

# Talk About It

Small Group Discussion Guide

## Paradox

April 13 & 16, 2023

**Start Talking** Pastor Ken shared about the concept of a paradox and how things in our world are seemingly contradictory and yet, found to exist together, faith and doubt being one example. Share other ways you have seen this concept play out in life.

**Main Idea** This weekend, Pastor Ken kicked off our new series, "Paradox," by discussing the relationship between faith and doubt and acknowledging the tension that lies between them. He offered us a new perspective when facing this tension in our own lives. He described the place of tension as a "grace point" and a "growth opportunity" while sharing four principles to hold onto while facing the faith/doubt paradox.

1. Be cautious and be open
2. But if you say so, I will
3. Jesus just got personal
4. This faith...[Peter's] faith meant he was now living for a higher purpose

Pastor Ken walked us through Luke 5:1-11. Here we see a story of a fisherman who has worked all night to catch fish to no avail. He was exhausted and discouraged and heading in for the night. Yet, Jesus had other plans. Peter doubts Jesus' plan to cast his nets again but eventually answers, "But if you say so, I will" (verse 5). Peter caught many fish that night, likely more than ever before, and thus began Peter's journey with Jesus.

What started as a draining, disappointing evening for Peter ended as the beginning of the most incredible journey of his life.

Taking God simply at His word and responding with, "But if you say so, I will," can catalyze incredible life change in and through us. It is one thing to talk about faith, but another to live it out. God honors movement.

- Personalize it**
1. Pastor Ken shared how "the cloud of our previous experiences can prevent us from a future fulfillment. What experience carries the temptation to prevent you from future fulfillment?"
  2. Peter had a next step to take with Jesus, just as we each always have a next step we can take. Reflect on where you are with Jesus and discern your next step.
  3. Read Mark 9: 14-29 (NIV). How do you relate to the father in the story?

**LET'S DO IT! Commit to a step and live it out this week**

1. Commit to praying over your next steps this week. Pray for peace, clarity, and the courage to take the steps needed to further your walk with the Lord.
2. Pastor Ken shared that the only way to prevent a "wishy-washy" faith tossed by every new life circumstance is to focus on only one voice - God's voice. Take time each day this week to sit quietly with the Lord and lean into His voice and what He is sharing with you.
3. In discussing our next steps with Jesus, Pastor Ken shared the importance of discovering our gifts, living them out, and finding a community of people to do life with. Getting Started at Cypress is what we offer to help you do this. If you haven't experienced Getting Started, you can start Steps One and Two online today.

Here's the link: [GETTING STARTED](#)

Maybe your small group can attend Step Three together? Make plans to do that...together!

**Pray**

Jesus, thank you for always pursuing us right where we are. Thank you for challenging us with our next steps for the glory of Your Kingdom. Help us navigate the tension between faith and doubt. Open our eyes to the opportunity for grace and growth in this place. Though we often doubt, we put our faith and trust in You and Your will for our lives. May our next steps this week and every week moving forward honor and glorify You. Amen.

**Key Scriptures**

**Luke 5:5 (NIV)**

Simon answered, "Master, we've worked hard all night and haven't caught anything. But because you say so, I will let down the nets."

**Mark 9:24 (NIV)**

Immediately the boy's father exclaimed, "I do believe; help me overcome my unbelief!"

**2 Corinthians 5:7 (NIV)**

For we live by faith, not by sight.

**James 2:22 (NIV)**

You see that his faith and his actions were working together, and his faith was made complete by what he did.