



PREVIEW

Storms of life occur in everyone of our lives. Sometimes, like a radar system, you can sort of feel and see a storm approaching. Other times, a storm will surface out of nowhere. The one constant in both of these situations is Jesus. If He is in the middle of your storm, everything is going to be alright!

PRAISE

Let's talk about storms for a minute. Go around the room and ask these questions and encourage them to share their story.

- Who enjoys watching storms? Why?
- What is the worst storm you have ever been in?
- Has anyone ever been in a storm while on a cruise ship?
- Has anyone ever been in a tornado?

PARABLE

Read Matthew 14:27-31. Let's set the stage for this story for a minute. A few verses earlier, we read about how Jesus fed 5,000+. One everything gets all said and done and the 12 baskets full of leftovers were collected, Jesus had the disciples get in a boat and sent them off to the other side of the lake. Jesus went up to a mountain to pray. So here are the disciples, headed into a storm, without Jesus. Jesus knew where they were headed and what they were getting ready to encounter.

Courage In the *STORM*

PARABLE *(continued)*

So in the middle of the storm, in the middle of the winds tossing the boat back and forth, and Andrew and James seeing fish and chips for a second time (probably), here Jesus shows up walking on the water. The disciples thought he was a ghost! Jesus tells his disciples not to be afraid. Peter, being Peter, calls out to Jesus and says, "If it really is you, call me out on the water." (Anyone else feel like singing Oceans right now?)

PRESENT

So Jesus calls Peter on to the water, the great unknown, where feet may fail. Okay, I'm done. Peter got out of the boat, began to make his way towards Jesus, but then he looked elsewhere. He saw the wind and the waves and likely had a more logical moment, "Wait . . . how is this possible? Humans don't walk on water. What if the waves are too strong? What if this doesn't last? What if I sink? What if . . ." Peter! Really?! What is your problem?! You are literally living a miracle. You are literally face to face with Jesus with his promise to walk on water still ringing in your ears! How could you doubt?!

PRACTICE

But Peter isn't alone, is he? You might not have walked on water before, but surely those questions have plagued your mind:

What if I drown in my homework?

What if I don't pass this test?

What if my dad loses his job?

What if I don't get accepted into college?

What if grandma's cancer doesn't get better?

What if . . .?

Courage In the *STORM*

PRACTICE *(continued)*

From the very beginning in the Garden of Eden, Satan has been tempting people in the same way. He first sparked doubt in Adam and Eve by asking, "Did God really say?" Suddenly doubts flooded their minds, wondering if God was holding back on them or if there was something better they were missing. So they ate the fruit because they doubted God's love and God's words.

Satan did the same with Peter. Peter doubted Jesus' words that clearly told him to come and walk on the water, and he doubted Jesus' love that he would keep him safe. And Satan still does the same today. He wants nothing more than for you to doubt Jesus' words to you and love for you today.

Look at the blood-stained cross. Look at the empty tomb. They are all the proof you would ever need. God's love for you is boundless and endless. God's promises never fail. God's words are always true. Trust the God who so loved the world that he sent his Son for you. Jesus reached out his hand to grab Peter when he was sinking in doubt, and he does the same for you. Listen to your Savior and trust him always as he says, "Take courage! It is I. Don't be afraid." We may not know what tomorrow holds, but we know Who holds tomorrow!

PRAY

Jesus, so often doubts fill my mind. I can hardly help it. My sinful heart is so broken and it's so hard to trust. But I know that you've never failed me. I know that your words are always true. I know that you love me. Give me a confident and courageous faith that always trusts, even when I'm sinking. Amen.

PLUS

Go around the room and conclude today's P7 Club meeting by asking members how they can keep their faith strong in the middle of their storms? Encourage them to keep their eyes and their focus fixed on Jesus.