

WALKING with JESUS

LIFE GROUPS | LEADERS GUIDE

October 4-10, 2026 | Fall Week 2

ANNOUNCEMENTS

You're now all finding your rhythm in your groups! It's time to now enjoy the week-to-week engagements with your groups.

1. YOUR THIRD MEETING:

- As these new fall rhythms settle into place, are you keeping in touch with some of your members who said they'd come, but haven't yet? That's an important step to building relationships and making sure that all members are accounted for.
- Also, have you been keeping up with logging your attendance? The email reminder for that comes out just as your group gets meeting, so be sure that once everyone leaves to find the email and check off those boxes!
- If your group cancels an event, be sure to reflect that as well, as there's an option to do so in the same email as the attendance reminder. In that email still click the blue button, "[Take Attendance](#)." You'll then see your list of members, then on the left side, click "[Events](#)", and then click on the date you need to cancel, and under the drop-down box of "[Options](#)" – click "[Cancel](#)." That'll make our logs fully accurate!

2. SERVE PROJECTS:

- There is a new opportunity this season, and that is to provide a meal for the Alpha program that is being hosted at our church, every Tuesday, until the end of November. There's been a few nights booked up already – but if you're keen on the idea, you can [SIGN UP HERE](#).
 - Here's what we've got so far... thanks so much to those of you who have signed up! Looks like we're in good shape for the coming 3 weeks. We're now looking to fill the last four! [Any takers?](#)
 - We are told that the group has "*healthy*" appetites!! So, consider over preparing!
 - As well, please consider serving the meal and then interacting with the group over their ALPHA video while they eat, and then cleaning up afterwards.
 - Remember, if costs are prohibitive, let pastor Adam know, and our Life Groups budget will cover it.

Week 5	Tuesday, October 13	Baars/DeJong	Pasta
Week 6	Tuesday, October 20	Chantelle Arends	Chili & Buns with baking
Week 7	Tuesday, October 27	Dykshoorn/Arends	Burgers, Salad, baking
Week 8	Tuesday, November 3	open	
Week 9	Tuesday, November 10	open	
Week 10	Tuesday, November 17	open	
Week 11	Tuesday, November 24	open	

- As well, we have our **SERVE SHIRTS** ready for your members, so send your newest members to the HUB to get theirs, or if any of your members need a new one – they can feel free to grab one. We’ve got youth sizes XS-L, and adult sizes S-XXXL.

3. PICTURES:

- We love seeing what you’re all up to! Take pictures of your group in your meeting spaces, gathered around the kitchen counter with their snacks and drinks, and your group out having fun, and serving together – then share them with Pastor Adam – via email or text.

GETTING TO KNOW YOU

LEADER NOTE: These are the lowest risk questions and are great ways to get everyone in your group talking – from those who love sharing stories, to those who feel a little uncomfortable in this new space. Low risk questions have their way of breaking the ice and getting everyone a little more comfortable sharing. It also gives a chance for everyone to share in an easy, approachable way.

1. How do you feel about water, being in it, on it, or underneath it, love it or not?

LEADER NOTE: As this week’s conversation takes us upon the stormy waters of the Sea of Galilee, let’s talk about our own desire to be in or around or on the water! It’s potentially a lighthearted way to start off the discussion, but know that the tone could change quickly, if someone’s aquaphobia are shared. And just as an FYI, there is another phobia called, “*Thalassophobia*” which is the intense fear of deep, open, and vast bodies of water, which might involve the fear of what also lives underneath.

2. Do you prefer moments that are a little unpredictable or planned?

LEADER NOTE: As well, in our passage this week, we’re looking at the events on the sea that were in the vantage point of the Disciples – a mix of both the predictable, in that winds would come up every day as temperatures adjust into the evening; and unpredictable, in that sometimes those winds turned to full on storms. All the while, Jesus knew that all this would take place. Have a conversation over where your members find themselves most comfortable in life. This will all help your members enter into the reality of the experience of the disciples in the boat, that one late evening.

QUICK REVIEW

LEADER NOTE: These following two questions aim to have your group reflect upon Sunday’s message. The first question will always be the same, and the second one is provided from our teaching pastor from the service. One thing that we want to be clear as we approach this section, is that this isn’t to be a time to evaluate the message or the one delivering it, but it’s to be a time when we talk about what we have learned or how we’ve been challenged by God’s Word.

1. Looking back at your notes from this week’s teaching, was there anything that particularly caught your attention, challenged, or confused you?

LEADER NOTE: Leaders, “*lead by example*” in your own use of these resources. Ahead of Sunday services, be sure to grab a guide in the lobby, fill it out during the message, scratch down extra thoughts and notes you might have, and bring it with you to your Life Group meetings.

2. Pastor Adam said, “[*Peter*] had to decide that his trust in the Lord was greater than his own desire to feel safe and comfortable.” Have you ever had to decide to trust the Lord, and leave something relatively safe? What was that like? How did you see the Lord’s hand through it all?

LEADER NOTE: It’s one thing to say that we have trust in the Lord, it’s a whole other level when we act and live out that trust. Peter had to decide in that unpredictable moment, of whether his fears were greater than his trust leaving him to hide in the boat, or if his trust in Jesus was greater than that fear. There have certainly been moments in the lives of your members where they’ve encountered similar points of decision. The hope is that your members made the more courageous decision to trust Jesus over being consumed in their fears – but that is not always the case. As your members might recount moments of poor decisions, listen with grace, and proceed without judgement. They’re learning all this too.

SCRIPTURE REVIEW

LEADER NOTE: Aside from building relationships, reading scripture together is one of the most important practices in our Life Groups; so never shirk away from reading the following passage. Always make time to interact with the Word of God and its message for us.

READ Matthew 14:22-33

1. How does this passage highlight God’s presence in our world?
2. What does this passage say about our broken human condition?
3. How does this passage call me to make change in my life?

Another option with these questions, is to even more simply ask, once you’ve read the passage together, as in a general way, “*What strikes us about this passage?*”

DIGGING DEEPER

LEADERS NOTE: These discussion questions generally start simple and gradually become deeper and more complex. This progression follows natural discussion patterns, but as leaders, you know your group best. Use this guide flexibly; it is not necessary to cover every question. Focus on ensuring everyone is heard and has the opportunity to contribute and ask their questions.

1. READ Matthew 14:22-26. Why do you think that Jesus sent the disciples ahead of Him, while knowing the storm would mean trouble for them?

LEADER NOTE: One of the questions that might quickly come up in your conversations, is the proverbial question of “*does God cause bad things to happen to good people?*” There are certainly moments in all of scripture that paint the picture of God causing bad things to happen. However, as you deeply explore those moments, the understanding arises that those ‘bad things’ are driven by the brokenness of the fallen and sinful world that we call home. This storm in Matthew 14, is the same. Before the fall, everything was life giving; after the fall, that was no longer the case. Weeds would disrupt the growth in fields. Floods would overflow banks. Winds would topple trees. Storms could sink ships. Death was now a reality. Yet, while Jesus knew that this storm would come up, He still sent His team into it – as He longs for them to seek Him in their trials, rather than depend on their own strength and might to prevail.

The Lord will use hard things in our lives to teach us foundational truths about His character and His love for us.

- **READ Genesis 1:1-3.** Do you notice any parallels between the moments before creation and Jesus walking on the water? Does this help you understand why Jesus sent them into the storm?

LEADER NOTE: The parallels appear to be on purpose, as Matthew is recording this to job our memories of what the earth is like, outside of God's presence. In the beginning, before creation the earth was "*tohu va bohu*." It's formless, it's void, it's darkness. It's complete and utter chaos. And once we see the picture of the Spirit of God, the "*Ruah Elohim*," hovering over the waters, nothing changes. It's the same with the storm on the Sea of Galilee. Even while they begin to experience Jesus, the chaos is still swirling around. Then Jesus gets in the boat, and peace occurs – and there was "*light*" (Genesis 1:3). But the light wasn't the sun rising in the morning (maybe it was by 6.00am?), it was the presence of the one who proclaimed, "*I Am the Light*" (John 8:12, 9:5).

2. READ Matthew 14:28-31. The storm doesn't define where Peter places his trust, but rather it reveals it. What do we learn about Peter's faith in this passage?

LEADER NOTE: Through this whole scene, until the moment that Jesus gets in the boat, the storm is raging. So, in the moment of Peter's decision, the wind is howling, and the waves are torturing the boat, and he gets out of the boat. The storm is driving all kinds of emotions and fears in Peter's body and heart, and as we humanly understand what he is facing, nothing but trust in the Lord, is pushing him to lift his leg over the edge. Therefore, the storm, is showing us that Peter did in fact have faith and felt security in Jesus, even if it wasn't perfect or complete. It was still purely genuine. And Jesus can work with even the small elements of faith. Even faith that is what we heard on Sunday morning as, "*It's little faith. It was faith wrapped in doubt. It was faith left a little unsure.*" Peter still had faith that Jesus would pull him through the storm.

- Is there a particular trial or hardship that you have navigated, where the Lord clearly taught you something?

LEADER NOTE: As we press through these discussion questions from week to week, there will be deeply personal ones like this from time to time. It is pretty early in the season for something like this particular question, so your members might not respond too quickly with identifying their own hardships, unless they feel completely safe in your group. Allow some time, and even some silence, while your members consider their own experiences. Some will just be fine thinking to themselves; others may verbally process a portion of their lives. In either way, know that the Lord is using these moments to do good work, and reminding your members that He has been present all along. Be grateful with those who do share.

- **READ James 1:2-8.** What wisdom can we glean from James when we encounter some of the storms of our lives? What can God do through our trials?

LEADER NOTE: James captures a variety of things we can learn as we face trials. First is we're to find them as *joyful*. Perhaps we're starting with the hardest element to learn, because no one has ever responded with joy when they break their leg, or when a relationship turns sour. It is good to note that James is referring more to persecution because of faith, and that we should consider it a joyful moment when we face trials because we have faith, and that there is something to be tempted and tested.

Because we know from Peter's experience, that when there is even a small seed of faith, Jesus is right there to save.

Then James writes that this **testing will lead to growth**. God doesn't waste anything, and will use anything to gain our attention, or to draw us closer to Him.

James tells us next that God continues to give of Himself in **generous** ways, He doesn't hold Himself back, or limit His gifts to us.

The other picture that James offers us here, brings us back to the storm on the sea in Matthew 14 but from a different vantage point. James writes at 1:6, "*for the one who doubts is like a wave of the sea that is driven and tossed by the wind.*" We're told that when we doubt completely, when we lack faith, we become those distractions to the world around us, we become the waves that are tossing the boat of disciples into their moments of fear, we're the ones who are in the wind who caused Peter to lose focus on Jesus.

3. READ Matthew 14:32-33. How has the disciples' reaction to Jesus grown from the beginning of the story to the end?

LEADER NOTE: If it's not obvious at this point, back up and read the initial verses again. It's at least 3.00am, the disciples have been fighting the wind and waves for at least nine hours. They're tired, exhausted, worn out, gripped with fear in the face of death, they're also spiritually afraid as they see a ghost coming. Matthew tells us, "*they were terrified*" and that "*they cried out in fear*" (14:26). That wasn't it, Peter, when he was walking on the water towards Jesus and he saw the wind, "*he was afraid.*" Even with Jesus firm in his sights. It's a big turn of events when Jesus and Peter enter the boat, and the storm subsides. They ignore Peter, and turn to Jesus with praise and admiration, seeing Him as truly, the "*Son of God.*"

- **READ Isaiah 43:1-3.** What does this passage remind us about who we are to God, who God is to us, and what He promises when we go through difficult circumstances?

LEADER NOTE: We're first reminded that God created and formed humanity, and not the other way around. It has always been, and always will be – God was first. God then tells us that it is He who has redeemed us, and no one else. The Israelites at the time were constantly distracted and caught up in the teachings of the world around them – and all the pagan and gentile approaches to religion. They heard of the other gods, and the other ways of worship, and all the other ways of sacrifice, as they continually sought for their place in this world. But God, reminded them that it is only Him who saved them, and He has claimed each one of them as His own.

The realities of the world in the first century, in the eastern Mediterranean area, they retained this fear of water, as it was that representation of chaos and disorder. God says, in there, "*I will be with you.*" The rivers in the area would also be trickles of creeks for a majority of the year, except when the rains fell in the mountains, and these creeks would turn into raging rivers that would overrun the banks and cause all kinds of damage to home and property. God says there, "*they shall not overwhelm you.*" Fire too, was a reality, that could easily spread and be an unstoppable force. God says, "*the flame shall not consume you.*" God knows that these very hard things will occur, and that on earth, they'll be unavoidable. But, they will never be our end. They will never draw us away from God's grip. They will test us, that's for sure. But they won't end us. Waters can lead to death. Rivers can lead to destruction. Fires can cause

all kinds of losses. But in Jesus, we are safe in that death, we are safe in that destruction, we are safe in Him, in those losses.

TAKING IT HOME

READ Psalm 18:16-20, Matthew 14:31, & 2 Timothy 2:13. How might Jesus' immediate action shape our response the next time we notice we're sinking? How might we today experience God's hand rescuing us? How might we be God's hand of rescue for each other?

LEADER NOTE: It's incredible to read this account in Matthew 14, and picture it all taking place in the moments of time. For the observers in the boat, it was probably happening so very fast. But for Peter, it was probably being experienced in slow motion. And for Jesus, He saw it all happening in its entirety as it was happening, therefore, He knew where He had to be right at the most critical of moments. Peter, as much as he felt like he was in danger, he never really was. He was always safe in Jesus. The Psalmist recognizes the gift of the Lord's delight. Salvation and rescue were never dependent upon their own actions, but solely on God's love. Peter experienced it similarly. And Paul reflects that very same truth to Timothy, that even when we cannot act in faith, when we experience doubt, and questions, and insecurity, Jesus will always continue to hold us, and provide us rescue.

PERSONAL REFLECTION

LEADER NOTE: This following question is completely optional and is intended for the participants' personal reflection. But do feel free to explore using the question within your groups meeting.

READ Isaiah 41:8-10. Isaiah speaks of a strength that God desires to provide for His people when both great and small difficulties arise. How have you experienced that gift of strength, as you look back at hardships you have faced? What can you do to help yourself remember that moment of the gift of strength the next time you face something?