

SESSION EIGHT: FOCUSING ON JESUS

THE SHIFT CHANGE...Peter did what no mortal had ever done: he walked on water. His eyes were locked on Jesus; he takes one step at a time. Like Master, like Disciple! But his focus shifts and his eyes dart. He feels the WIND, looks down, and sees the waves. A shift change that changed everything. His personal safety became the issue, not going out to meet Jesus. Hope got him out of the boat. Trust held him up. For Jesus, it was a teachable moment. For Peter, it was a crisis.

It all comes down to focus: when he focused on Jesus, he did things he never imagined; when he focused on the storm, he sunk and cut off his ability to receive God's power

SETTING OUR MINDS...how we think and what we think is critical to our ability to focus on Christ instead of our problems.

Question: What thoughts preoccupy your mind?

We often live as REACTIVE PEOPLE, not PROACTIVE PEOPLE. Only we can decide how we react. We aren't spectators watching our thoughts flash THE SCREEN of our minds, with no control OVER WHAT'S ON IT. We can't just "say no" to thinking bad or negative thoughts by trying hard not to do it. As I said in a recent message:

We can SET OUR MINDS, like a HOME THERMOSTAT. A thermostat can't control the weather; it can create a TARGET CLIMATE, our heat/air systems adjust to conditions.

THE INTENSITY OF JESUS...we can't control what happens in world; we can create a good mental climate. To think noble/godly thoughts, it is essential to focus on God, not life's challenges or our coping skills. Only God can change a mind. We can elevate our world by raising the quality of our thoughts. Jesus taught his friends how to stay focused. He was intent, intense, and single-minded. Many tried to steer him off course, but Jesus knew WHO HE WAS/WAS NOT. He never let anything deter him from God's purpose. Having single-minded focus is a rare quality. Our age is an age of INDECISION: where DOUBT masquerades as HUMILITY, and passive resignation poses as rest. Indecision has now become a virtue. Over time, Peter learned how to focus his mind. The same man who sunk beneath the waves after losing his focus, would later write to the early Church:

Therefore, prepare your minds for action; set all your hope on the grace that Jesus will bring you.