



theme: The Gospel of Mark #8 – Across The Water

materials: Bibles, reading materials (newspapers, magazines, books, etc), pencil, notepad or paper

This month the cell talks will cover chapters three and four of Mark. We are building up a picture of Jesus in these months, one which amazed, angered, and fascinated people in 1st Century Palestine. What does this picture of Jesus tell us now? How do we respond to this “Son of Man”?

welcome

What are you most afraid of? Why? What do you do when you are afraid?

interact

Give everyone (except one person) something to read – a book, a newspaper, a magazine, etc... Give one person a Bible and one person a notepad and pencil. Ask everyone to start reading out loud all at once, including the person with the Bible (have them read out Mark 4:35-41). Tell the person with the pencil to write down whatever he or she hears, words, sentences, whatever comes through. Do this for about 2 minutes. Then have the person read out what they wrote. Does it make any sense? Then spend about a minute in silence, and have the person with the Bible read out the scripture passage again.

read

What do we learn about the character and mission of Jesus in this passage? Sometimes we miss things in the Bible because we don't know the original context, or even geography, in which it was written. What might the significance of Jesus crossing over to the other side of the Lake be? Who was he leaving, and who was he going to? The “furious squall” must have been terrifying. Has anyone ever been in a frightening situation like a storm or an accident that they couldn't control?

What was it like?

Are there other situations in your life, perhaps emotional, social or spiritual, in which you felt totally out of control, in chaos?

Do you think the disciples were out of line in asking for Jesus' help?

Why did He rebuke them for having so little faith?

Why were the disciples afraid at the end of the passage? Do you think they knew who Jesus was at this point?

Can you think of any other times in the Bible that God controlled the sea?

think

It is easy for us to get caught up in storms in our lives; to see only the chaos and turmoil. This week when a storm hits in your life or in someone else's life, act counter-culturally. Speak to the storm and say “Peace! Be still.” (v.39). Perhaps your prayer could be to sleep and rest in this time of blowing winds and lightning bolts, instead of running around with your head cut off.



The following are three steps of "What to do in a Storm":

1. Open a window on the side of the building away from the wind. This will relieve pressure on the roof and help prevent it from lifting.
2. Close all curtains to slow down flying glass and airborne objects
3. Stay away from doors and windows. If the wind becomes destructive, shelter further inside the house.

These steps are talking about a physical storm but each point reflects the idea of peace. Step one – relieve pressure. Relieving pressure in a personal storm is to relieve stress, which is simply to be calm and still. Step two – close curtains. Closing the curtains in a personal storm would be to not interact with the outside storm but to remain where the storm is not, to remain in peace. Step three – shelter in the center. Again personally this should look like centering yourself in the calm of the storm, which in this text, and always, is Jesus. To do something tangible and prophetic find the center of your house and spend your morning prayer times in this spot sitting still.

live & pray

Who in your life is encountering a time of chaos and fear right now? Fight for them in prayer, trusting that Jesus, who is Lord over all storms, can bring order to their lives. Let them know you are praying for them, and see what other help you can offer to them.

leader's guide

When Jesus crossed over the lake, he was leaving Jewish ground and going towards Gentiles. This probably would have bothered religious leaders and others significantly, and signals that Jesus was opening up His Kingdom message to those beyond the borders of Judaism.

It seems natural for the disciples to ask Jesus for help in that situation. But Jesus was frustrated because they still were seemingly missing who He was, and that while He was with them they had no reason to fear the chaos of the waters.

Water and storms represented chaos in the OT, frightening, uncontrollable elements.

Throughout Scripture God is shown to have control over the waters, and to exert order in the chaos (Creation, the Flood, The Nile, The Red Sea and River Jordan, Jonah, etc...). By exerting His authority over the storm and the waters Jesus is putting Himself in line with the older stories of God. He is showing His power over creation, over chaos.