

Life Changing Community Group Discussion Questions
week of 7/19/26

Summary

In this sermon, Dr. Bowling explored the dramatic account of Jesus calming the storm on the Sea of Galilee, and used it as a lens to examine how we respond to the storms of life. The disciples, doing exactly what Jesus asked them to do, found themselves in a terrifying situation. Yet Jesus was present with them the entire time, and with a simple command, "Peace, be still," He demonstrated His authority over every force of nature and every circumstance of life. The central truth is clear: we are not immune to storms, but we serve a God who is greater than every storm we face.

Dr. Bowling drew out four key observations: storms are an unavoidable part of life in a fallen world; fear and anxiety grow when we fix our eyes on the storm rather than on Christ; Jesus holds complete authority over every storm; and a fresh vision of Jesus is the greatest cure for unhealthy fear. The disciples moved from panic to awe, discovering that the one in the boat with them was greater than anything they faced. That same Jesus is in the boat with us today, and His invitation remains: look away from the storm and fix your eyes on Him.

Intro Prayer

Heavenly Father, we come before you today as people who know what it feels like to be in the middle of a storm. We ask that as we open your Word and discuss what you have placed on our hearts, you would quiet the noise around us and within us. Give us ears to hear what you want to say to each of us today.

Help us to be honest with one another and open to your Spirit. May this time together draw us closer to you and to each other. In Jesus' name, amen.

Ice Breaker

What is one thing that always helps you feel calm or at peace after a stressful day?

Key Verses

- Mark 4:37
- Mark 4:39
- Mark 4:40
- Philippians 4:6-7
- Isaiah 26:3

Questions

1. Fear and anxiety are described as natural responses to life's storms. What are some of the most common storms people in our community face today, and how do you see those storms affecting people's faith?
2. Dr. Bowling pointed out that the disciples woke Jesus with words that were both a question and an accusation: 'Don't you care that we are going to die?' (Mark 4:38, NIV). Have you ever felt like God did not care about what you were going through? How did you work through that feeling?
3. Dr. Bowling used the image of the moon eclipsing the sun to describe how fear can block out our awareness of God's love and power. Can you think

of a time when a problem or fear seemed to eclipse your view of God?
What helped you regain perspective?

4. Philippians 4:6-7 (NIV) says, 'Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.' What does it look like practically to bring your anxieties to God rather than suppressing them or denying them?
5. Dr. Bowling said, 'Storms reveal what the calm often conceals.' What do you think storms reveal about a person's faith? What has a difficult season revealed about your own faith?
6. After the storm was calmed, the disciples moved from fear of the storm to awe of Jesus. Have you ever experienced a moment where a difficult situation gave you a deeper or clearer understanding of who Jesus is? What did that look like?
7. The sermon closed with the encouragement to look away from the storm and fix your eyes on Jesus. What are some practical habits or spiritual disciplines that help you keep your focus on Christ when life gets overwhelming?

Life Application

This week, identify one specific storm or source of anxiety in your life right now. Each day, take a few minutes to bring that concern to God in prayer, following the pattern in Philippians 4:6-7 (NIV): be specific about your request, and

intentionally include thanksgiving. At the end of the week, reflect on whether shifting your focus toward Christ made any difference in how you experienced that situation. Consider sharing what you noticed with someone in your group.

Key Takeaways

- Storms are an unavoidable part of life. Following Jesus does not insulate us from difficulty. The disciples encountered the storm while doing exactly what Jesus commanded, reminding us that hardship is not always a sign that we are outside God's will.
- Fear and anxiety grow when we fix our eyes on the storm rather than on Christ. Just as the moon can eclipse the sun, fear can block out our awareness of God's love and power, even though God is infinitely greater.
- Jesus holds complete authority over every storm. His command, 'Peace, be still' (Mark 4:39, NIV), brought immediate calm, demonstrating that no circumstance in life is beyond his authority or control.
- Storms reveal what the calm often conceals. Times of testing expose the true condition of our faith and give us the opportunity to grow in trust and dependence on God.
- A fresh vision of Jesus is the greatest cure for unhealthy fear. When we shift our gaze from our problems to the majesty and sovereignty of Christ, fear begins to lose its grip and we discover the peace that passes understanding.

Ending Prayer

Lord Jesus, thank you for the reminder today that you are in the boat with us. We confess that there are times when the storms of life feel overwhelming and we lose sight of your presence and your power. Forgive us for the moments when fear has eclipsed our faith. We bring before you now the storms each person in this room is facing, the ones we have shared and the ones we have kept quiet. Speak your word of peace over each of those situations. Help us to keep our minds fixed on you throughout this week, trusting that you are greater than anything we face. May we leave here today not just informed, but transformed, walking in the peace that only you can give. In your mighty name we pray, amen.