



## READ MARK 6:45-56

### Pursue

- Jesus sends the disciples across the sea and dismisses the crowds around Him. He is praying alone on land when He sees the disciples struggling with the wind against them at sea. The disciples struggling against the wind is a picture of suffering that reminds us that things don't go well when His disciples are separated from Jesus. This is a powerful reminder for us. But Jesus sees the suffering of the disciples and responds.
  - How does knowing that Jesus sees and responds to the suffering of His people encourage your faith? Where do you need to remember this truth?
- Jesus walks out on the tumultuous sea, enters their suffering, and does not immediately calm the storm but intends to "pass by them." Read Exodus 33:19 and 1 Kings 19:11.
  - What do these verses reveal about what "pass[ing] them by" could mean?
  - Why do you think Jesus wants to "pass by them?"
- The disciples are terrified and believe Jesus to be a ghost, but He responds, "Take heart; it is I. Do not be afraid." The text "It is I" can also be translated as "I Am." Jesus reminds them of His true identity as God in two ways, with His words and with His actions as he enters the boat and the winds cease. The text makes clear the reason for the disciple's fear. They continue to miss the true identity of Jesus.
  - In what ways would believing in Jesus' true identity of God relieve the fear of the disciples?
  - In what ways do you need to be reminded of these same truths?

### Practice

- **ACTS Prayer** - The disciples continue to miss the true identity of Jesus. But the text goes further, it states that they continue to miss or doubt the true identity of Jesus because of their hardness of heart. What the disciples most struggle with is a heart issue, not simply a thought issue. Problems of the heart are God's work. Empowered by the Holy Spirit, we surrender to Him, resist temptation, and repent of our unbelief. It is God alone who can truly change the hearts of people.
  - **BREAK INTO PAIRS OR SMALLER GROUPS** (2-3 ppl.) Using the ACTS method, spend time praying for each other.
    - **Adoration** - Praise God for who He is & how He works. Specifically, praise Him in light of the scripture we read today. (Ex. That He is full of glory, that He is in control, that He is compassionate, that He is attentive to His people, that He is patient with His people, that He is faithful to save, that He will sanctify His people, etc.)
    - **Confession** - Confess areas of your heart that might be hardening or already hardened towards Him. Ways in which you are not trusting in who He is, His character, but trusting in yourself, others, or the world.
    - **Thanksgiving** - Thank God for His salvation and thank Him for sanctification. If you have been saved by Him, thank Him specifically for your salvation & sanctification. That He has given you a new heart, that He, by His Spirit, continues to sanctify and keep your heart soft to His word, etc.
    - **Supplication** - Ask God for His continued work in your life. If you confessed areas of hardness to Him, ask for the Spirit's help in those areas, and ask for repentance and faith in His forgiveness in Christ. If you are facing suffering or trial, like the disciples, ask the Spirit to help you know, love, and trust Jesus more deeply.

## **Proclaim**

- At the beginning of this series, we encouraged people to choose one person this semester that they would pray for and share with. Encourage group members in this relationship. What is something you learned, was convicted of, or encouraged by that you will share this week with that person who doesn't have faith in Jesus?