

Perfect Storm

35 As evening came, Jesus said to his disciples, "Let's cross to the other side of the lake." 36 So they took Jesus in the boat and started out, leaving the crowds behind (although other boats followed). 37 But soon a fierce storm came up. High waves were breaking into the boat, and it began to fill with water.

38 Jesus was sleeping at the back of the boat with his head on a cushion. The disciples woke him up, shouting, "Teacher, don't you care that we're going to drown?"

39 When Jesus woke up, he rebuked the wind and said to the waves, "Silence! Be still!" Suddenly the wind stopped, and there was a great calm. 40 Then he asked them, "Why are you afraid? Do you still have no faith?"

41 The disciples were absolutely terrified. "Who is this man?" they asked each other. "Even the wind and waves obey him!"

Mark 4:35-41 (NLT)

Observation (what does the text say?) **Interpretation** (what does it mean?) **Application** (what does it mean to me/us?)

Discussion/Topic Starters (Ice Breakers)

- Discuss a time where fear kept you from doing or saying something you thought you should?
- What is the most terrifying storm that you can remember?
- How do you normally react to "storms" in your life and why?
- O: What things in the text strike you or jump out at you? Why?

V35-41

Note: the Sea of Galilee is about 680 feet below sea level. Winds often come up suddenly from the surrounding hills, turning a calm lake into turbulent waves within minutes. Today, the western shore has signs warning drivers of high winds; big waves routinely swamp cars parked on what looked like a safe beach. Life seems to get tossed around by storms in the same way.

- O: Contrast Jesus' behavior during the storm with that of His disciples (v.38)
- O: How is this miracle different than all other miracles that Mark has recorded up to this point? What does this teach you (hint, remember the "even" word in Mark 2:28)?
- O: What are the various emotions that the disciples exhibited? Do you think they were angry?
- I: Discuss how the disciples fear during the storm was different than their fear after the storm. What is the difference? How do you experience this difference?
**(another way to ask this question: The disciples are quite naturally afraid of the storm. Once Jesus calms the storm, however, they are still terrified. How does their fear after the storm differ from their previous fears?)*
- I: If Jesus can calm the storm, why did He let it come up in the first place?
- I: In 5:1-20 (next week's passage) who is afraid & why? How does their fear compare with those here in 4:35-41?
- I: What did the disciples learn about Jesus from this episode (v.35-41) and the events recorded in Mark leading up to it?
- A: How do you react when Jesus seems to be asleep in your life? How does this story encourage you in those situations? How does v.39-40 speak to you (honestly)?
- A: How would you compare your life now to the storm found in this passage (smooth sailing, choppy water, cloudy, stormy, storm over (ex. cleaning up the mess), etc.)

Recommended Follow-up:

- **Pray:** Pray for the different "storms" occurring in the lives of the group members. Pray that we would see Jesus in the midst of these storms, trust Him with what seems to be uncertain times/events. Pray that the group would be a place of refuge and equipping for these life events.
- **Respond:** Reflect on the fears that inhibit you from fully living out the kingdom life and sharing the gospel (ex. fear of rejection, lack of knowledge, comfort, etc.). Pray over these this week; ask God to help identify these fears and teach you how to overcome them with faith (v.40).
- **Read:** Next week's sermon (7/25/2010) will focus on Mark 5:1-20. Take time prior to next Sunday to read & study the passage, pray through the passage, meditate on the passage, etc.

* As discussed in Riverside's HGLT (Home Group Leader Training), these guides are to be starting points for home group leaders to develop their own guides and approaches to leading group discussions. This is a resource tool, not a rigid "go through this guide word-for-word." There are intentionally too many questions for a single home group time. These guides rely heavily on a few different study guides; including "LifeChange Series" (ISBN 0891099107), N.T. Wright's guide (ISBN 9780830821822), James Hoover's guide (ISBN 9780830830046), and the Serendipity NT for Groups by the Young Life ministry (ISBN is N/A)