

COWARDLY

A Discussion Guide for Small Groups

THE TEXT

- Mark 4:35-41 (main passage)
- Mark 6:45-52
- Romans 5:1-5

THE TEACHING

Watch the video, "Cowardly"

SMALL GROUP STUDY – TO BE DISCUSSED BEFORE THE VIDEO

- 1) **Read Mark 4:35-41.** What had Jesus' day been like before they got to the boat? Glance back through the preceding verses. What had He been doing? Who was calling for His attention? Verse 36 says, "they took him with them." Literally, the disciples took Him under their care. What does this tell you about them and their relationship with the Lord? The boat they took Jesus in was a larger vessel as opposed to the smaller boats that "were with him." Why is it important to know that this was more than just a little boat? What happens to the boat? To the disciples? To Jesus? Jesus said, "Peace! Be still!" Why do you suppose they were so surprised at this? Have you ever felt a time when you were surprised at something the Lord did in your life?
- 2) **Read Mark 6:45-52.** How does Jesus differ here from in Mark 4? It tells us Jesus saw that they were having trouble (note, John 6:18 tells us that the sea became rough and the wind strong), but He didn't come out until after 3:00AM! Why were they terrified when they saw Him? What happened that encouraged them? What happened to Peter (see Matthew 14:28-31)? Why were they still so astounded? What should they have learned from the loaves (the preceding miracle in Mark 6:42-44)? Why do you suppose Jesus made the Sea of Galilee such a wild place for them? Have you ever found yourself in a similar wild place? What would the Lord have us do in wild places such as these?

- 3) Looking back at Mark 4 where Jesus is in the boat, what does His being tired and sleeping tell you about who He is? What does His command of the wind to cease and the waves “to be muzzled” tell you about who He is? What do these two understandings tell you about our lives in a pandemic or times of upheaval?

SMALL GROUP APPLICATION – TO BE DISCUSSED AFTER THE VIDEO

- 4) George argues that the boat in Mark 4 was a wild place both for the disciples and for Jesus. He refers to the disciples in the Greek as *deilos*, which George suggests means “cowardly.” The word also can mean “a fearful timidity”, which can lead to a fear preventing action or a lack of courage. He suggests that Jesus may be upset with them. What do you think? Why would Jesus permit them to go into a situation where they would fail? How does God teach us through failure? Can we be afraid and not be timid or cowardly? How do you react when afraid?
- 5) Mark says that Jesus was sleeping in the stern. Was He asleep at the wheel? The disciples even asked Him, “Don’t you care?” Was there ever a point during the storm that was intimidating to Jesus? Why could He sleep despite the storm? If their passion was to be like Jesus, where ought their focus to have been? Are there times in your life you find yourself asking the Lord, “Don’t you care?” Where is our focus in times of peace? Where is it in times of storm? If different, why? If the same, how do we keep from forgetting that?
- 6) **Read Romans 5:1-5.** How important is it that we not lose trust in God when in wild places? What does Paul tell us about the source of our strength and perseverance in wild places? Paul says that it is by grace. What does this mean to you when you are in a wild place? How are we to face the suffering of wild places? How does God strengthen us for wild places? How can we deepen our roots in Christ so that when storms come, we can trust our sovereign God?