

Title: If You Want to Walk on Water, You've Got to Get Out of the Boat

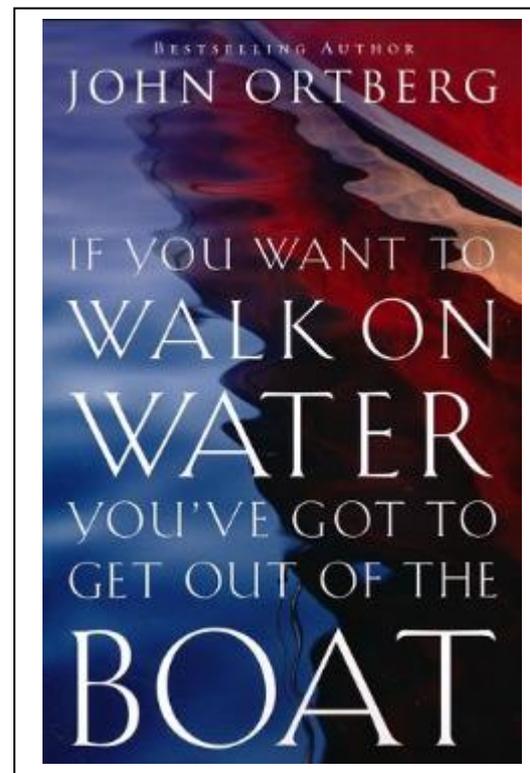
Author : John Ortberg

Category : Christian Living

He said, "Come." So Peter got out of the boat and walked on the water and came to Jesus.

Matthew 14:29 ESV

It was some time ago that I chanced upon this book, most probably in the SKS book recommendation I usually receive in my email. The title caught my eyes because it is so logical. It is a no-brainer that you have to get out of the boat if you want to walk on water. But walking on water is not a logical, ordinary feat. I read the synopsis in the book recommendation, searched the internet for the book and managed to read some sample pages. And I have been wanting to read the book since. So quite recently, when I went to SKS and saw the book on offer (last copy), I bought it immediately. After reading it, I told Amos Ho, who is currently heading the church library, that I would write a book review if the library got a copy. The church library bought a copy and so here is the review.



The book is based on the account of Jesus walking on water to the disciples as their boat was quite a far distance from land (Matthew 14: 25 – 32). The author is able to draw faith lessons from this short account, with a focus on Peter and an invitation for us to be like Peter, wanting to step out in faith, wanting to experience something more of the power and presence of God. This really interests me. To the author, there is a consistent pattern in Scripture of what happens in a life that God wants to use and improve:

- There is always a call.
- There is always fear.
- There is always reassurance.
- There is always a decision.
- There is always a changed life.

Those who say no are changed too. They become a little harder, a little more resistant to His calling, a little more likely to say no the next time. How very true this is, I thought. For the rest of the book, the author talks about skills essential to “water-walking”: discerning God’s call, transcending fear, risking faith, managing failure, trusting God.

The book is written in contemporary style and very readable. At the end of each chapter, there are also discussion questions. I may even want to use this book as study material for my DG at some point. Highly recommend for your reading if you want to walk on water. But first, you’ve got to walk to the church library.

This book is available for loan. Please also consider other titles by John Ortberg.

1. God is Closer Than You Think
2. The Me I Want to Be (Adults Edition) and (Teens Edition)
3. The Life You’ve Always Wanted

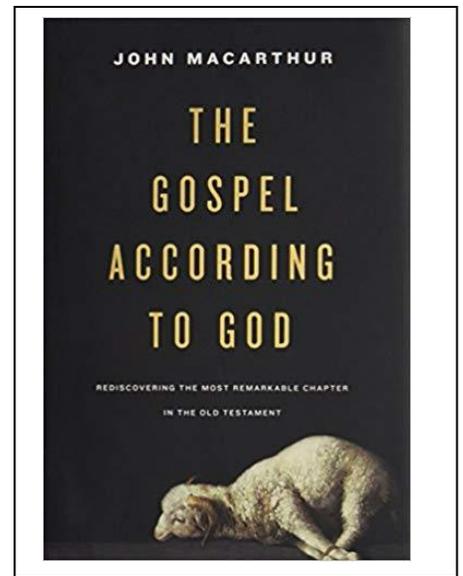
Title: The Gospel According to God ~ Rediscovering the Most Remarkable Chapter in the Old Testament

Author : John MacArthur

Category : Bible Study

“Surely he has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows; yet we esteemed him stricken, smitten by God, and afflicted.”

Isaiah 53:4 ESV



The Gospel According to God by John MacArthur was for me a book that transformed my prior perceptions of Isaiah 53. Although I thought I had already recognized the significance of the verse, the book thoroughly showed me how little I thought I knew. There were so much more truths within that chapter which I did not yet understand. What a magnificent revelation I had, that this singular chapter could contain within itself entire gospel truths about the salvation plan of God, as well as the life and sacrifice of Jesus. This is indeed a book that everyone should read if they can, for one would surely be brought to awe all over again by God and what Jesus has done and endured for us.

In fact, Isaiah 53 is so significant that the book states that should we not have the New Testament, Isaiah 53 would be all-sufficient for us to preach the gospel of salvation. A quote by Charles Spurgeon used in the book goes, “This fifty-third of Isaiah is a Bible in miniature. It is the condensed essence of the gospel.” Such is the mystery and awesomeness that lies behind the powerful Word of God, that a prophecy from seven centuries before the birth of Christ could bear such striking resemblance to the actual events and represent the gospel so accurately.

MacArthur also further expounds on the on-going redemptive work of Christ for His chosen people, the Jews, with numerous descriptions of their rejection of Jesus and their ultimate restoration at His second coming. Despite its explicit reference to the Jews, I believe everyone else can also find their own applications within this display of God’s saving grace as I have for my own spiritual life. Layered throughout this narrative, one can clearly witness the amazing grace of God and His everlasting faithfulness to the people that have continually rejected Him. Truly the love of God is greater than we can ever imagine!

Filled with deep and insightful theological truths, John MacArthur leads the reader on an expository and exegetical journey through Isaiah 52:12 – 53:12 and the rest of the scriptures to discover the eternal truths embedded within. Topics that are covered include:

- The significance of Isaiah 53 for the Christian life
- The necessary suffering of Jesus Christ
- The rejection of Jesus by the Jews and their subsequent salvation
- The life of Isaiah the prophet

This book is available for loan from the TWPC Resource Library. His other titles include:

1. The Gospel According to Jesus
2. What the Bible Says about Parenting
3. Twelve Unlikely Heroes