



DFGC Community Groups - for week of October 21, 2018

Mark 4:35-41: "Even the Wind & Sea" Group Study Handout

Opener: Do you or anyone in your group have a story from your life (or a friend or family member) of a serious close-call, accident or near-death encounter? What was that experience like?

This passage brings out the disciples' fear of death--a fear that underlies much of our human experience: a fear that reminds us of the beauty and fragility of life itself. Death pulls us up short, often causing us to realize that all is not right in our world. Some of us may not fear our own deaths, but we may fear losing loved ones around us. This story is all about Jesus and his presence in the middle of our greatest fears and anxieties. Think of your own worries or challenges as someone from your group reads the following passage aloud.

READ Mark 4:35-41

1. How would you describe the state of the disciples? Recall Mark 1:16-19. What does that tell you about the situation?
2. How do you identify with the response of the disciples? Have there been moments in your life when Jesus *seems* like he's asleep or silent in the middle of our storms? [Some great examples of seeking after God when he seems distant are in the Psalms. E.g.: Psalm 6:2-3, 13:1-2, 90:13-14. Psalm 40:1-3 especially talks about simply waiting for God].¹
3. Consider Jesus' command over the wind and sea. What parallels can be drawn between this passage, Genesis 1, and John 1?
4. Why are the disciples still 'terrified' even after Jesus calms the storm? What is Jesus revealing to his disciples about himself? (see Psalm 65:7; 89:9; 107:29).
5. What evidence is there in this passage that Jesus meant for the storm to occur? Why would Jesus let this storm happen to his disciples? What does Psalm 23:3-4 tell us about God's presence in difficulty and death?

¹ A good resource for those struggling to feel close to God is an interview with Pastor John Piper called "What To Do When God Feels Distant" from February 27, 2015: <https://www.desiringgod.org/interviews/what-to-do-when-god-feels-distant>; Internet.

6. In what circumstances in your life do you find it easy to remember and trust in the power and sovereignty of God?
7. In what circumstances is it difficult for you to trust God?
8. How can we better cultivate your trust in Jesus? Are there practical steps we can take to better prepare us to trust when the 'storms' of life do arise?
9. Read Colossians 1:27, Ephesians 3:14-20, and 2 Peter 1:3. What does the Bible teach us about the power and presence of Christ in our lives?
10. What does it look like to try to live out of faith rather than fear?
11. What storms of life are you currently facing? Are there storms already battering (or beginning to loom large) in your family, friends, work, or health? Prayerfully write these down here and ask the Lord to intervene, to give guidance and peace. If appropriate, share your current 'storm' with your group.

TAKE TIME TO PRAY together, encouraging one another in the "storms" of life, and thanking God for his presence and compassion in the midst of life's challenges. Pray for renewed faith and trust in Jesus.