

International Conversation Café

Is Faith in Jesus Relevant to My Life?

Human Need: Uncertainty

Motivational speaker, Tony Robbins, identifies six emotional needs every person has. The way we meet these needs can either be helpful or destructive to ourselves and those around us. This discussion examines how faith in God makes a difference in our lives and in the lives of those around us.

All of us need uncertainty or variety in our lives. Of course, we need to know that we will be provided for and that we can count on our family and friends. But if we were certain about everything in our lives, we would eventually feel bored and restless. What we enjoy are pleasant changes: more money, bigger houses, travel, and adventure. While we may resist challenges and unpleasant surprises, often these challenges are the things that keep us engaged in life.

Name some destructive things people do to keep life “exciting?”

What are some constructive ways people do to keep life from getting boring?

What do you do to bring variety into your daily routine?

Certainty

Jesus Christ offers a life of both certainty and uncertainty. About certainty in this life Jesus said, “Put God’s kingdom first. Do what he wants you to do. Then all those things (clothing, food, and the necessities of life) will also be given to you. So, don’t worry about tomorrow. Tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.” About certainty after death, Saint Paul writes in Romans, “For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.”

Restate the above paragraph in your own words.

Uncertainty

In the early part of the first century, there were certain men that went from village to village teaching people and telling stories. These teachers gathered a following of people called, “disciples,” who learned from their teacher. When Jesus began his ministry as a teacher, Peter left his occupation as a fisherman and followed Jesus. While being a fisherman is an honorable profession, Peter went from a very ordinary, routine life to one that was full of adventure and uncertainty. It was not boring! Consider the following story about Peter’s life with Jesus.

Jesus taught people and healed their diseases. At one point, Jesus had been teaching and healing people and then fed 5,000 people using a boy’s lunch of five loaves of bread and two fish. Afterwards, he sent his disciples in a boat to cross the Sea of Galilee. As you read the story, contrast Peter’s life before he met Jesus with his life following Jesus.

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 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.



James Tissot. St. Peter Walks on the Sea. 1836-1894. Watercolor on paper. 19.5 x 11 cm. Brooklyn Museum, New York

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, he was afraid and, beginning to sink, cried out, "Lord, save me!"

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 you are the Son of God" (Matthew 14:22-32).

Retell the story in your own words.

Though people create their own adventures, following Jesus brings purposeful adventure. What do you think was the purpose of Peter's adventure on the boat?

Most of the time we want an adventure that is mildly risky but also pleasant. When Jesus healed people, walked on water, or fed people, it interrupted their lives for the better. But sometimes the changes Jesus brought to people was not so pleasant. For example, some early believers had to leave their homes and cities because certain people hated and threatened them. Other believers stayed where they were and began a life of faith and service to others in their communities.

We all need some variety, change, risk, and excitement to break up the routine and expected. Following Jesus gives us the joy of variety and the courage to get through the difficult.

How do you suppose following Jesus by loving God and loving others could bring purposeful adventure in your life?

Do you know any more stories of people who followed Jesus and lived a life of adventure?