

## Security or Freedom? Walking the Line



We all live with a quiet tension between two deep desires: security and freedom. We want to feel safe—protected from harm, uncertainty, and loss. Yet we also want room to breathe, to explore, to live lives that feel truly our own. The difficulty is that these longings often pull in opposite directions. The more freedom we claim, the less secure we may feel. The more security we construct, the more we risk limiting our freedom. What's striking is how rarely we acknowledge this tension. Instead, we chase an ideal where life is both perfectly safe and completely free. We invest time, energy, and money trying to build that reality—often by casting off responsibilities or resisting limits we believe hold us back. We assume that freedom lies in removing constraints, in doing whatever we want, whenever we want.

But the story of Peter walking on water offers a different perspective.

In Matthew's Gospel, the disciples are sent across the Sea of Galilee at night. A storm rises—violent, disorienting, and terrifying. There is no artificial light, no clear horizon, just wind and waves crashing in darkness. In the midst of this chaos, Jesus appears, walking towards them on the water.

Peter's response is impulsive and bold: "Lord, if it's you, tell me to come." Jesus says, "Come." And Peter steps out of the boat.

For a moment, he does the impossible. He walks on water, eyes fixed on Jesus. But then his focus shifts. He notices the storm—the wind, the waves, the instability. Fear takes hold. And he begins to sink.

Peter's experience mirrors our own. Freedom—stepping out of the boat—is exhilarating but uncertain. It exposes us to risk, unpredictability, and forces beyond our control. Naturally, we try to manage that uncertainty. We build systems, routines, and protections. We seek to control variables, including other people. Yet these very defences can become restrictive. What begins as protection can turn into confinement.

The tension between security and freedom cannot be resolved by clinging to individualism or control – or both. As Fannie Lou Hamer famously said, “Nobody’s free until everybody’s free.” The same applies to safety: no one is truly safe until we all are. Freedom and security are not purely personal achievements—they are shared realities. The Gospel offers a different way. In Matthew’s account, Jesus does not calm the storm. It continues to rage. The miracle is not the absence of chaos, but the presence of trust within it.

The question is not how to eliminate the storm, but how to walk through it.

*When you walk through a storm... Hold your head up high... And don't be afraid of the dark.*

*At the end of a storm... There's a golden sky... And the sweet silver song of a lark.*

*Walk on through the wind... Walk on through the rain... Though your dreams be tossed and blown,*

*Walk on, walk on... With hope in your heart... And you'll never walk alone.*

*You'll never walk alone.*

Peter walks on water not because the conditions are safe, but because his focus is clear. When his attention is fixed on Jesus, he finds stability that defies circumstance. When he shifts his gaze to the storm, fear overwhelms him.

This suggests that true security is not found in control. True freedom is not found in the absence of limits. Both are found in relationship—in trust, in orientation, in where we place our attention.

To “walk on water” in our own lives is to keep our eyes fixed on what anchors us beyond fear: on love, on truth, on the teachings and spirit of Jesus. It is to live from a place of trust rather than control.

The storm may not cease. Life will remain unpredictable. But we are not left alone in it. Hold your focus. Keep walking. And even in the wind and rain, you may discover a deeper kind of freedom—and a deeper kind of safety—than you ever thought possible.

With love and many blessings

LucyA