

Talk About It

Small Group Discussion Guide

God Encounters

Jesus Calms the Storm

July 6-9, 2023

Start Talking

Pastor Drew shared that we might be in one of three places today—currently in a storm, coming out of a storm, or with a storm on the horizon. Is one of these you, and how are you handling it?

Main Idea

The Bible is full of stories of people encountering God in various ways. These encounters often transformed people's lives and set them on a new path. In our Summer Series, God Encounters, we explore some of these encounters and learn what they can teach us about our spiritual journeys. This week, Pastor Drew shared the story from Mark 4 of the Disciples crossing the Sea of Galilee when a "fierce storm" arose. The confidence of these professional fishermen began to wane as the storm grew and grew. The waves began breaking into the boat. They cried out to Jesus, who was asleep in the back of the boat with his head on a cushion, "Don't you care that we are going to drown?" Jesus miraculously calmed the storm with just a few words, and then challenged the Twelve with words that might have stung a little: "Why are you afraid? Do you still have no faith?" Words he may still be speaking to us today.

Personalize It

1. Pastor Drew shared that faith is like a muscle. What does that mean?
2. Does faith grow in the calm, easy times of comfort or in the times of testing and challenge? Why?
3. Is your faith growing or dying today? Have you identified the source of the storm (you, the world, etc.)?
4. Do we more often look for peace in circumstances or in the person of God? Is that the question Jesus was really asking when he said, "Why were you afraid?"

Let's Do It! Commit to a step and live it out this week!

1. Many of our storms are of our own doing—decisions we have made or things we have done or said that led us into problems that may have been avoidable. Is there something in your life today that can be traced back to you? What can you do to help start to make it right?

2. When we can look past the circumstance itself, there is peace in knowing that God might be using the storm to show us something, teach us something, or build in us something that couldn't be built without it. What could some of those things be?
3. If you are familiar with the song "Turn Your Eyes Upon Jesus", share the words with the group. If not, look it up and give it a listen. Keep its truth close by this week so that your faith "muscle" will be more ready for life's storms.

Let's Pray

Father, we know that you love us. Your Word tells us so, you proved it when you sent your son Jesus, and you are the embodiment of absolute love. Help us to remember these truths whenever we go through a storm. Help us remember that faith isn't faith when the seas are calm and the sun is warm on our backs. Lord, faith is built when the waves are high and the outcome is uncertain. Help us remember You in those times, and help us to see past the circumstance and into the opportunity of what You want for us in those times. Help us to remain faithful. Thank You for being faithful to us, all the time, no matter what. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Key Scriptures

Mark 4:39-41 (NLT)

"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. Then he asked them, "Why are you afraid? Do you still have no faith?" The disciples were absolutely terrified. "Who is this man?" they asked each other. "Even the wind and waves obey him!"

Hebrews 11:1 (NIV)

"Now faith is confidence in what we hope for and assurance about what we do not see."

Matthew 7:24-25 (NIV)

"Therefore everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock. The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house; yet it did not fall, because it had its foundation on the rock."

James 1:2-4 (NIV)

"Consider it pure joy, my brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance. Let perseverance finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything."

John 14:27 (NLT)

"I am leaving you with a gift—peace of mind and heart. And the peace I give is a gift the world cannot give. So don't be troubled or afraid."

John 16:33 (NLT)

"I have told you all this so that you may have peace in me. Here on earth you will have many trials and sorrows. But take heart, because I have overcome the world."

Philippians 4:6-7 (NLT)

"Don't worry about anything; instead, pray about everything. Tell God what you need, and thank him for all he has done. Then you will experience God's peace, which exceeds anything we can understand. His peace will guard your hearts and minds as you live in Christ Jesus."