at it, and I can separate myself from the thought. By the grace of Jesus, by the grace of God, by the power of the Holy Spirit, I can look at the thought and realize that just because I think it doesn't mean I have to be it. So, I can drop a thought. How dumb would it be for you to drown on this sea because of something you won't drop? How dumb would it be? The Bible says to forsake your thoughts when they're not God's ways. His ways are higher. So, when he shows you the higher way, don't stay down in the way you did it, the way they did it, the way you thought you were going to do it. Drop your thoughts so God can drop his.
- "What do you mean God can drop a thought?" I mean like AirDrop. I mean like how I could take my phone and put it next to your phone, and if it's near enough, you can choose to share with me what's on your phone on my phone. If we are close enough to connect, you can drop something to me that I didn't come with. Now you know why it was important for you to be at church today: so you could get close to God and close to somebody. Fist bump your neighbor and say, "I'll drop you some faith today." Fist bump them really quick and say, "I got something for you." Tell them, "I'll AirDrop you some peace today. I'll AirDrop you some joy today." The Bible says that if two of you will agree... Well, we've got a lot more than two, baby boy. The Holy Ghost in me is the Holy Ghost in you. If you came a little empty today, there is a word from God, and if you don't feel it right now, then praise him by faith until something clicks in your spirit and you get the sense, "I think I'm going to be all right." High-five your neighbor like you're AirDropping something. Oh, that's good, isn't it? Isn't that good to know that God can drop you a thought? Forget about a human. They might not have it. But if I'm close enough to Jesus, what I didn't get from other people... What I didn't have in my flesh, God did by sending his Son. So, you can drop a thought, and so can God. The moment you drop your low thought, the moment you drop your human thought, the moment you drop your sinking thought... Notice the Bible says, "Immediately Jesus reached out his hand and caught him."
- Why did Jesus catch him at that moment? If He's there, don't worry instead of keeping him from the storm? Good question, because it probably wouldn't be a good story. The second thing I want to mention to you is what Jesus was doing before he joined the disciples on the rough sea. When you get in those situations, doubt and fear flooding your heart...drowning in doubt, flooded with fear, drowning in doubt, flooded with fear... "Oh, it came so quickly, I don't know what to do." There is something Jesus models for us that is so important to remember.
- You've got to think the disciples have been doing ministry with Jesus for a little while now. This is Matthew, chapter 14, not Matthew, chapter 1. They've seen some things, and they've even been through storms, but this one is different, because the last storm they went through with Jesus, he was on the boat with them. This one is a little different, because they just got done with a spectacular miracle. I want to tell you something about spectacular things that God does in your life.
- Just as quickly as you start to celebrate the spectacular, a new struggle can show up. Just that quick. Somebody say it. "Just that quick." I mean, they just picked up the leftovers. They just dismissed the crowds. Jesus says, "I need you boys to go to the next appointment," but he conveniently leaves out the detail that "You are going to encounter a violent, furious squall on the open sea getting to where I'm sending you. But I'm not telling you about that part," because as I taught you last week, details follow obedience.

Kev's guys on-line eGroup study notes

Elevation Sermon Notes – “Sinking In The Storm” by Pastor Steven Furtick - August 25, 2025

- When Jesus gives a command, he does not have to give you every single component of that command. He wants to put you in school to know "Will you be my disciple if I don't give you the details? Will you do what I told you to do when you don't know where it's leading?" And into this atmosphere, the disciples are straining in the boat all night long. I mean, you really can't see it from Matthew's account. It says in Mark's account that they were straining at the oars. It means they were all rowing together all night long, but Jesus was not physically with them. What was Jesus doing in Matthew, chapter 14, verse 22? The Bible says immediately after sending the crowds away, dismissing them and sending them home, and the disciples in the boat to go to the next appointment and go on ahead of him to the other side while he dismissed the crowd...Verse 23: After he had dismissed them, he went up on a mountainside by himself to pray. Later that night, he was there alone, and the boat was already a considerable distance from land..." You don't have to be nervous when you're next to Dad.
- **But now I'm in a season where the boat is out here and Jesus is back there. Yet note what Jesus is doing. He is praying. Watch this. Jesus is getting alone with God to get aligned with God. Sometimes when you're facing all of these crazy thoughts in your life, you've got to remember to get alone with God to get aligned with God. Alone with God to get aligned with God. He's praying on a mountain. "My ways are higher." Remember, the people wanted to make Jesus an earthly king, but he came to die on a criminal's cross. At this moment in his life, it was really important that he did not follow the crowd's recommendation for his next step, because to follow the crowd at this moment would have pulled him off the path of his Father's purpose.**
- Are you in that moment?
- Pulling at you from one side, pulling at you from the other. One person telling you that you need to be skinnier; one person telling you that you could stand to put a little meat on the bones. I went on Holly's Instagram feed the other day. I didn't know they were telling women to eat protein and creatine. That used to be reserved for teenage boys.
- When did the women get to do the protein and creatine? That's supposed to be our thing, man. Now she's being told... I'm like, "What are you doing, Holly? You're lifting weights? You used to do cardio?" She's like, "Yeah, that's what I'm supposed to do now." If you're not careful, you'll be lifting a weight, drinking a protein shake, and putting on weight and losing weight, because they will change it in three years. We're only three years away from them telling us that creatine causes cancer, and it makes your mom hate you, gives you bad breath, and will make all of your babies born deformed. I mean, they're changing it all the time.
- So, if I don't ever get alone with God, I can't be aligned with God, because it's too much noise. It's too much crowd. I'm sinking. Am I sinking because I'm not sitting? If I would sit with God sometimes, or even just in a moment where I'm about to walk into something, if I would stop myself and say, "O Lord, you know I'm about to be triggered in here. Well, I don't want to get trapped. Lord, you know it's about to be windy when I walk into this situation..."

Kev's guys on-line eGroup study notes

Elevation Sermon Notes – “Sinking In The Storm” by Pastor Steven Furtick - August 25, 2025

- I wonder what one moment with God could do for you this week before you go into a windy condition. Just a moment with him. Now, Jesus is up there praying all night, and he has to, because what he's about to do is so amazing. When he lands on the other side, he is going to heal the sick, but the disciples don't know that. When he lands on the other side, there is a revival waiting, but the disciples don't know that. All they know is they're going through a storm.
- May I remind you...you have no idea what God has on the other side of your storm. You have no idea how he's going to use you. You have no idea how he is going to unleash something that could have never otherwise been unleashed in your life. See, now I see the passage a little bit differently in Matthew, chapter 14, when it says, "Peter began to sink." It says Peter began to sink, and he cried out, "Lord, save me." Verse 31: "Immediately Jesus reached out his hand and caught him. 'You of little faith...'" I realized as I read that over and over again and thought about Jesus spending all night praying alone on the mountain and making intercession for us in heaven right now... I realized that Peter wasn't the only one sinking. Jesus was too. Y'all think I'm a heretic? Hold on. I've got to explain this the right way. Sinking has two different meanings. If you spell it S-I-N-K, it means going down, but if you spell it S-Y-N-C, it's more than a boy band. It means if you've got something on your phone that I need on my phone, and we get close enough, we can sync. So, maybe this passage isn't about a sinking Peter; maybe it's about a syncing Savior.
- Phone drop moment.
- Because now I realize... No, no. Keep celebrating. Keep celebrating. I need a wave to preach this.
- I realize that the whole time he was on that mountain, he was praying for Peter, because while Peter was sinking, Jesus was syncing. And "My ways are higher than your ways, and my thoughts are higher than your thoughts." So, I came to declare you're not going down. Jesus is praying for you. He sees you in this storm. He sees you in this dilemma. He sees you, and he's syncing. He's syncing. Sometimes you've got to sync in the storm. Not go down in the storm, but hook up with God and say, "If it's you, tell me to come. Give me a word. Show me a way. Give me a path. Make me a way, I'm syncing with a Y'all. Jesus didn't leave them. He was syncing. "Don't give up. You hadn't synced yet." "That's not good grammar." Yeah, it is, and it's good theology.
- But I thought about Isaiah 55. "As high as the heavens are above the earth, so are my ways above your ways."
- Tell your neighbor, "I've got something in the cloud. I've got a promise that's yes and amen. I've got a sure word from God. He put me here. He called me here."
- As a matter of fact, they didn't even call him the Son of God until the wind died down. So, how could they know who he was when the wind died down if the wind never blew? I'm telling you, you're going to know God in a way that you couldn't have known God had you not been a student of this storm. How much better would you feel about the storm if you knew God was syncing you in the storm, that he was bringing things, pictures and sounds that had to come to the phone? How dumb would you be to throw it away because it hadn't synced yet? Yeah. Even Peter was syncing. He was still Simon at this moment. He hadn't synced yet. I said, "He hadn't synced yet."

Kev's guys on-line eGroup study notes

Elevation Sermon Notes – “Sinking In The Storm” by Pastor Steven Furtick - August 25, 2025

- Where's my real church at? I know we've always got spectators. I said, "Don't give up. You hadn't synced yet." "That's not good grammar." Yeah, it is, and it's good theology. "No eye has seen, no ear has heard, neither has it entered into the heart of a man..." Okay. So, I'm driving to church today, right? And I'm like, "Lord, I'm excited to preach, but I need one more illustration to tell them how to get in sync." Yeah, exactly. How to get in sync. How to get in sync.
- It's so much easier to do it when you've got somebody in the boat rowing with you, which is why, when I come to church on Sunday, I always bring Abbey with me if I can get her to wake up on time. I beg her to come with me, because she unlocks my love, and I don't want to come up here in front of y'all and not have love. If I can ride to church with Abbey and unlock my love, I can talk to you from the love I have for her, and through that love, hopefully I can communicate God's Word, and hopefully I will not be like clanging cymbals, just shouting stuff and spelling stuff and saying stuff, but hopefully my love will come through.
- One of the practices we have in driving to church is a playlist that consists of songs that will lift our spirits, a playlist of songs that are not Taylor Swift, although she's fine, and that are not Gracie Abrams.
- Sunday mornings are not for Gracie Abrams; they're for the grace of God. They're for the glory of God. So, I hand her the phone, and she picks out the songs. Today she picked out, "I shall not want, I shall not want..." And we started singing the last verse of "Shall Not Want." I remember when we wrote it, and we were talking about... When this life is over, I'm gonna live again, Gonna trade this cross for a crown. No, it's not the end. When he calls my name, I will take my rest. There's a mansion in glory, and you're gonna meet me there. I shall not want... I told Abbey, "Do you know what song inspired me?" Because a lot of times on Sunday I use it as a catch-up time to show her songs that I listened to when I was her age that made me love worship and gospel music like I love it. Oh, I mean, I show her some great stuff. Today I said, "I need to show you 'He'll Welcome Me' by John P. Kee and The New Life Community Choir from circa 1994, because you need to hear 'He'll Welcome Me' to understand 'Shall Not Want,' because if I never heard 'He'll Welcome Me,' I wouldn't have wrote 'Shall Not Want.' So I need to play 'He'll Welcome Me.'"
- When the song came on, I got dangerous on the driving because it's a fast song. It's not a slow song. Then, all of a sudden, I couldn't stop my hands from clapping. I mean, I'm supposed to be driving. I don't have a Tesla. I'm just clapping with my hands off the wheel. I'm singing every ad-lib, every single ad-lib, every single ad-lib.
- I'm living this life just to live again, And with the Lord I know that I shall reign...I'm a tenor. Watch this. I shall not stray, With him I'll stay, He'll welcome his children home one day. I know every ad-lib. "Like a thief in the night..." I know them all. (Keep the beat going. Keep the beat going.) I'm clapping. I'm praising. I feel like I just snorted cocaine, or something, I'm so excited. And I never did that before, for the record. But I'm clapping my hands. All of a sudden, Abbey starts just to troll me. She started... That's the one and the three. That's the white people beat. She's literally killing my spirit. Killing my spirit, because she won't get in sync. See, if we're going to do this... Oh, stand up on your feet. If we're going to do this, if we're going to do this together, we've got to get in this boat. Clap your hands like you know that Jesus is praying for you, that Jesus is coming to you. Two, three, four! Clap those hands like you're from North Carolina, like you're from Durham, North Carolina. And when the wind died down... Verse 33 says when the wind died down, they worshiped. They worshiped. They worshiped. From sinking to syncing. "I know who he is."

Kev's guys on-line eGroup study notes

Elevation Sermon Notes – “Sinking In The Storm” by Pastor Steven Furtick - August 25, 2025

- So, God said, "As high as the heavens are above the earth, so are my ways above your ways." Stop doing it your way and get in sync. Get in step. Get in sync. Get in step. Clap those hands! Just like this room -you're shifted when we got in sync, God said, "When I send you a word from heaven, my ways are not your ways, and my thoughts are not your thoughts." So, do what the disciples did when you feel what the disciples felt. And when you feel like you're starting to sink in the storm... The Bible says, "Call on the Lord, for he is near."
- **Get what he has for you and beg him to save you. Do you not realize that Jesus was not late to save Peter? The Bible says that the moment he called the name of Jesus, immediately he reached out his hand. Why? Because while Peter was sinking, Jesus was syncing. That's what I came to tell you. That's what I came to remind you: that you're not really alone in the boat. That's why I came to encourage you, when your life feels barren and dry, that as the rain falls from the heaven and waters the earth... What's that? Synchronization. S-Y-N means together. Chronos means time. Synchronize. God knows how to bring it together at the right time. The rain falls in the season it's supposed to. It's amazing how Jesus knew just the right moment to step into that boat. Don't you think Jesus was at least trolling them this much to wait until just before the dawn to show up?**
- Does it feel like maybe right now he's running a little behind your schedule as well? That's okay. In fact, Mark's gospel says that Jesus pretended like he was going to pass them by, and they thought (everybody say, "They thought") he was a ghost. Maybe this thing isn't a ghost; maybe it's God coming to get you. Maybe the thing you're afraid of is the thing God is using to answer your prayer. Maybe it's him. But see, you don't know that when you're in the storm. You really don't know it was God in the storm until the storm is over. Then the wind died down, and then they worshiped. But if you can be like Jesus and sync before the storm, you won't sink in it. That's what I wanted to tell you. That's what I wanted to remind you of. The seed and the soil in Isaiah, the rain and the earth and the kingdom of God and the earth... It's all about synchronization. Because I won't let you sink. You won't let me sink. That was beautiful what you told Abbey. "Stay next to Dad. He won't let it go bad." And watch this. Peter only started to sink. You're like, "Well, it didn't turn out too good for Peter." The Bible says he started to sink. But this is not called the Drowning Disciple; it's just the one who slipped for a minute. I don't know where you've been slipping. I don't know where you've been sinking, but just that quick, just as quick as he called his name... Do you know that all you have to do is call on the name of the Lord and you will be saved?

Kev's guys on-line eGroup study notes

Elevation Sermon Notes – “Sinking In The Storm” by Pastor Steven Furtick - August 25, 2025

- The Bible says, "Whosoever calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved." "It is by grace through faith you are saved, not of yourselves; it is a gift of God, lest anyone should boast." It means all you've got to do is reach for him. He's already right there, and just that quick he'll forgive your sins. Just that quick he'll wash you with his blood. As quick as you repent, he'll forgive. Turn to the Lord today. Forsake your ways and embrace his. At this moment, he has synchronized this moment so that this word would hit your heart in this moment. Today, for those of you who want to give your life to Jesus Christ for the first time or come back to God, I'm going to lead you in a prayer right now. It's a simple prayer, like the one Peter prayed. "Lord, save me. Save me from my sin. Save me from myself. I believe you died for me, and now I want you to live in me. Save me, God. This is my new beginning." Right now, if that's your heart, I want you to bow your head, close your eyes, and we're praying out loud together for the benefit of those who are coming to God. Repeat after me. Heavenly Father, I am a sinner in need of a Savior, and I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God and the Savior of the world. Today, I make Jesus the Lord and Savior of my life. I believe he died that I would be forgiven and rose again to give me life. I receive this new life. This is my new beginning. I am a child of God. Get your faith synced up with some other believers. That's right. Get synced up. We're going to take what we got here on the mountain today, and we're going to carry it into the storm we face tomorrow. Even if we don't see it coming, Jesus does, because the whole time they were in the boat straining, he was on the mountain praying. He is a syncing Savior. He caught Peter immediately when he fell, because he is a syncing Savior. You won't go down, because "Now unto him who is able to do exceedingly, abundantly, immeasurably more than you ask or imagine, to him be glory through Christ Jesus in the church now and forever. Amen." If you love him, say "Amen." If you're saved and you know it, say "Amen."

Part 2: eGroup study questions

“How much have the wrong thoughts cost you? Because God, your God, the God who speaks by impressions, instructions, and even interruptions, might be using this storm to give a thought to you.”

Sermon Discussion – “Sinking In The Storm” by Pastor Steven Furtick - August 25, 2025

The wind is the trigger, and the sinking is the trap.

What does it mean to “catch it quicker?”

Is 55: The Lord says, "Seek the Lord while he maybe found; call on him while he is near."

Isaiah, chapter 55, gives an interesting strategy - you have to be willing (verse 7) to forsake your ways and your unrighteous thoughts. Now, that's interesting language. Forsake your ways, because my ways are higher, and your thoughts that are not from God." How many times have I been drowning in my mind and in my life because of the thought that I wouldn't drop about my situation? How many times have I clung to an offense while I'm drowning in my bitterness? If I don't drop the thought, I drown. You've got to stop thinking childishly about this and waiting on people to come around and make it right, and you've just got to get your heart right with God. Kev note: This is essential life advice.

Deuteronomy 29:

2 Moses summoned all the Israelites and said to them:

9 Carefully follow the terms of this covenant, so that you may prosper in everything you do. 10 All of you are standing today in the presence of the Lord your God—your leaders and chief men, your elders and officials, and all the other men of Israel, 11 together with your children and your wives, and the foreigners living in your camps who chop your wood and carry your water. 12 You are standing here in order to enter into a covenant with the Lord your God, a covenant the Lord is making with you this day and sealing with an oath, 13 to confirm you this day as his people, that he may be your God as he promised you and as he swore to your fathers, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. 14 I am making this covenant, with its oath, not only with you 15 who are standing here with us today in the presence of the Lord our God but also with those who are not here today.

16 You yourselves know how we lived in Egypt and how we passed through the countries on the way here. 17 You saw among them their detestable images and idols of wood and stone, of silver and gold. 18 Make sure there is no man or woman, clan or tribe among you today whose heart turns away from the Lord our God to go and worship the gods of those nations; make sure there is no root among you that produces such bitter poison.

There are only Two Types of Relationships

Consumer Relationships

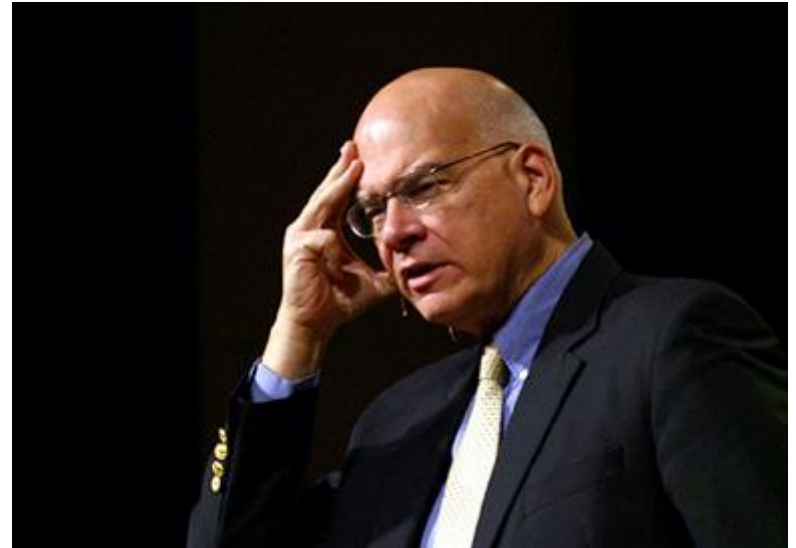
- I am in this thing as long as you are meeting my needs.
- Everything is ordered around the experiencing individual self.
- Everything is about the happiness and fulfilment of the individual self.
- Your fulfilment and happiness is an individual right and a means to an end vs. all other institutions and relationship.

Covenant Relationships

- One of the last things Moses says just before he dies in Deut: “you need to be in covenant relationship with God.”
- The relationship is more important than my needs.
- “A relationship that is more loving than a merely legal relationship, yet more binding, enduring, and accountable than a merely personal relationship.”
- “It is a stunning blend of law and love. It is stunning because it is personal relationship made more loving and intimate because it is legal.”
- Through binding and mutual vows to be loving and faithful no matter the circumstances.
- Note profiled well in modern society.
- “The most profound, most joyful, most life changing, most deep, and glorious relationships are covenantal relationships”.

The main point by Dr. Timothy Keller:

“If the most profound, most joyful, most life changing, and glorious relationships are covenantal relationships, then your relationship with God has to be through and through a covenantal relationship. However, modern people have trouble mixing law and love together. The modern person say: I am spiritual but I am not religious. This means that I am spiritual and want a relationship with God, however, I do not want a covenantal relationship with God. . . . However, the bible says that that is impossible since the only relationship God wants is a covenantal relationship. In his relationship with Adam, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, etc., it is always a covenantal relationship.”



Gen: 15

The Lord's Covenant With Abram

6 Abram believed the Lord, and he credited it to him as righteousness.

7 He also said to him, "I am the Lord, who brought you out of Ur of the Chaldeans to give you this land to take possession of it."

8 But Abram said, "Sovereign Lord, how can I know that I will gain possession of it?"

9 So the Lord said to him, "Bring me a heifer, a goat and a ram, each three years old, along with a dove and a young pigeon."

10 Abram brought all these to him, cut them in two and arranged the halves opposite each other;

17 When the sun had set and darkness had fallen, a smoking firepot with a blazing torch appeared and passed between the pieces. ¹⁸ On that day the LORD made a covenant with Abram and said, "To your descendants I give this land, from the Wadi of Egypt to the great river, the Euphrates— ¹⁹ the land of the Kenites, Kenizzites, Kadmonites, ²⁰ Hittites, Perizzites, Rephaites, ²¹ Amorites, Canaanites, Girgashites and Jebusites."

The wisdom of Paul:

Roman 4:

4 What then shall we say that Abraham, our forefather according to the flesh, discovered in this matter? 2 If, in fact, Abraham was justified by works, he had something to boast about—but not before God. 3 What does Scripture say? “Abraham believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness.”

Gal 3:

26 So in Christ Jesus you are all children of God through faith, 27 for all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. 28 There is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free, nor is there male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus. 29 If you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.

The Bible says, "Whosoever calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved." "It is by grace through faith you are saved, not of yourselves; it is a gift of God, lest anyone should boast." It means all you've got to do is reach for him. He's already right there, and just that quick he'll forgive your sins. Turn to the Lord today. Forsake your ways and embrace his. At this moment, he has synchronized this moment so that this word would hit your heart in this moment. I'm going to lead you in a prayer right now. It's a simple prayer, like the one Peter prayed. "Lord, save me. Save me from my sin. Save me from myself. I believe you died for me, and now I want you to live in me. Heavenly Father, I am a sinner in need of a Savior, and I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God and the Savior of the world. Today, I make Jesus the Lord and Savior of my life. I believe he died that I would be forgiven and rose again to give me life. I receive this new life. This is my new beginning. I am a child of God. Get your faith synced up with some other believers. We're going to take what we got here on the mountain today, and we're going to carry it into the storm we face tomorrow. Even if we don't see it coming, Jesus does, because the whole time they were in the boat straining, he was on the mountain praying. He is a syncing Savior. You won't go down, because "Now unto him who is able to do exceedingly, abundantly, immeasurably more than you ask or imagine, to him be glory through Christ Jesus in the church now and forever. Amen." If you love him, say "Amen."

Back up slides

In August 2017, Pastor Furtick led a study of David called “Bars and Battles.” I think Pastor Furtick’s sermon this weekend “Not as Long as My Song” builds of this prior series. On August 13, 2017, Pastor Furtick said this while unpacking Psalm 142 and 1 Sam 22 – where Saul is trying to kill David: “We have to learn to trust God and keep our hand on the harp. This means that the weapons of our warfare are not carnal (fleshy or bodily), they are mighty through God for the pulling down of strong-holds – so it might not look like much – but our worship is our weapon. If you humble yourself under the mighty hand of God, and trust him – no matter what is coming at your head, no matter what is coming at your life – if you trust him and duck – and trust him and pray – the hand of God is on your life. Therefore, if you can win the battle here (your heart) – if you can get down low enough to say God I need you – and realize that the real battle is not with Saul – it is with self. Before David become a king and before God calls us to do what we are supposed to do, we need to learn to do the hardest thing to do – to depend. The easiest thing for David to do was to fight – this came naturally to him – the hardest thing for David to do was to be humble and depend – where David has to depend on the hand of God for the spear to miss him.” Kev note: Dang that is good!



July 18 – Daily Devotional:

“There is nothing miraculous about the things that we can explain. We command what we are able to explain, consequently it is natural to seek to explain. It is not natural to obey; nor is necessarily sinful to disobey. If one man says to another – You must and you shall, he brakes the human spirit and unfits it for God. Many a soul begins to come to God when he flings off being religious, because, there is only one master of the human heart, and that is not religion but Jesus Christ. But woe be to me if when I see Him I say – I will not. He will never insist that I do, but I have begun to sign the death warrant of the Son of God in my soul. When I stand face to face with Jesus Chris and say – I will not, **He will never insist, but I am backing away form the re-creating power of His redemption.**



Dr. Timothy Keller

total freedom = lack of meaning and significance

What if we found the reason for life? Why we were created? Why we were designed? And conformed to that and then honored that?

If there is a design, there is a designer. And if there is a designer, the logos has come. Not some abstract philosophical principle. **It is a person.**

The designer has punched a hole into the world and he has descended. And you were built not to just honor some philosophical principle. But you were built to know and love this divine person. When you know him and when you serve him and you find out what he built you for, when you comply with it and submit yourself to him, you find out who you are. And you are now able to reach your potential.

Have a good navigational beacon in 2022:

“Life and Leadership at the Highest” A quote from an unknown author and requoted by Pastor Tim Keller in his sermon “This is Jesus” part 4 “Two Grieving Sisters Encounter Jesus” at Oxford University in 2016: “The accounts of Him in the New Testament speak for themselves – He combines qualities that no one has ever seen – despite his incredible claims, we never see him pompous, offended, or standing on his own dignity. Despite being absolutely approachable to the weakest and most broken people, he is completely fearless before the powerful and the corrupt. Despite being weary and lonely, we find him remarkably human - filled with joy, fear, love, and anger. Yet, we never see him Moody. We never see him being inconsistent. We never see Him strong when He should be tender and we never see Him tender when He should be strong. Most interesting of all – Of all his encounters with people - we are continuously surprised – shocking us - but never disappointing us – it is difficult for us to imagine words that Jesus ought to have said or deeds that he ought to have done. Nothing he has done ever falls short - in fact He is always surprising us - because He is incomparably better than what we could imagine for ourselves. Why? These are the surprises of perfection – He has tenderness without weakness – He has strength without harshness – humility without the slightest lack of confidence – unhesitating authority without the slightest sense of self-absorption – Holy and unbending convictions without the slightest lack of approachability – power without insensitivity – passion without prejudice – there is never a false step – there’s never a jarring no – this is life at the highest.”