

February 5, 2023

Pastor Joe Hess

Study Guide

Love Lives Here



God's Call on Ordinary People to do Extraordinary Things – Part IV

Mark 4:35-41

Jesus Calms the Storm

35 That day when evening came, he said to his disciples, **"Let us go over to the other side."** 36 Leaving the crowd behind, they took him along, just as he was, in the boat. There were also other boats with him. 37 A furious squall came up, and the waves broke over the boat, so that it was nearly swamped. 38 Jesus was in the stern, sleeping on a cushion. The disciples woke him and said to him, "Teacher, don't you care if we drown?" 39 He got up, rebuked the wind and said to the waves, **"Quiet! Be still!"** Then the wind died down and it was completely calm. 40 He said to his disciples, **"Why are you so afraid? Do you still have no faith?"** 41 They were terrified and asked each other, "Who is this? Even the wind and the waves obey him!"

Ice Breaker Questions:

Do you have a favorite weather forecaster? Why?

Do you like storms? Why?

Can you share a storm that you were in that frightened you?:

Thoughts & Questions to Fuss With:

How do you and I react to danger and stress?

Joe shares the 4 questions in the gospel plus the one: "Whose Idea was this anyway?"
When we are in the midst of struggles and storms – have you ever shared that thought – "Who's to blame for this?"

When the unexpected storm in the gospel story hits – the disciples think they're going to drown. They cry out to Jesus, not to rescue them or calm the storm – they cry out for Jesus to help bail. Their question to him is, "Teacher, don't you care.....?"

Is that our question to God when our "storms" "hit"?

Joe shares that struggle and storms are part of life. Are you in a storm?

What stormy times in your life were scariest?

From Jesus, “In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world.” (John 16:33). Fuss with this text as honestly as you can. How does it help or how does it not?

Joe shares how first-hand accounts give us authority (Schmikah) to speak. We’ve talked about this before – but in the context of the “storms in our lives” - can you share some first-hand accounts that have given you authority to speak?

Many of us have seen the video tape of the young black man – Tyre Nichols – beaten by Memphis City policemen on January 7th after being pulled over for a traffic violation. We learned he died three days later from the beating. If we had been there (first-hand account), what would your reaction have been?

How do you think you would share the story differently if you had been there?

Do you think you would have tried to stop it?

How have storms in your life softened your heart?

How have storms in your life hardened your souls?

Joe shares the difference between being “involved” and being “committed”. Can you share something in your life that you were involved in and then were moved to being committed?

Jesus knew the storm in the gospel story was coming – yet he set out at night right into it.

Do you think God allows storms in our lives to happen?

What do the storms in our lives force us to do?

At the end of Joe’s message – he shares about “bids for connection.” He shares that throughout our lives we experience and give to each other “bids for connection” – wanting to connect with each other in real ways. He shared that we have 3 ways we can respond or turn toward someone’s bid for connection with us: 1. Toward; 2. Away (neutral); or 3. Against.

God does the same thing towards us – bids for connection. In your life right now – which way are you leaning: Toward? Away (neutral)? Or Against God?

Joe’s challenge – to recognize the bids for connection in our lives (the people we interact with on an everyday basis) and lean into them. Do you see some opportunities this week where you need to lean into someone who is wanting to connect with you?

How is God bidding to connect with you right now?

What’s been your response?