



The Storm

Date: February 18, 2024

Text: Matthew 14:22-33

Big Idea:

Jesus had experienced the “storm” of his cousin, John the Baptist’s, beheading (martyrdom) because of his allegiance in Jesus. Jesus is now trying to get away and grieve but the crowds pursued Him and He “had compassion on them” healing the sick and feeding the 5,000. This is the “ministry” life of a disciple. Storms and ministry are often mingled in the same time and space. Then the disciples, following the commands of Jesus, are ushered into a storm. Often we are doing exactly what we are supposed to be doing, we are walking exactly where we are supposed to go, and still face storms. The storms we face are not a punishment or neglect from God, but an opportunity for us to realize Who He is more fully.

Opening Questions:

1. Have you ever been trapped in a storm (literally a weather occurrence? What was it like? What did you feel?

Notes on the Passage:

(Verses 22-27) Jesus had just performed miracles and the people were enthusiastically following Him; although, maybe more for what He could do or provide instead of for Who He was. Jesus knows He needs to get away to spend time alone with the Father- the source of His ministry and life. He sends the disciples on a boat and goes up a mountain to be alone and pray. During the early morning hours, a storm comes, and the disciples have exhausted themselves trying to row and steady the boat themselves when out steps Jesus, walking on the waves. The disciples are terrified because they do not recognize Him, but He responds with a word of encouragement and an invitation to draw closer.

1. Do you tend to neglect your relationship with God during “mountain top” seasons? Why do you think comfort often hinders spiritual growth?
2. How does it make you feel that the disciples obeyed Jesus and yet still faced a storm?
3. The disciples were exhausted and did not recognize Jesus in the midst of their fear- have you ever struggled to recognize Jesus in your storms?
4. How does it make you feel that Jesus responded to their fear with compassion and invitation and not anger?

(Verses 28-33) Peter responds to Jesus’ invitation and steps on the waves. At first, he is steady, focused on Jesus and walking towards him... but then the storm begins to steal his focus and soon he begins to sink. He *immediately* cries out to Jesus in recognition that He was the only One Who could save him, and *immediately* Jesus pulls him from the waves. Our faith journeys are often filled with steady steps and sinking moments- but through it all the hand of Jesus is right there, outstretched and ready to rescue us each time we fall.

1. Peter often gets a bad reputation for sinking, but he was the only one who climbed out of the boat; how does he show great faith even in the midst of doubts?
2. How does it encourage you that you can have powerful faith and still sink sometimes?
3. Would you rather be on the waves with Jesus or in the boat without Him? Explain.



the discipleship journey

FROM INVITATION TO IMPACT

Going Deeper:

1. What are some storms in your life right now?
2. What are some ways you have exhausted yourself trying to fight the storms alone?
3. How can you see Jesus even in the midst of the waves? If you can't see Him, who can you invite into your boat to help you see Him?
4. When are some times you can set aside to be alone with God? To pray without distraction?

Additional Resources:

[For Those with Little Faith | Desiring God](#)- Devotion.

[Peter Walks On Water \(5 powerful lessons from Matthew 14:22-33\) \(rethinknow.org\)](#)- Blog
[Craig Groeschel | Missing Peace | Messages | Free Church Resources from Life.Church](#)- Sermon

Group Activity:

Draw a picture of a boat with waves; now draw you inside of the boat. Label the boat- what are the things in your life that are barely holding you together? The coping mechanisms or distractions you use? Now label the waves- what are the storms you are facing right now? Are they relational? Financial? Spiritual? Now draw Jesus however you feel led to in the midst of this- maybe you want to write a verse over the drawing, or words that come to mind, or promises He gives us. Somehow, depict Jesus in the midst of whatever storm you are facing and see how His presence calms those waves.