

**LIFEGROUP STUDY**  
**FOLLOW ME: INTO THE STORM**  
**March 14, 2021**

**LEADER NOTES**

**OVERVIEW**

Welcome back to our LifeGroup study, Follow Me. In Mark 4:35-41 Jesus says, "Follow Me", and then leads his disciples right into a storm. It's a great reminder that following him does not prevent the storms of life. But we don't have to be afraid. We can learn to trust him even through storms, suffering and persecution. The key is in answering the question, "Who is this man that commands the winds and waves?" When we answer, "He is God with us", we can have peace in the storm.

**ICEBREAKER** That Was a Doozy!

One of my favourite experiences is standing on the shores of Lake Huron watching a storm come in. The ominous gathering of black clouds, the sudden onslaught of wind and the lightening flashing across the vast sky is a sight to behold! **What "doozy" of a storm have you experienced? What impressions has that storm left in your memory?** Share your story with your group!

**STUDY**

You cannot, of your own free will, follow someone you do not trust. This is also true of our relationship with Jesus. When he calls on us to "Follow Me" He is inviting us to turn over the leadership of our lives to him. He is calling on us to let Him be our life-guide. To say "No" to him is to say, "I do not believe in you as someone worthy to be my life-leader". To say "yes" to him is to say, "I am putting my trust and faith in your leadership over my life." Our response to his call is a statement of our faith in Jesus.

- 1. What does our faith in Jesus look like when we choose to follow Him? In other words, what actions demonstrate that I have faith in Him as my Life Leader?**

**LEADER NOTES:** A key action that demonstrates my faith in Jesus is trusting in Him. This trust gets lived out in my choice to believe that what God has revealed about Himself in the Bible is true. I believe He is good, that He loves me, that He is with me. I believe He is worthy of my worship and praise. Those beliefs lead to the actions of obedience to His teachings. In faith, I live a life of following Jesus, reordering my life to live as He did, to love as He loved, to serve others as He served.

- 2. What do you think of the following two statements?**

- I will never be any closer to, any more intimate with, any more alive in my relationship with Jesus than the degree to which I trust in, believe in, put my faith in Jesus.
- If you are not close to Jesus it is a "faith in Jesus" issue.

LEADER NOTE: My faith in Jesus is essential to my relationship with Him. I can grow my faith in Jesus by spending time with Him, reading His Word, praying, learning about His teachings and living them out in my life in community with other followers of Jesus. Faith is choosing to believe that what the Bible teaches about Jesus is true. At times we may not *feel* close to Jesus. Our relationship with Him is not based on our feelings but on our faith. Our faith is based on the facts we have in Scripture about who Jesus is. If you have put your faith and trust in Jesus, you are close to Jesus, period. If you have not put your faith in Him, you cannot be close to Him. Faith is the key.

**3. How do the following verses help us understand what faith is?**

*Now faith is the certainty of things hoped for, a proof of things not seen.* Hebrews 11:1 NASB

LEADER NOTE: Faith is acting on what God has revealed about his will and character.

*Without faith no one can please God. Anyone who comes to God must believe that he is real and that he rewards those who truly want to find him.* Hebrews 11:6 (NCV)

LEADER NOTE: There are two aspects to faith – belief and action. In difficult seasons of life, we can trust God is who He says He is and we can anticipate the fulfillment of His promises.

**4. Create your own definition of faith. How would you define it?**

LEADER NOTE: Encourage your group members to use the two verses above from Hebrews to guide your definition.

On Sunday we did a bit of a FAITH 101 study. We talked about FAITH: THE FACTS. Review the following 7 facts that were shared and help each other remember them.

#1 Everybody's Doin' It

#2 Faith is Evidenced in Our Actions

#3 God Demands It

#4 It's More About the "Where" Than it is About the "How Much"

#5 It Comes With Doubts

#6 Acting in Faith Affirms that Faith

#7 God Wants to Help Us Grow in Our Faith

**5. Are there other facts about faith that you can think of that are not on the list?**

**Which of the 7 facts about faith do you find most helpful?**

**Which of the 7 do you most need in your life to help you do a better job of following Jesus**

READ: Mark 4:35-41

Storms can serve as an analogy of the difficulties that come into our lives. These difficulties can challenge our beliefs about God and our expectations of how He will work. For example, when storms come we may think it's because we've done something wrong. We may believe that if we are faithfully following God, we'll be protected from all storms. Neither of these presumptions are necessarily true.

#### **6. Why is it important to understand how God can use storms in our life?**

LEADER NOTE: It is important to understand how God can use storms so that when they happen, we can be on the lookout for Him to work and ready to cooperate with whatever He wants to do. Sometimes we will see God at work right while we're in the storm. Sometimes, after the storm is over, we'll look back and understand how He is used it in our lives. Sometimes we'll never know how He was at work in our storms until we are with Him in heaven.

#### **7. Read vs. 38 again. Why is it a terrible question?**

LEADER NOTE: This is a terrible question because it calls Jesus' character into question. It assumes that because He is not doing what we think He should be doing in that moment, we cannot trust Him and He does not care. We must be careful not to ask the same questions – "God, don't You care what's happening to me?" "Don't you see what I'm going through?" God knows and God cares. His ways and timing are often different than ours but His plan and His purpose for your life will prevail.

In Mark 4:40, after Jesus stills the storm, he says to the disciples, "*Why are you afraid? Do you still have no faith?*" In Luke's account in 8:25 Jesus says, "*Where is your faith?*", he asked his disciples. Having three accounts (Matthew, Mark and Luke) of the same event can give us a fuller picture of what took place and what it was that Jesus said. It is likely that Jesus asked all three questions and Mark records two of them and Luke one.

#### **8. Why would Jesus ask them these questions? What is He hoping they would learn?**

LEADER NOTE: Jesus asked them these questions to grow their faith in Him. They had heard Him teach and seen Him perform miracles. They had just seen His authority over the wind and the waves, yet they still lacked faith. Jesus wanted to grow their faith in who He is - the Son of God. Jesus' identity is a key theme Mark builds on throughout his Gospel. (see Mark 1:1)

#### **9. In verse 41, we read the disciples are "absolutely terrified". There is bad fear and there is good fear. How has bad fear impacted your life this past year? How can good fear grow our faith in Jesus?**

LEADER NOTE: Bad fear happens when we fix our eyes on the storm, rather than on Jesus. Good fear looks up to God as awesome and all powerful. It's a fear that comes from our realization that we are accountable to this awesome God who rules the wind and the waves and our lives.

**10. Think about the storm you are in right now or one you've been in recently. How can you look to Jesus in your storm?**

### **PRAYER**

Let's pray for our Celebrate Recovery ministry at Creekside.

Please pray as we continue serving our community well as we stay online, and transition back in person. We know the value in both and want to ensure we are doing them as best we can...but not sure we can do both well!

We are seeing an increase in our numbers (yay!) from other parts of Canada (From Newfoundland, Quebec & Alberta). Pray for wisdom in how to proceed locally for those can only join us online.

Pray that those joining us would continue to seek Jesus and his healing power. We are seeing the mental toll this pandemic is having on many. We want to serve them well, understanding what our role is in their life.