

August 9, 2026 — Sermon

Scripture Reading: Genesis 37:18–28

Gospel Reading: Matthew 14:22–33

“The Adventure of Faith”

I love traveling, and I have visited more than thirty countries so far. Yes, I know. I am showing off a little. If you read my article in last month’s newsletter, you may remember which trip was the most memorable for me. Can anyone remember? Yes, South America. You get a bonus point! What made my trip to South America so memorable was not only the beautiful scenery, but also the people I met along the way.

Since South America is so far from South Korea, I had to change planes in Paris. But the connection time was very short, and I missed my flight. Around ten other Korean travelers on my flight also missed their connections. Fortunately, or unfortunately, I was the best English speaker in the group. My English was not as good as it is now, but I led everyone to the Air France counter and explained what had happened. Eventually, we received new tickets to Lima, Peru, along with hotel rooms and meal vouchers. This is the photo we took to celebrate surviving our little international travel disaster. Look at those big smiles!

Later, when I finally arrived at Machu Picchu, someone suddenly called my name in Korean. I turned around, and there were some of the travelers I had helped in Paris. What were the chances? When I remember that journey, of course I remember Machu Picchu, the mountains, and the beautiful scenery. But the people I met along the way made that journey unforgettable. I think that is true of most journeys. A destination may be beautiful, but the people we meet often make the journey unforgettable. And perhaps life is similar. Life is a journey. But what makes this journey rich and meaningful is not simply where we go or what we accomplish. It is how we travel, and whom we trust along the way. That is why I believe faith makes life an adventure.

Joseph also began a journey. But unlike my trip to South America, Joseph did not choose this journey. He simply left home to find his brothers. It probably seemed like an ordinary trip. Go find them. See how they are doing. Then come home. But Joseph did not return home. Instead, he was thrown into a pit. Genesis gives us one small but interesting detail: “The pit was empty; there was no water in it.” Then Joseph was taken from the pit and carried toward Egypt. Suddenly, a short journey

to find his brothers became the beginning of a much greater journey. Joseph had no idea where he was going. He did not know what was waiting for him in Egypt. He did not know what his life would become. But his journey had begun. And eventually Genesis tells us something much more important than where Joseph was: "The Lord was with Joseph." Joseph did not know the destination. But he was not alone on the journey.

Then today's Gospel gives us another journey, and another kind of water. Joseph was in a pit with no water. Peter found himself surrounded by too much water. In Scripture, water can represent life. We need water to live. Water refreshes us, cleanses us, and in baptism becomes a sign of grace and new life. But water can also represent danger and even death. Deep water can overwhelm us, and storms remind us how little control we sometimes have. Joseph had no water. Peter had more water than he could handle. Their situations were completely different, but both found themselves beyond what they could control. And that is often where the adventure of faith begins.

The disciples were all in the same boat. They all experienced the same wind. They all saw the same waves. They all saw Jesus walking toward them. But Peter experienced something the others did not. Peter said, "Lord, if it is you, command me to come to you on the water." And Jesus said, "Come." The other disciples remained in the boat. Peter stepped out. They were in the same place. They saw the same Jesus. They experienced the same storm. But Peter's experience became different because he responded to the invitation. He entered the adventure. And before we focus on Peter sinking, remember this: Peter walked on water. He experienced something none of the others did. Not because Peter was more powerful. Not because Peter understood everything. But because he was willing to step out when Jesus said, "Come." This is the adventure of faith. Faith is not simply stepping out of the boat. The adventure itself is not the goal. Trusting Christ is. Faith is trusting the One who calls us to take the next step.

Joseph did not choose his journey. Peter chose to step into his. Sometimes life takes us somewhere we never expected to go. Other times Christ invites us beyond what is safe and familiar. Joseph and his brothers began that day in the same place, but Joseph's path took him somewhere completely unexpected. Peter and the other disciples were in the same boat, facing the same storm, but Peter responded when Jesus said, "Come." The circumstances around us do not always determine the meaning of our journey. How we respond, and whom we trust, matter.

In either case, the question is not whether we can control everything that happens. The question is: Whom will we trust along the way? Peter eventually noticed the strong wind. He became afraid, and began to sink. Then he cried out, "Lord, save me!" And Scripture says, "Jesus immediately reached out his hand and caught him."

This may be the most important image in the story. The adventure of faith does not mean that we never become afraid. It does not mean that every journey goes according to plan. It does not even mean that we will never sink. It means that in the middle of the storm, we look toward the One who comes to us. And when we begin to sink, Christ reaches out his hand.

When I remember my travels, the places are important. But the people I met made those journeys unforgettable. Sometimes, we may miss the flight. Plans may change. The road may take an unexpected turn. However, the more important thing is what we do next. When I missed my connection in Paris, I could have worried only about my own ticket. But because we helped one another, an unexpected problem became a memory that we could share together. That is one of the gifts of a journey. We can help someone along the way, and sometimes we are the ones who need help.

And our journey of faith is the same. We cannot control everything that happens. We cannot know every turn of the road ahead. Joseph did not know where his journey would take him. Peter did not know what would happen when he stepped out of the boat. Neither do we. And maybe that is why we call it an adventure. If we knew everything that would happen, it would not be much of an adventure. To experience something new, sometimes we have to leave what is familiar. And when Christ calls, sometimes we have to hear him say, "Come," and take the next step.

There may be wind. There may be deep water. There may be moments when we begin to sink. But Christ is there. And his hand is reaching toward us. So when Christ calls, do not remain in the boat simply because the wind is strong. Trust the One who calls you. Look toward the One who comes to you in the storm. And take the next step.

Life is a journey. Faith is an adventure. We may not know exactly where the journey will lead, but we know who travels with us. So may we continue this journey with faith, trusting the God who goes with us and guides our steps. And when Christ says, "Come," may we have the courage to take the next step. Amen.

Let us pray. Gracious God, thank you for walking with us on our journey of faith. When we do not know what lies ahead, help us to trust you. When Christ says, "Come," give us courage to take the next step. Guide us wherever the journey may lead. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.