



Has anyone ever been lost? [Leader Note: Begin with a personal story. Here's mine: When I was about five years old, I got lost at Busch Gardens (theme park) while waiting in line for a ride. There were monkeys on display, and I was so focused on them that I forgot to move forward in the line. When I realize my family is nowhere in sight, I start panicking and running through all of the ropes and stanchions. Now, I'll stop here and finish the story later...everyone loves a cliffhanger, right? Hint: I am standing here today, so you know how the story ends...I found my family.]

Why did I get lost? Because I was not focused on my mom. Instead, I was focused on the monkeys and they caused me to lose my way. My focus was on the wrong thing. Tonight, we are going to talk about focus.

According to dictionary.com, the definition of focus is “to direct one's attention or efforts.”

Have you ever watched someone perform a magic trick? Do you want to know the greatest secret of all magicians? Drum roll please...The art of distraction! Magicians can fool you by simply making you focus on the wrong thing. They tell you to look at a certain object and then all of a sudden something disappears right before your eyes. Magicians cause you to focus but it's always on the wrong thing!

Many people say that students have lost the ability to focus. I'm not sure I fully believe them. Now, I know there are people who truly experience the effects ADD and ADHD, but that is not everyone in the world. And let's be real, many of you can focus on video games or social media for hours. It's quite the accomplishment, ha! When you really care about something, it's amazing how well you can focus.

So, let me ask you this, does the problem actually lie with our inability to focus? Or is the problem more so with the object of our focus? The heart of the matter is this: on what, or rather who, are you focusing? To whom are you devoting your attention and efforts?

Let's look at a guy named Peter who is one of Jesus's disciples. He was laser-focused on Jesus, to the point that he would do literally anything for

Him. *Read Matthew 14:22-25: 22 Immediately He made the disciples get into the boat and go ahead of Him to the other side, while He dismissed the crowds. 23 After dismissing the crowds, He went up on the mountain by Himself to pray. Well into the night, He was there alone. 24 Meanwhile the boat was already some distance from the land, battered by the waves, because the wind was against them.*

25 Jesus came toward them walking on the sea very early in the morning. When the disciples saw Him walking on the sea, they were terrified. "It's a ghost!" they said, and they cried out in fear (CSB).

Okay, let's pause right there for a second. Don't miss this. Jesus was walking on water! That doesn't happen every day! Sometimes, when we've been raised in the church and we hear the same stories, they become dull and normal to us. But seriously, you try walking on water tomorrow! Let me know how it goes...Alright, let's keep going.

Read Matthew 14:26-29: 27 Immediately Jesus spoke to them. "Have courage! It is I. Don't be afraid."

28 "Lord, if it's you," Peter answered him, "Command me to come to you on the water."

29 He said, "Come."

And climbing out of the boat, Peter started walking on the water and came toward Jesus (CSB).

Wait, we have to pause again. Here we read that Peter walked on water, too! Again, don't take these things for granted. This is amazing and completely unheard of. Let's see what happened to Peter.

30 But when he saw the strength of the wind, he was afraid, and beginning to think he cried out, "Lord, save me!"

31 Immediately Jesus reached out His hand, caught hold of him, and said to him, "You of little faith, why did you doubt?"

32 When they got into the boat, the wind had ceased. 33 Then those in the boat worshipped Him and said, "Truly you are the Son of God" (CSB).

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