

# Wet Water Walkers

## Freedom

Intro: *We believe the next few weeks can be a defining season of your life. We will learn about God's love, grace, forgiveness, and mercy- things that will enable you to overcome guilt, shame, worry, fear, anxiety, and anger. You'll learn more about your identity and authority in Christ and live free from the things that keep you from God's best.*

### **Galatians 5:1 (NIV)**

*It is for freedom that Christ has set us free. Stand firm, then, and do not let yourselves be burdened again by a yoke of slavery.*

**Freedom is not a destination that we arrive at; it's an adventure that we embark on.**

Freedom Goals Card: Check off areas you believe the Holy Spirit wants to bring freedom in these 8 weeks.

Freedom Event: March 25<sup>th</sup>

**God's language is a language of freedom.**

### **Luke 4:18 (NIV)**

*<sup>18</sup> "The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to set the oppressed free,*

God's first words to humanity...

### **Genesis 2:16 (NIV)**

*<sup>16</sup> And the Lord God commanded the man, "You are free to eat from any tree in the garden;*

**Every adventure begins with a step!**

### **Matthew 14:22-27 (NIV)**

*22 Immediately Jesus made the disciples get into the boat and go on ahead of him to the other side, while he dismissed the crowd. <sup>23</sup> After he had dismissed them, he went up on a mountainside by himself to pray. Later that night, he was there alone, <sup>24</sup> and the boat was already a considerable distance from land, buffeted by the waves because the wind was against it. <sup>25</sup> Shortly before dawn Jesus went out to them, walking on the lake. <sup>26</sup> When the disciples saw him walking on the lake, they were terrified. "It's a ghost," they said, and cried out in fear. But Jesus immediately said to them: "Take courage! It is I. Don't be afraid."*

- The disciples set out on the lake and should have taken a few hours, but it was much longer. Jesus made them get in the boat, knowing a storm would come.
- Why? It's when we go through the storm that we learn to trust God more than ever.

### **The Good (God) in the Storm:**

- When Jesus called them, He said "I will make you fishers of men." Developing faith...with God, today's struggle is tomorrow's strength.

***We just want to get through it, but God wants us to grow through it.***

- Every time we see the disciples in trouble, God used it to train them.
- Remember another storm Jesus was sleeping in the boat- They learned the wind and waves obey Him in the storm. They would never have learned that if they didn't go through the storm.

*What is the treasure in the storm- the revelation, the character God, the goodness of God?*

- This requires we change our focus from what God is doing for me to what God is doing in me.

*and the boat was already a considerable distance from land, buffeted by the waves because the wind was against it.*

- Storms reveal where we find comfort and security, God or otherwise.
- The places that we find comfort and security in that are not Him are dangerous, not safe. Notice "the boat" was buffeted by the waves. The storms of life will challenge our places of comfort and security.
- Jesus sent them in the waves to reveal Himself, not to hide Himself. Don't let the presence of a storm cause you doubt the presence of God.
- The whole time, Jesus could see them from the shore. He sees you and knows where you are. You are not missing, you are found.

*When the disciples saw him walking on the lake, they were terrified. "It's a ghost," they said, and cried out in fear. But Jesus immediately said to them: "Take courage! It is I. Don't be afraid."*

- Our place of desperation can be a place of revelation.
- He went to them; not like they would have thought. Walking on water! This was a new revelation to them. He may come to you in a way you aren't expecting but He's coming, and He wants to reveal Himself in a fresh way.
- The most common command: Do not be afraid. 366 "Fear Nots" in the Bible. Why? It's not one of the 7 deadliest sins. BECAUSE:

***If you listen to fear, you will never step out in faith.***

- It will keep you from being who God has called you to be. It will keep you bound when you are supposed to be living free. It will keep you a slave when you're a son/daughter.

**2 Timothy 1:7 (NKJV)** *For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind.*

- Any time you step out in faith to do something God has called you to do just expect a spirit of fear to try to talk you out of it. "Nobody in your family has ever done that." "What are you thinking?" "Who do you think you are?" "You were handed everything you have." "You're going to SINK, in your marriage, finances...." Don't Listen!!
- Listen to God: "You are chosen, equipped, called, you're my son/daughter."

*"Take courage! It is I..."*

- "Take Courage, I AM" - Greek translation. Notice when they heard His voice, they recognized Him.
- Same declaration God gave Moses at the burning bush. "Who will I say sent me..."
- Jesus is declaring "I AM" with you. "I AM the great I AM" "I AM the First and the last" "I AM the same yesterday, today, and forever." "I AM your help."
- The very thing that they feared the most, Jesus came walking ON TOP of it. It wasn't a circus act. It was a power play. The Great I AM declaring His Freedom over all that we fear!

### 3 Responses to Freedom

#### Get Up!

**Verses 28-29** <sup>28</sup> *"Lord, if it's you," Peter replied, "tell me to come to you on the water."*

<sup>29</sup> *"Come," he said. Then Peter got down out of the boat, walked on the water and came toward Jesus.*

- First: Jesus called him out. Sometimes we step out do something that Jesus never called us to. Instead of faith, we step out in fear, in pride, ambition, something to prove to ourselves or others. God is calling us into greater freedom, let's not try to do it without Him.
- Object Lesson: Leave the life preserver in the boat!
  - o Our back up plan, you know, just in case Jesus doesn't work out
  - o "It just doesn't make sense to get in the water without a personal flotation device"
  - o I'm going to test the water when we are really testing God
  - o "But I don't know how to swim." That's okay, we aren't going swimming!
  - o Comfortable floating? False sense of security like the boat. We'll at least I'm not drowning. You were not made to float; you were made to stand!
  - o Nature Preserves: our life preservers make us think we are protecting ourselves from harm but when we are really keeping God out.

- Comparison “Well, at least I’m not in the boat.”

*Psalm 121:7 (NKJV) The Lord shall preserve you from all evil; He shall preserve your soul.*

- We have one “Life Preserver” his name is Jesus!!

### **Freedom is a Choice**

*Deuteronomy 30:19 (NIV) I have set before you life and death, blessings; and curses. Now choose life.*

- Free to get out of the boat! Free to trust Jesus like never before.
- Peter’s ears heard the voice of Jesus, and his eyes were set on Jesus!
- He took a step out of the boat of comfort and familiarity into freedom...he got wet, but He got free!
  
- We know what happens next. But let’s celebrate...bro just walked on water. They could have all been doing the church clap on the water but 11 stayed in the boat.
- If we are afraid of getting wet, we’ll never walk on water. “I’d rather be a wet water walker than a dry boat sitter.”
- Don’t miss the freedom that God wants to lead you into this year because of fear. the real failure would have been if he never took a step
- Choosing freedom every day means we are consistently walking towards Jesus!

### **Look Up!**

#### **Freedom is a Person**

*Verses 30-31a <sup>30</sup> But when he saw the wind, he was afraid and, beginning to sink, cried out, “Lord, save me!” <sup>31</sup> Immediately Jesus reached out his hand and caught him.*

- Peter cried out and immediately and Jesus picked Him up. Stop waiting until you are underwater to cry out! And don’t cry out to the boat, cry out to the Savior!
- There’s only one thing that changed from when Peter walked on the waves and when he sank. The waves were there, Jesus was there. What changed? Where Peter was looking!
- Let’s keep our eyes focused on Jesus. It is for freedom that Christ has set us free. I don’t know how He is going to do it or what He is going to do but He is the Great I AM, and He will do it!

*Verse 31b “You of little faith,” he said, “why did you doubt?”*

- Jesus wasn’t saying that Peter didn’t have faith in Him. Most of the time we don’t doubt if Jesus can be free. We doubt ourselves.... the Greater One inside of us.
- When Peter looked at the waves, he doubted himself. That he could walk in the freedom that Jesus called him to.
- Even though He was out on the water, something was holding him to the boat.

**What are you tethered to?** For centuries, sailors and fishermen will tether themselves to their ships/boats in high winds and seas. The tether was made of rope or cable, and the idea was to keep you secured to the ship. The only time you ever felt it was if you began to sink. This was true for Peter and it's true for us.

- The rope: What thoughts and feelings keep you looking at the waves and the boat? These are strongholds: these are lies the enemy plants into your mind that are contrary to the Word of God.
  - o Unforgiveness, pride, shame, insecurity, money, success, habitual sin, fear...
- Beware of the trap of self-awareness. If you become self-aware without being God-aware, get ready to sink. But when you combine a healthy sense of self-awareness with God awareness, get ready to live free and walk on water!

**Who are you tethered to?** Jesus sets the captives free but how. Jesus didn't free us to do whatever we want. That's not free, that's lose. He doesn't just cut what we are tethered to, He joins us to Himself. Peter looked up and was tethered to Jesus.

**1 Corinthians 6:17 (VOICE)** *But when you are joined with the Lord, you become one spirit with Him.*

- Object Lesson: use the rope to show being tethered to Jesus
- Free from and free to: Now I'm tethered to the Way, the Truth, and the Life, to the person of Freedom, Joy, Peace, Holiness, Forgiveness.

### **Don't Give Up!**

#### **Freedom is a journey**

- You might get wet as you learn to live free, but don't swim back to the boat.
- He doesn't call us out of the boat in faith, only to sink in fear.
- Immediately Jesus reached out his hand and caught him Why did Jesus help Peter stand on the water again before getting back into the boat? Because in life, we sink sometimes and but if we cry out to Jesus we can learn to stand. Just stand back up.

**Galatians 6:9 (AMP)** *Let us not grow weary or become discouraged in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap, if we do not give in.*

- I wonder what breakthroughs were just around the bend, but we gave up and swam back to the boat. (Cortez burned the ships, Elisha burned the plows)

**Philippians 4:12 (NIV)** *Not that I have already obtained all this, or have already arrived at my goal, but I press on to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus took hold of me.*

#### **Freedom is a story**

- Focus of the bigger thing God is doing is inside us, not around us. He calls us into the waves to show us that where He walks, we can walk.

*Verse 32-35 And when they climbed into the boat, the wind died down. <sup>33</sup> Then those who were in the boat worshiped him, saying, "Truly you are the Son of God." <sup>34</sup> When they had crossed over, they landed at Gennesaret. <sup>35</sup> And when the men of that place recognized Jesus, they sent word to all the surrounding country. People brought all their sick to him <sup>36</sup> and begged him to let the sick just touch the edge of his cloak, and all who touched it were healed.*

- When Jesus got in the boat the wind stopped. He wants to walk us into freedom. They experienced new levels of freedom on their way to free others.
- Notice Jesus walked Peter back boat that He called him from. But Peter was different. No more life preserver or tether. Those old places of bondage are now a Place of Freedom!
- Notice the disciples in the boat worshiped Jesus instead of praising Peter. Our Places of Freedom are about Him.
- Then, they took the boat to Bethsaida (Peter's hometown), but the "storm" (**the discovering of freedom**) rerouted them to Gennesaret: Rabbis called this region *the Garden of God, a fruitful place for crops, a treasure. "All who touched Him, were healed.)*
- You thought you were just going to a place you had been, but God has greater in mind. There is more!
- God will use our freedom story to reach places we could never reach otherwise. Freedom to me and through me! Who will be free because they standing next to me?

### **Walk on Water:**

- Commit to the next 8 weeks
- Register for a GROW Nights or a connect group.
- Come to NEXT
- Get Baptized.
- Make Jesus your Lord.