

WANDERING HEART: I'M FIXED UPON IT

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Matthew 16:21-23

From that time on, Jesus began to show his disciples that he must go to Jerusalem and undergo great suffering at the hands of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and on the third day be raised. And Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him, saying, "God forbid it, Lord! This must never happen to you." But he turned and said to Peter, "Get behind me, Satan! You are a stumbling block to me; for you are setting your mind not on divine things but on human things."

REFLECT & DISCUSS

1. Read the passage slowly. Then take a deep breath and read it again. What word, phrase or image stands out to you?
2. Peter has just declared Jesus as the Messiah. Jesus has just declared Peter is the rock on which Jesus will

build the church. Then... whiplash. Now Peter is rebuking Jesus, and Jesus is calling Peter "Satan"! How might both these scenes reveal a deep trust and intimacy between Jesus and Peter?

3. Peter obviously had a different expectation of what it meant for Jesus to be the Messiah of God. Perhaps he expected that the Messiah would come to take over the political controls of the territory and defeat the Roman rulers—not dying, but ruling. Whatever he imagined, he couldn't square his understanding with Jesus' teaching about suffering, pain, and death—let alone resurrection. Sometimes, our beliefs are so fixed and deep, it's hard for us to see things any other way. Have you ever experienced something like this? What helps you change your mind when your beliefs or expectations short circuit your imagination and openness?
4. Has anyone ever challenged you like Jesus challenges Peter? What happened, and what did you learn?
5. We may want to cling to easy or simplistic answers—about God, faith, our lives, or our selves. But growing in maturity and in faith inherently comes with challenges and complexity. What does it look like to welcome complexity? Can you stay

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fixed in your convictions while also expanding your perspective?

6. What do you think it means to fix your mind on divine things, not human ones?

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