



# CRAZY FAITH

THE KIND OF FAITH THAT MOVES MOUNTAINS



*Small Group Discussion Guide*



## PREPARATION

### STUDY

Spend the week studying Matthew 14:22-32. Consult the commentary provided and any additional study tools to enhance your preparation.

### PRAY

Pray for our pastors and this week's message, the upcoming group time, your group members, and their openness to God's Word.

### LANDING POINT

When you're in the storm, look to Jesus and follow His Word.



## GROUP DISCUSSION

❑ **CONFIDENTIALITY** | What's said in the group stays in the group.

❑ **NO CROSS-TALK** | Be considerate of others as they share. Refrain from side conversations and texting during group time.

❑ **NO FIXING** | We are not in the group to fix each other. Jesus does that part.

❑ **SHARING** | Be sensitive to the amount of time you share. Don't talk too much or too little. Every person brings something valuable to the group.



## INTRODUCTION

*As your group time begins, use this section to introduce the topic of discussion.*

# EXPERIENCING LIFE'S STORMS

The thing about storms is they often arrive unexpectedly. A storm can make us feel afraid, powerless, and helpless. Life is filled with its share of storms. Whether it's a lost job, financial burdens, illness, a conflict with someone, or a tragic loss, we all experience life's storms at one time or another. This week's story shows us that those storms don't surprise Jesus. God brings storms into our lives to teach us that He is with us in the storm and will bring us through the storm if we have faith.

**Q:** *What's one storm you've encountered recently and what did you learn from it?*



## DEEPER DIVE

*Select 2–3 questions to discuss as a group.*

# FAITH AND FEAR AT SEA

Already we've seen Jesus heal a leper and a paralyzed servant; but this week, we see how Jesus showed His disciples that He can even command the winds and waves. His authority extends to all creation, which should give us the crazy faith to believe and not fear when life's storms come crashing in on us. Let's take a look at this dramatic event and discuss it.

**Q:** *Have a volunteer read Matthew 14:22-32. Imagine yourself as Peter and share what kind of emotions you would have felt.*

**Q:** *In what ways did Peter demonstrate both faith and fear?*

Q: Share about a time when Jesus comforted and brought you through a difficult situation.



## REFLECTION AND NEXT STEPS

# ENCOURAGED TO BELIEVE

Have you ever found yourself in a situation like the disciples? Maybe not literally, but maybe you've experienced one of life's storms and you had to do everything to stay afloat and survive. This week's story is meant to encourage us. How? When you find yourself in the storm, you can have faith in three essential truths:<sup>1</sup>

- *Jesus brought me here.* Not all storms come because of our disobedience. Sometimes they come because of our obedience. The disciples were obedient to Jesus and the storm still came. Often God uses storms to grow our faith so that we rely on Him and His care for us.
- *Jesus will come to me.* Jesus was testing His disciples' faith by waiting until the ship was far from land before coming to them. Being in the storm can make us feel abandoned by God. "Why did you allow this to happen to me?" "Where are you?" The truth is, Jesus is always with us in the storm. The storm can bring you closer to Him when you look to Him in the midst of it.
- *Jesus will see me through.* Despite Peter's fear and doubt, Jesus made sure that he and the rest of the disciples made it safely through the storm. Like Peter, we may fail along the way in life. We may have fears and doubts, but we can have hope and faith in Jesus who promises to see us through the storm. Fear may see only the storm, but faith sees Jesus who rules over the storm.

Q: In what ways can life's storms grow your faith?

Q: What are some practical ways to follow Jesus's Word in your day-to-day life?

Q: How would you respond to life's storms differently if you believed that Jesus both sends and controls those storms?

Q: *How can the group be praying for you this week?*



## COMMENTARY

**TIMING OF THE EVENT** “The Roman military divided the night into four watches of three hours each, from 6:00 p.m. until 6:00 a.m. The fourth watch would have been between 3:00 and 6:00 a.m., which means the disciples had been battling the storm for over nine hours (cf. “by this time,” v. 24).”<sup>2</sup>

**WAS IT A GHOST?** “Many Jews believed that after a person died, the person’s ghost inhabited areas nearby. This was apparently the only way the disciples could explain Jesus appearing on top of the water.”<sup>3</sup>

**I AM** “It is I reads, more literally, I am. This is not bad grammar but a conscious echo of the divine name of Yahweh, as in Exod. 3:14. Though still somewhat veiled, this is perhaps Jesus’s clearest self-revelation of his divinity to date.”<sup>4</sup>

### ENDNOTES:

1. List adapted from Warren W. Wiersbe, *The Bible Exposition Commentary*, vol. 1 (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1996), 51–53.
2. Crossway Bibles, *The ESV Study Bible* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles, 2008), 1852.
3. D. A. Carson, “The Gospels and Acts,” in *NIV Biblical Theology Study Bible*, ed. D. A. Carson (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2018), 1729.
4. Craig Blomberg, *Matthew*, vol. 22, *The New American Commentary* (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1992), 235.