

Stepping Out in Faith

By Francis Chan

Francis Chan:

You know a while back I was, does this sound weird? It sounds weird, I feel like I'm in a tunnel or something. Okay. Um, let me switch to that other mic if you don't mind. Did that other one-- did he sound like--did he sound like he was in a tunnel? Barry? No? Now do I sound like I'm in a tunnel? This feels like I'm halfway through now, huh? It sounds better, whatever he's doing.

Does that sound better? Oh, okay. See? Um, that was supernatural. Okay. It um, I was talking it was a while ago, you know how you gear bible stories your whole life and you don't think about them a whole lot? And I try not to do that every time I study a passage I pretend like I've never read it before and just really analyze it and try to figure out like I've never seen it before. And I was looking at the passage of Jesus walking on water, because everyone has read that passage, everyone has heard the passage preached so any times. So when I read a passage like that it's like God, you know, bring something to life to me, let me feel it, let me try to be there. And that whole picture of Jesus making them go on the boat there in Matthew 14, and uh, and the whole idea of Jesus walking on the water when they saw him on the lake and they say it's a ghost and they cry out in fear. And Jesus says the courage it is I don't be afraid.

And Peter says Lord if it's you tell me to come out on the water to you. Come he said. And Peter got out of the boat, walked on the water, and came towards Jesus. Now I think about that and I just again I've heard it all my life. But when I read it I thought okay, what if I were there, what if I were Peter, what if I were on a boat right now. Just picture yourself, just say we were at the beach right now. And just put it in a different setting. Pretend we are at a beach right now and I'm standing on a raft in the water. Imagine if I stepped out of the raft and onto the water and I

stood on the water. And I showed you the I could do it. You know when I stepped out of the boat and I stood on it. Imagine what you would feel. You guys would freak out right? I mean seriously. If I did that today, and I walked around and I walked down the ocean and you guys saw me, just try to imagine what you guys would do with that.

And I mean, imagine if I called you out to me, I said you know what God can give you the ability to do this. And maybe you were on the boat with me. Okay let's change it again. Okay we are all on the boat we are on a big raft. And we paddled out a ways and uh, okay. Um, and then I walked, okay, and you saw me on the water. Now you are still just as freaked out as you were when you were own the beach. But now imagine I call to you and I tell you that God can give you the ability to walk on this water. Okay? Right here at the beach, right there. And imagine what it would feel like try to picture yourself stepping out of the boat. And let's say you do it and you stand on top of the water. Can you picture yourself doing that right now? You are standing on top of the water, you are looking down, you see a dolphin right there, you just, see like you know a seal or whatever. And you're walking on the water, you're standing on top of it. What an amazing feeling. I mean I try to put myself in Peter's shoes and go gosh what does that feel like to actually step out and be on top of water and to be remembered right now 2,000 years later, as Peter is that guy who got to experience that and step on it. And now it is known forever in history that he would be remembered as the guy who actually walked on top of water with Jesus.

What an amazing and then when I pray for the supernatural, that's what I'm talking about. Like I want to experience something like that. I want to feel something like that in life. And I don't know if you've really felt anything like that during your time here at Biola. Have you? Anything

close to that? See cuz for me, I feel like I have. I feel like there are times in my life when I go, I can't believe this is happening right now, his is unreal! This doesn't happen! This is abnormal. And I'm realizing that the only time the only time I really experienced the supernatural, you know I want that right now, I don't know what's going to happen. Because I know the few times in my life when I really sensed the presence of God and something was happening was where I go, wow, this is of God this is of God right now. The one common factor was that it was when I stepped out in faith. And I did something that scared me. The times in life where I went and did something that I didn't know the outcome of and I was terrified of doing, those were the times where I believe that I really experienced God. It's that same picture of all the disciples that sat in the boat. They didn't get to experience it in the same way, it's just not the same as being the guy, we can look at the people who did great things for God and we get excited and fired up, good for him, good for her, look at that.

And you know, just the disciples going no way! Look at Peter look at that guy. You know, but it's completely different when you're the one and you're standing there going no way, me, I'm on top of water right now. Isn't that what you want out of life? You ever get tired of being one of the guys in the boat just looking at everyone else doing things that only God could do through them, and just wishing you were there. I um, I live in a city called Simi valley. Simi Valley is a, I don't like it. Because Simi Valley is, it's been voted year after year within the top three safest large cities in America. You know, we will have like 2 people jaywalk, or you know, it's just, it's you know so all these people go to simi valley because it's safe. All the LAPD live in simi valley. LA fire department live in Simi Valley. They don't want to live in LA, lets live in Simi Valley. And so then you've got a cop on every corner, so you're like okay what am I going to do? He knows

so it becomes a safe safe place and everyone's about safety. I want to make sure I homeschool my kids, make 'em wear helmets, make all my furniture out of rubber. No one is going to hurt me, I'm going to live in a gated community with an alarm, dogs, everything, because we want to be safe. And we want to be comfortable and save up, make sure we are secure, make sure we have enough, and it's so hard not to fall into that. And we warn our kids, look out, if we go to San Fernando valley, you know, there's some bad people over there. They do this they do that, don't go to a public school, don't do this don't do-- you know we are just fearful.

And I remember one day, gosh, it was years ago, probably 5 years ago, my daughter was in the front of our house and she was playing and then suddenly she would go like this. You know, we are looking at her through the window and she'd do something else, she'd go like that. What is her deal? Like she was just playing she was by herself and suddenly she'd just go like this. And I'm like what is wrong with you? So, you know when she came in I'm like baby, what are you doing? She said what are you talking about I'm just playing. I go but how about you play and every once in a while you'd stop? And she goes, well, you know you guys tell me that someone might steal me or whatever and to always be careful, and, every time a car would come by I would pretend I was a statue. And it hit me, it's like gosh, I totally fell into this whole safe, don't let anyone touch you, the parents who keep their kids on a leash, you see that at amusement parks, they walking around they got a thing around their neck, and it's like, I totally am sorry if that was you as a kid, but you know it's just I fell into that, I fell into that safe, hey no one is going to hurt you look out watch out, everything else, lets protect protect protect.

You guys, when you do that, first of all there is no security outside of God, you know, like I was preaching this weekend at church, Psalm 127, unless the Lord builds a house ye labor in vain who build it. unless the Lord guard the city, the watchmen guard it in vain. It's like you can't protect a city with any army. If God wants that city destroyed, it's going to be destroyed. If God want to protect to its going to be protected. But if he doesn't want it protected, you know you could put all the guard you want, everything in front of it and guess what, it's not going to happen. That's what sovereignty is all about. That's what control is all about. God is in control. And when you find Him, you find perfect security. When you seek him, then you'll have perfect security. But until you do you've got nothing. A lot of you are in college because you want to get a good job and you are going to pursue financial security. What a joke. How are you going to do that? How are you going to be secure financially? Diversifier, right? You have been taught that, you've got to diversify, put some in stocks, buy a house here, buy a house here, ensure everything to death, save some here, buy gold, buy foreign currency, buy this, buy that, buy that, and have a whole bunch of difference things so that if there's an earthquake that noise is no big deal.

But you know this goes down stock marker, it's no big deal I've still got this, I've still got this, I've still got this. You have all these big things you can run to and believe that at some point you are going to feel secure in sharing all these things and making sure you're going to have money in your life. Well God says are you kidding me? He says to those, and I love what he says in the book of Haggai to those people who were building their homes to the neglect of the temple, and he says to them in Haggai chapter 1, um, he says this is what the Lord says, give careful thought to your ways, you've planted much but you've harvested little. You eat but you never have

enough, you drink but you never have your fill. you put on clothes but you're not warm. You earn wages only to put them in a purse with holes in it. This is what the Lord Almighty says. Give careful thought to your ways, go up in the mountains, bring down timber, build the house that I may take pleasure in it and be honored said the Lord. I love this verse 9, you expected much, but see? It turned out to be lit, What you've brought home I've blew away. Why? Declares the Lord Almighty, because of my house which reminds a ruin while each of you is busy with his own house. So he says you did all of this stuff and you expected man, but it had great harm, I had all of these things planned, my stuff, everything happened and he goes, and now look at your account. Look what happened. You have nothing do you. I'm like yeah. He goes do you want to know why? Because the reason why you have nothing is, he says I blew it away, Because you had all this stuff, you had this awesome house. You know why it collapsed? I knocked it over.

It's like he's out there going, you know why your bank accounts empty? I drained it. You know? It's just like I just took away everything you had and everything you worked for, you know why? Because all you're thinking about is yourself. And my temple is in ruins, but you built a nice house and I'm going to knock it over. Because you see, unless the Lord builds a house you're going to labor in vain. You know in some ways you look at that and you go wow that's cruel, how could a God do that? But the answer is it's the most loving thing he could do. See, any time he causes you to run to Him it's a good thing. If its tragedy, pain, insecurity, loosing everything, when your relationships end, you know why your relationships end? Because God break them up. You know why you lose your job? Because God took it away from you. You know why you'll end out of money? Because God blew it away. So that you'll go back to him, seek him

first. Man, that verse--I guarantee you there some of you in this room that you found God when it was just the worst time in your life.

Everything was falling apart and it was wrong, alright. I'll try you know. You know that he blows things away so that we come back to him and that a good thing. Anything that draws us close to God is a good thing. But you know this whole idea of this pursuit and this fail and insecurity, you know i just pursued safety. And really, during my college years you know I went to masters for 2 years, I went to junior college for 2 years, I was in public school my whole life and then I went to masters for 2 year sand the thing I struggled with the most was safety. I was sitting in a room with everyone who believed the same thing I did. You know, I didn't have to talk 'em into anything, and pretty soon we just found things to argue about. It was just the master's way. We just kind of said oh, what do you believe about this? Oh you disagree on this dispensation lets fight about it. And those were my only you know, no, I've got to debate this guy on what the Holy Spirit does on Thursdays. You know whatever. I couldn't think of anything.

You know infralapsarianism, you know, whatever you--there just wasn't that fear, there was just a comfortable let's go to the cafeteria with a bunch of Christians and let's eat together. Let's you now, let's work and you know the bookstore together. Let's have a study group together, let's do this together. Let's do that together. And I remember um, one of my professors was preaching through the book of Amos, and in Amos chapter 6, he says woe to those who are comfortable. Those who are complacent. And I just remember that hitting me and going wow, that's me. And he asked the question, what are you doing right now that requires faith. What are you doing right now where God has to come through for you or you're a mess? See when I was going to

Christian school I couldn't point to anything like that. I didn't need God for anything. I set myself in this environment where you know, what, every if there's no God this is cool.

There were chapels, sing with a bunch of people, this high of some sort, your speakers, they're entertaining, well they're good they kept my attention. I'll learn different things and hang out with people I agree with. I mean really what could go wrong. What do you need God for? And I sat, I thought well, I'm a youth pastor though, I'm working with high school students. And everything else, and that takes faith, and I'm like no it doesn't. I enjoy this, this is fun, you just go hang out, you don't talk in front of a bunch people, get paid for it. And I'm like what, what's scares me? And I couldn't point to anything. See nothing in my life that required faith. And then you start reading things like Hebrews 11, where it says like okay, without faith it's impossible to please God. And you have all of these stories of guys like uh, you know, him, Noah, Noah. You know, verse 7, you know, by faith Noah when warned about things not yet seen, he built an ark to save his family. By his faith he condemned the world and became heir of the righteousness that came by faith. You know he talks about Noah and his faith. I mean think about it, does anyone know how long he built that ark for? 30 years, no. not sure.

Wasn't it 120? No? Wow, okay, I'll prepare for tomorrow's seminar. I thought he did it for like 120 years, was it 120? Yeah? People, I mean if you know, say it with confidence, Yeah, yeah a really long time, but 120, I haven't done anything for 120 years. You know but Noah from 120 years, I mean just picture it, here's faith. Here's what I'm talking about as far as something that is just crazy. Think about it. You will devote your whole life to building a boat? In view of everyone. To be the one person on the planet where you go okay God you're telling me it's going

to flood. You better be right. You know what I mean? Because I'm about to look stupid in front of every single person here. And I'm about to tell my whole family to help me with this thing. Knowing that I might put my kids through this and we are going to be the ridicule of everyone here. No one else believed it, would you have been able to do that?

Can you do that right now where you say okay, I'll go out in the middle of the street right now, I'll go out to the mall, right now, and make an absolute fool of myself. I'll do something that, you know what, this is about God and I. See this is faith, this is something that's going to happen. He's promised me that this is going to happen. It's like the end times. God has promised you that he is going to destroy the world. Just like he promised Noah, not I'm going to flood the earth. And Noah believed this so much that he's telling everyone listen, God is going to flood the world. You got to come to safety, you've got to come in this ark with me, you have to help me build it. And no one would believe him. But that didn't stop him. Do you believe God so much that you are going to people and saying listen, God is going to destroy the world. He told me that, I know it, I believe it, and I'm going to spend the rest of my life preparing for that, and hopefully you'll join with me. And when no one listens to you do you quit, or do you just keep going? Keep going.

You know it's interesting because that passage, I've heard it taught before where they said Noah when it talks about him being warned about things not yet seen, that I've heard people actually say that they had never even heard of rain back then. I don't know how true that is, but they're saying in that region, the way that God created the world and the whole idea of the canopy effect and the separation of the waters, there was a lot of scholars who believe that they didn't even

know what rain was. And so you try to imagine being a man on the earth saying water is going to fall from the sky, so much so that it's going to flood the earth. I mean that's hard to believe right now. Say god's going to make it rain so much that everyone is going to drown. Come on.

But what about back then if rain had never even taken place and you got this guy Noah going around going hey guys, it's going to rain! What is that? You now, water comes--God told me! It's just the same way when we read the book of revelation right? You read about these locusts that come upon the earth, stars falling from the sky, and everything else. You're like come on. That doesn't happen! Are you willing to stand behind this book and tell people you really believe that a third of the waters will turn to blood? Are you ready to say that? And the plagues are going to take place on the earth and people will be stung by these scorpion-like things, and they will die, and on and on and on, things that have never happened before? That's what Noah was doing. He said well I know this is true. I don't care what you believe, I'm telling you this is true. And he stepped out in faith. What a scary scary thing.

You see, he hadn't heard of rain, they had probably never heard of an ark. Who builds an ark? I want to build an ark and get two of every animal on it. This is what God told me to do because it's going to rain. You see--do you guys see--this is like, it's like if you woke up tomorrow and you came to chapel and you said you guys, God told me tomorrow it's going to [unintelligible]! We're like what? What's that? God said it's going to [unintelligible]! It's never [unintelligible] in the history of the world. I don't even know what you're talking about. You know that's what it felt like. Its going to rain! But its like what is that? I have to build an ark! You know? I've got to build this, and you're just like what? This one man who just says I'm going to do this and God if

it doesn't rain, I'm going to look so stupid. You better come through for me or I will have wasted my whole life. Do you have anything like that in your life right now? Where you go God I'm about to do this because I really that I believe that's what you're calling me to do.

But you have to come through or this--I'm just going to look like a fool. You know, you go on and it talks about Abraham. It talks about Abraham, verse 27, by faith Abraham when tested offered Isaac as a sacrifice and it says he who would receive the promises was about to sacrifice his one and only son even though God had said to him it is through Isaac that your offspring will be reckoned. Abraham reasoned that God could raise the dead. And figuratively speaking, he did receive Isaac back from the dead. Think about Abraham taking his son, I mean like I have a one-week old baby boy, I'm already just crazy about this kid, I've got three girls and it's like this is my boy. You know, it shuts weird it's like different feelings, man as much as I love my girls it's, it's a different live, you know, it's like man I love 'em like crazy and I love them equally, but there's just different feelings of man, this is a boy, this is a son, and just it evokes all these emotions in you, like I want to hunt, you know? I've never wanted to hunt, now I feel like I should teach my son how to kill something you know?

He just, this is my boy! You know, I've been praying for a boy, it's weird, when I was younger I'm like, God give me a boy so I can play ball with him, sure with him, all this stuff. And really over the last year I was like Lord, I don't care about that stuff anymore. I really--if you gave me a son to disciple, and just turn him into a man of God and just to carry on what I'm doing here. That would be the thrill that would be the rush. I love my girls, and they're such amazing little relationship bond that a father has with a daughter. It's like nothing else. They've just got me

wrapped. But with a son it's like a different mentality of this discipleship, you know it's there with the girls, it's like cloning yourself so much. Like gosh I want him to be as unique individual and do way more than I ever did, but all these feelings and imagine Abraham taking his son, the one who God promised him and saying this is the one, this is the promised one. All your descendants will come through him. This amazing ancestry you know, it all going to start from him. And God says kill him. And I look at that scene and see another passage that we've read so many times. Until you have a child and you picture grabbing a knife.

You can't even imagine, obviously you can't imagine doing this to any kid, I hope, you know. If so, go to a different seminar. But you know, I just think the sheer terror of taking a knife and plunging it into a boy's heart, could you do it? What would that feel like, to take a knife with all the intention, God I'm about to thrust this into his heart. Its gross isn't it? And now multiply that by one hundred knowing this is your own flesh and blood, this is your own son that you love so much, the promised one. And it says that Abraham reasoned in his mind that God could raise the dead. He's going but God promised that my descendants would come through him, so I know he says in his mind I know the God can't break a promise, when Go promises something it's going to happen. And so, I know that he is going to have descendants. So, in his mind he had so much faith that he says I can kill him because God already made a promise that he was going to have descendants, so I can kill him and he will just have to come back to life. Because that's faith. He goes God promised it so there's no way it can't come true, I cannot ruin Gods plan, and now he's telling me to kill him? I'll kill him. Because God will raise him from the dead.

What if God doesn't come through? What if God's promises were not true? What if Abraham kills his son, and God doesn't come through? Try to imagine Abraham walking back to town with blood on his hands. Try to imagine Abraham burying his son, thinking I thought God wanted me to--I thought he could raise the dead, I thought since he promised, he couldn't go back on it. But he let me down. It's about risk. Kind of. Not when you totally believe. That's why in your giving, you say as long as I'm seeking the kingdom first, well, you know, it'll be taken care of. Somehow, it'll be taken care of. I don't know how, but as long as I seek the kingdom first, he said he would give me all these things. He promised that, he has to. I mean, I don't throw this conviction at everyone, but I don't save. I don't save. I give everything away. Because I think that shot is the safest. If I seek him first, because why would God bless me for saving for thirty years from now if my brother or sister is dying today?

I think the safest thing I can do, the most secure thing I can do is go here, you eat, you eat, you eat. I'm not going to worry about when I'm 80. If I die, I die. I started to--I can't think the far ahead. If you are dying today, I don't get--I've got to just give it to you and by faith go, he promised me, God you promised me. I love what he says in um, I was talking about this this weekend, psalm 37, he says uh, I love this phrase, if I can find it. Verse 23, Psalm 37:23. If the Lord delights in a man's way, he makes his steps firm. Though he stumble, he will not fall. For the Lord upholds him with his hand. I was young and now I'm old. Yet I have never seen the righteous forsaken or their children begging bread. They're always generous and lend freely, their children will be blessed. See I look at that and I go, that's a promise.

You know, like Matthew 6:33, that's a promise. If I seek him first I shouldn't have to worry about my food, drink, clothes, kids, what will they eat? The psalmist says, he goes, look I'm an old man. He says I was young, I was like you just going after the world and all this other stuff. I was young and he goes now I'm old. He goes and I've seen a lot of things in my lifetime. But let me tell you one thing I've never seen. Never. The righteous forsaken. Or their children begging for bread. Love that. Because I've seen a lot of things in my lifetime, one thing I haven't seen is those who are seeking God first, who are generous with their stuff, lending freely giving freely, I've never seen their kids suffer for it. Never. They're never begging for bread, I've been watching this my whole life, I'm an old man and I've seen everything on this planet. But I haven't seen the righteous forsaken. And that whole security, that whole faith going, you know what? I can trust in this God. I can give.

As long as I'm giving to the kingdom, as long as I'm not spending foolishly, then I'm going to go and give in such a way that it takes faith, that it scares me. I want to give so much away where it goes okay God, this person needs it more than I do, so here. Here. Give it. Come through for me. And he does, every single time. Every every single time. He is never forsaken me. And I don't expect him ever to forsake me. My children have never been hungry, and I don't expect them ever to go hungry. It's just not going to happen. People have asked, what if, what if? I go, there is no what if. But okay, okay. What if I starve to death when I'm 70. Isn't that a great way to go to heaven? I gave everything away and starved to death. Because I trusted in your promises. Wouldn't that be a great way to enter heaven? I read this quote by Tony Campolo, he says most people live life as though they were trying to arrive at death as safely as possible.

Think about that. Most people live life as though they were trying to arrive at death as safely as possible.

In fact, I've prayed these things, God, I want to die in my sleep so I don't even feel it. You ever thought that way? Like God I don't want to go through any pain, don't want to go through hurt and then one night in the middle of the night just take me, where I don't even feel it. No pain or anything like that. After I've just for some reason said goodbye to everyone the day before. You know? Just make my death nice and safe, make my life nice and safe, make all this stuff nice and safe and comfortable, and I'm telling you you do that, and you're going to miss out on life.

You're never going to experience life. There was a quote, let me check my notes, there was another quote in one of my notes that I wanted to read that, maybe I didn't bring that talk. Sorry guys just be quiet. Okay here it is, it is, I'm just jumping all over the place but, courage is not the absence of fear but rather the judgement that something else is more important than fear. While it true that the brave won't live forever, the cautious never live. That was from the Princess Diaries. Yeah.

That's what happens when you have three girls, it's like, watching Mary Kate and Ashley, go to the mall, you know. But uh, that was so funny because I remember watching it with my kids I thought, that's actually a good quote! I rewound and my wife like I can't believe you're getting quotes of courage from a princess. But uh, you know, I just thought wow, that's it! You know, yeah. You know you may do something crazy and you may die, or you may not do anything crazy and you'll never live. Um, I know that college, your college years are supposed to be a time of preparation. Preparing you to do something big. You know? But I'm telling you unless you

start doing things like that now, things that scare you, you're going to get in this habit of safety and comfort, where you spend 4 years secluded doing safe things, you really think that then you go out and you're going to go to the ends of the earth and do crazy things? No you won't.

I've seen, I've graduated with people from Bible college, from seminary, who are still working at the bookstore. They haven't done anything anything that requires, and I don't mean to bag on bookstores, bookstores are great. Um, we have a bookstore, I have a bookstore, you know. Okay. Anyways, so, don't call me. The whole thing--so many librarians are mad at me. Um, you know I'm just saying like, well, its starting college and I remember just being convicted and going God I just want to experience you. Take me somewhere that scares me. I think I shared at Biola before, but I remember just, my friends were going to the beach on Saturday and I said I'm not going. I've got to do something that requires faith. I'm just tired of being comfortable, just playing and studying all the time. I remember driving into downtown LA, and just driving to downtown LA and saying I'm going to start witnessing to people on the street. And scares me to death. Just talking to strangers, especially out there. But I thought, I'm just going to go. And uh, I remember just walking around, just terrified. like who do I talk to?

And walking around the bo--walking around the block like two or three times without talking to anyone because I was so scared. You know, just some of the way the people would look at you, and everything else, I was its like Lord, why am I out here? What am I doing here? This is so not me! Lord God come through, do something. Because I'm just walking around the block now. You didn't send me down here to walk around the block. And then this street person comes up and goes, buy me a burrito. I'm like, alright. And uh, I go and buy him a burrito, like hey, what

do you want? And he goes, chicken. You know, so I buy this big whole chicken burrito and give it to him. He starts eating it, he starts passing it out to these other street people, breaking it up, and giving them pieces. Then he comes over and he hugs me. And uh, odd, this guy was so dirty and smelled, and he kisses me on the cheek. You know, he goes thank you! Mwah. Is there anything I can do for you? I go well, you could get off me. You know uh, he just kind of backs off, I didn't say that. You just shave to--I started telling him, you know, this is crazy. I came down here to talk to people about Jesus. And he goes, tell me about him. And Im like, alright. And I start talking to him, I start opening up my bible. I mean, I was like 19, 20 years old, just going uh, you know, I didn't preach, I didn't know how two communicate. I was just opening up the Bible, telling him stories, telling him what Jesus did for him.

Pretty soon all the people that he gave pieces of the burrito to, they're all sitting at my feet. I have about a dozen bums, no exaggeration, about 12 of them sitting at my feet as I'm telling them about Jesus. And this one guy starts cussing at me. Just swearing at me as I'm talking, and I'm reading, and I just kept going. I don't know what to do, you know? My gosh, no one had cussed at me, you know, in my youth group. And I'm just talking and I'm here by myself, you know, in this place, I don't know apnea and these guys are all, this one guy is swearing at me. And I'm all, what am I doing? I just closed the thing up and go home? No I'm going to sit next down next to that guy. What would scare me the most? I sit down next to him. So I sit down next to him, and i go, you don't believe in God? He goes, I don't believe in that effin, this--you know all this stuff and I'm like, really? My heart is just pounding, going God what am I supposed to say? Really?! I don't know! You know, just give me words! You promised me! And I'm talking, and and uh, you know I'm talking to this guy and he finally goes, I know there's a God. He goes, my brother is a

pastor. Does he know you talk like this? You know. He goes, look at me. Strung out on drugs, laying out in the street. I don't want anyone to know I'm a Christian.

His name was JD. And I go, you know JD, God can forgive you, just start all over. We started a, I got together with him every weekend, I started going back every weekend just to hook up with JD. I remember just him telling me about his life and me telling him that he could be forgiven and that God could still use him even there in the streets or wherever else. Get cleaned up, and uh, man, and I gave him a bible, wrote some things in the front of it. He took that thing wherever he went, and I'd come back every Saturday, how was your week, he goes oh man I carry this thing around, I tell people about it, they like run from me now. I go yeah. You know, just, he goes I'm telling them! You know, and we walked by this one corner and he'd take me to these allies, and you know scare me to death, you know, just these dark allies and all these street people laying in there. No one else around you're just going what is this place.

And I remember just walking this one alley and these different guys get up and he goes hey this is my friend Francis, and they're all looking at me like--I remember one guy looked and just goes, he's a cop. I'm not a cop, I don't even like cops! Just, just weird situations that you don't normally go through at the masters college. I went in there and just, what's going on, scaring me, and trying to share with these people and trying to lead them to the Lord, you know. I remember going around one corner and he goes man Francis this is where I almost died. A lot of it happened here, he goes, I was stabbed, someone left me to die and the ambulance took me away, they bandaged me up and kind of threw me back on the street. And he goes, and for a few

years now I keep telling God, God why did you have me live? There's no point in my existence there's no reason for me to be on this earth, you should have just let me die.

And he goes there's no point in my life, until you came that one day. And he says to me, Francis, no one's ever said to me this since. He goes Francis, it was like you were an angel from heaven sent from God for a message just for me. I remember thinking, no way. No way, he just took me in, like you were like this messenger sent from God, you're an angel. He called me an angel! That God used to tell me there's still a reason for my life. And discipling this guy, and moving on, and him having this ministry, and all this stuff. In fact, I remember one day I came down I go what is going on, he goes, oh I found out who stabbed me. And I'm like are you serious? He goes yeah. I'm like who was it? He goes, Michael. Michael was that first guy who asked for the burrito. I go, burrito guy? He goes yeah. And uh, I'm like what'd you do? he goes Francis, a year ago, forgot it, three months ago if I had found out I would have taken him in the alley, and I would've killed him. But I could look at him and say I forgive him because of what God did in my life. You guys, it's walking on water. It's going, God that was not normal. These things that are happening, I don't get it, and you guys every year it's a temptation to jump back in the boat and get safe again.

But I'm trying an experiment with my life. I'm trying to see if every year is it possible to take another step away from the boat. Because in my life I have yet to see a Christian who takes a step away from the boat and keeps on walking, every year walks further and further away, every year does something that scares him more to where pretty soon he can't even see the boat anymore. See in my experience someone who does a step of faith who walks on water and quickly jumps back

in, and then writes a book about it. And the rest of his life sits in the boat eating twinkies and signing autographs. You know, it's like is that possible God? That scared me to death last year but that doesn't scare me anymore, so now what? Give me something scarier this year. Give me something that takes more faith.

And every year that call for comfort just screams at me, no don't do that! Get secure! Get safe! Make everything else safer, nicer, more comfortable. It's like no now. God's saying every year, take a bigger step of faith if you want to see me. You're not going to see me come through for you unless you put yourself in a position that takes faith. And it's like what I was saying this morning. It's not like this harsh talk of, go! Do something that requires faith or else! It's just guys if you really want to experience God, if you want to live a nice comfortable life and not have everyone bug you, you can do it, you can do it. I talk to college students all the time and I go what's your goal? I want to graduate, get a good job, get married, have a nice little family, you know, kind of raise them, and then they'll have grand kids, you know, and I'll play with them and then travel the world and die. Oh that's great that's so cool. That's what you want out of life? I don't. I don't want that. I want to every year walk on water, walk further away from the boat going man its even scarier out here. I can't even see the stinking boat anymore. I'm 60 years old and I'm on another continent or whatever. I'm just way out there. You know what God you've got to come through. You've got to come through. Guys don't waste these college years.

This is a preparation time, but preparation doesn't mean you quite everything and you just study, just prepare. Because by doing that, that's going to kill you, you can't expect to have 4 years of

comfort and then go out and do something crazy. Four years of comfort does not prepare you for a life of radical living. And so you have to start now and say while I'm here, what am I going to do that scares me to where God has to come through. Because I want the supernatural. You guys can graduate Biola without God. You guys don't have to see the power of God. Unbelievers graduate college. I know a lot of them. Do you know some? They got through college, they have homes, they have happy families, they have this, they have that. But unbelievers don't get to see the supernatural hand of God. Do you?

Let me pray for us. Father sometimes I wish for something external that I can point to and say that was God. God for even someone to physically fall over or whatever God, just something to where I can go, that wasn't normal. And yet my desires, my ways, are not always yours. And God I pray that through your word that supernatural things will take place. That maybe supernaturally for the first time in history everyone will leave a room and do something about a message. Maybe that's your answer God. I just want to see you. I just want to see that we didn't waste an hour. That the students who leave this room would step out in faith and actually enjoy seeing you come through for them. May we be like Noah. May we be like Abraham. May we be like the martyrs who gave their lives knowing there's something better on the other side. May we not live safely. In Jesus' name amen.