

Finding God's Presence When You Feel His Absence

Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall trouble or hardship or persecution or famine or nakedness or danger or sword? ... No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. (Romans 8:35, 37)

Session 3: When Storms Threaten to Sink Us

Matthew 14:22-33 (Mark 6:45-52; John 6:16-21)

1. The greater danger of a storm isn't the external risk it poses but the internal. What is happening within us is more life-changing than what is happening to us because what is happening within determines who we'll be when we emerge from the storm.
2. *Mark 6:45-52* also relates the story of Jesus walking on water and adds the detail that he was about to pass by the terrified disciples (6:48). Why?
3. Jesus reassured his followers with the words: *Take courage! It is I. Don't be afraid (Matthew 14:27)*. A literal translation of *It is I* is _____ from *Exodus 3:14*.
4. Rather than simply disclosing his _____, Jesus declared his _____.

5. John Ortberg: “If you want to walk on water, you’ve got to get out of the boat. If you want to experience the power of God in your life, you’ve got to take a step of faith. It involves risky obedience.”

6. To stand rather than sink in a storm:

- _____ the storm to be God’s invitation.
- _____ fear’s legitimacy and supremacy.
- _____ to God.

7. Safety and security come from the _____ of Jesus, not the _____ of storms.

Discussion Questions

1. What spiritual truths in this story especially speak to you?
2. Despite the miracles they’d seen and the teaching they’d heard, Jesus’ disciples worshiped him for the first time after he and Peter climbed into the boat. What was different?
3. Are you more like the disciples in the boat watching Peter’s boldness or like Peter? What step of faith is God encouraging you to take?
4. Where do you turn for safety and security when you face storms? How can the challenges of life enable you to grow in faith?