

3. **Trust God to grow you and use your story.**
Do you still have no faith?

When the apostles returned [proclaiming the kingdom of God and healing the sick (9:2)], [and before they would be sent out again with the 72] they reported to Jesus what they had done. Then he took them with him and they withdrew by themselves to a town called Bethsaida, ¹¹ but the crowds learned about it and followed him. He welcomed them and spoke to them about the kingdom of God, and healed those who needed healing. ¹² Late in the afternoon the Twelve came to him and said, "Send the crowd away so they can go to the surrounding villages and countryside and find food and lodging, because we are in a remote place here." ¹³ He replied, "You give them something to eat." They answered, "We have only five loaves of bread and two fish— unless we go and buy food for all this crowd." ¹⁴ (About five thousand men were there.) But he said to his disciples, "Have them sit down in groups of about fifty each." ¹⁵ The disciples did so, and everyone sat down. ¹⁶ Taking the five loaves and the two fish and looking up to heaven, he gave thanks and broke them. Then he gave them to the disciples to distribute to the people. ¹⁷ They all ate and were satisfied, and the disciples picked up twelve basketfuls of broken pieces that were left over. **Luke 9:10–17 (NIV)**

For this reason I remind you to fan into flame the gift of God, which is in you through the laying on of my hands. For the Spirit God gave us does not make us timid, but gives us power, love and self-discipline.

2 Timothy 1:6–7 (NIV)

As you are sent to serve to demonstrate the kingdom of God in word and action...

- God is always present
- God is always at work
- God is always making things new

You are here so it is well
Even when my eyes can't see
I will trust the voice that speaks
Peace, peace
Over me Peace
Peace over me

—*Peace Be Still*, Lauren Daigle

THE INCREDIBLE STORY OF GOD'S AMAZING LOVE

ACT 3: THE FULFILLMENT

FAITH AND FEAR

Mark 4:36–41 (NIV)

³⁶ Leaving the crowd behind, they took [Jesus] along, just as he was, in the boat. There were also other boats with him. ³⁷ A furious squall came up, and the waves broke over the boat, so that it was nearly swamped. ³⁸ Jesus was in the stern, sleeping on a cushion. The disciples woke him and said to him, "Teacher, don't you care if we drown?" ³⁹ He got up, rebuked the wind and said to the waves, "Quiet! Be still!" Then the wind died down and it was completely calm. ⁴⁰ He said to his disciples, "Why are you so afraid? Do you still have no faith?" ⁴¹ They were terrified and asked each other, "Who is this? Even the wind and the waves obey him!"

1. **Our questions tell us about our fear.**

Don't you care if we drown?

Oh, I know that I can make it, I know that I can stand. No matter what may come my way, Jesus, my life (my life is in your hands).

—*My Life is in Your Hands*, Kirk Franklin

2. **Fear leads to faith.**

They were terrified...Even the wind and the waves obey him!

ephobethesan phobon megan = They were afraid with mega-fear.

(continued on the back page)

SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS—WEEK OF FEBRUARY 16, 2020 THE FULFILLMENT—FAITH AND FEAR

CONNECT

- Share where you are serving next week for CSD. What are you looking forward to doing?
- What is your typical response when you are in a frightening situation and feel real fear?

SPIRITUAL PRACTICE: Visio Divina

Visio Divina is the practice of meditating on God's truth using visual arts (similar to Lectio Divina, which is the practice of meditating on God's truth by listening and reflecting on scripture).

Prepare: Ask God to guide and direct your impressions and thoughts as you look at the painting by Ludolf Backhuysen: Christ in the Storm on the Sea of Galilee (see bulletin). Let your mind be open to whatever God may reveal to you.

Listen: Read Mark 4:36-41 aloud slowly and prayerfully. As you listen to the scripture, imagine you are in the boat with Jesus. Picture the enormous waves that threaten to sink your boat, tossing you up and down, with the freezing water hitting your face and hands.

Art Reflection: As you meditate on the painting in light of this passage, journal your responses.

- What stands out to you? What do you notice?
- What do you feel when you see Jesus sleeping in the midst of the storm (i.e., anger, abandonment, desire to fix, depression, barely hanging on, sick, lost, taking control, working hard, yelling, worshipping)?
- Seeing Jesus asleep, what question would you ask him? What does that tell you about your fears?

Personal Reflection: Identify your own storm and the fears you feel in the midst of your circumstance. Imagine looking at Jesus in the boat with you. Write your own honest request and response to Jesus:

- God, I don't understand...
- God, please fix...
- God, I trust you with my future even if...
- Listen. What do you think God wants you to know?

Share Together

- What did you discover as you reflected on the scripture and the painting?

SCRIPTURE REFLECTION: Questions to stimulate discussion

- Read Mark 4:36-41 aloud. What stood out to you from this week's passage or message?
- What does the disciples' fear reveal about their understanding of Jesus? What impact would that have on their ability to follow Jesus in the future?
- How do you feel when it looks like Jesus is sleeping and ignoring or unaware of the situation that has "swamped" you and threatens to drown you? How might you respond if you were in the boat with the disciples?
- What do you learn about the mystery of God from this passage?
- Why are the disciples still "terrified" even after Jesus calms the storm?
- Has a trial you've endured ever made you stronger? How have your storms prepared you to follow Jesus? How have your trials prepared you to help others?
- Do you feel that Jesus should keep you from going through the storms of life? Why or why not?
- In what areas of your life are you tempted to respond with fear rather than faith? What would help you grow in your ability to trust God in the future?
- What role does the Holy Spirit play in moving you from fear to faith?
- How does this passage reflect the truth that God is always present, God is always at work, and God is always making things new? Can you see any evidence of this in your current circumstance? Could it help you move from fear to faith?

PRAYER and BENEDICTION: Share current joys, hopes, or challenges

Pray for one another: How can you help one another trust in God, even in our frightening storms?

Closing Benediction: (Timothy 1:6-7 and Psalm 100:5)

Let us fan into flame the gift of God...for the Spirit God gave us does not make us timid, but gives us power, love, and self-discipline. For the Lord is good and his love endures forever; his faithfulness continues through all generations. Amen.

DAILY PRACTICE: Continue to spend time with God daily in scripture, prayer, and silence (see Reading Plan or APP).