

**Think it Over
Going Deeper
Devotional**

11-8-20

**When You Feel You're Sinking
Hope Rises Us Up!**

Mark 6:45-52 - Immediately Jesus made his disciples get into the boat and go on ahead of him to Bethsaida, while he dismissed the crowd. ⁴⁶ After leaving them, he went up alone on a mountainside to pray. ⁴⁷ When evening came, the boat was in the middle of the lake, and he was alone on land. ⁴⁸ He saw the disciples straining at the oars, because the wind was against them. About the fourth watch of the night he went out to them, walking on the lake. He was about to pass by them, ⁴⁹ but when they saw him walking on the lake, they thought he was a ghost! They cried out, ⁵⁰ because they all saw him and were terrified. Immediately he spoke to them and said, "Take courage! It is I. Don't be afraid." ⁵¹ Then he climbed into the boat with them, and the wind died down. They were completely amazed, ⁵² for they had not understood about the loaves; their hearts were hardened.

Have you ever felt like you were sinking? The sinking hopes, rising problems, and fading dreams this world has dealt them makes many people struggle. This insecure and unsettling feeling was not foreign to the disciples as they faced great winds and high waves on the water. Jesus was ready to rescue them then, and He is ready to rescue us today.

Open your study with a prayer. This is only a guide--select the points you want to discuss.

Monday

That Sinking Feeling

The miracle spoken of in the introductory passage, Mark 6:45-52, was also recorded in the Gospel of Matthew and the Gospel of John. Read Matthew 14:22-33 and John 6:15-21.

- What additional information did you discover about this miracle in the passages in Matthew and John?

Signs that show I'm sinking:

- I can't see my way.
John 6:17a - By now it was dark....
- I feel I'm on my own.
John 6:17b - Jesus had not yet joined them
- I'm out of my comfort zone.
Mark 6:47 - the boat was in the middle of the lake
Matthew 14:24a - they were a long way from shore
- Strong forces are against me.
Matthew 14:24b - tossed around and battered by waves

John 6:18 - the waters grew rough!
Mark 6:48 - the wind was against them

- I'm struggling but failing.
Mark 6:48 - They were in serious trouble, rowing hard and struggling against the wind and waves (LB)

Question: Which of the five signs listed above best represents what you are experiencing right now? _____

If you would like, share why the sign you chose represents what is sinking in your life.

What Does Jesus Do When I'm Sinking?

1. He notices my struggle.

Mark 6:48a tells us that Jesus noticed something about the disciples rowing. What was _____ it? _____

- Hebrews 4:15 - For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are--yet was without sin.
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- In Hebrews 4:15, we are told that Jesus sympathizes with our weakness and was tempted in every way that we were. Share how this knowledge is designed to help you in those moments of feeling like you're sinking. _____

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Tuesday

2. He comes to me in a moment of desperation.

- According to Mark 6:48a, where did Jesus go and how did He get there? _____

- Amid the violent storm and in the midst of the disciples great angst, John 14:18 tells us the comforting words of Jesus. What were they? _____

- John 14:18 I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you.

3. He shows me his true identity.

- In Mark 6:49-50, what was the reaction to the disciples seeing Jesus walking on the water?

- Jesus responds to the disciples' fear by telling them, "Take courage! It is I! Don't be afraid." What do you think Jesus was revealing to them about who he was by stating "It is I" (or best expressed as "I AM")? _____

Reflecting on what Jesus does for us when, and even before, we are sinking, how does this encourage you to become more like Christ while even in the midst of your personal struggles?

What Should I Do If I Am Sinking?

1. Have courage because Jesus is with me.

- We can lose our fear when Jesus is near. As stated in Mark 6:50, when we are in the midst of a crisis and we believe we are sinking, why does Jesus encourage us to be courageous and unafraid? _____

Wednesday

2. Take a risk in faith.

Matthew 14:28 - "Lord, it is you," Peter replied, "tell me to come to you on the water." 29 "Come," he said. Then Peter got down out of the boat, walked on the water and came toward Jesus.

- It is safer to be in the water with Jesus than without him in the boat. In Matthew 14:28- 29, what risk did Peter take? _____
- What gave him the courage to do this? _____

- We are often fearful of taking risks when we are in crisis. What risk are you contemplating today? _____

- What might you ask God to do for you? _____

3. Stay focused on Jesus.

Matthew 14:30 But when he saw the wind, he was afraid and, beginning to sink, cried out, "Lord, save me!"

- Keeping our focus on Jesus will bring positive results. What did Peter do in Mark 14:30 that resulted in him sinking in the water? _____

- What circumstances or situations might cause you to lose focus on Jesus? _____

Thursday

4. Don't doubt.

Matthew 14:31 - Immediately Jesus reached out his hand and caught him. "You of little faith," he said, "why did you doubt?"

- When I trust instead of think, I walk instead of sink. What did Peter do in Matthew 14:31 that caused him to doubt? _____

- When Jesus held out his hand, why do you think Peter's ability to refocus was immediate? _____

Friday

5. Praise God.

Matthew 14:32-33 - And when they climbed into the boat, the wind died down. 33 Then those who were in the boat worshiped him, saying, "Truly you are the Son of God."

- Read Matthew 14:32 - 33. When the disciples recognized Jesus's power what did they do? _____

Worship recognizes Jesus's power and influence in our lives. Share how you might apply these steps when faced with a crisis. _____

Personal Application and Commitment:

How many storms is God going to need to take you through before you realize He is all you need? What storm is worrying or causing fear in your life right now? Tell your fears where to go--to Jesus! By truly placing your trust in God, He will come to you in the most unexpected ways. Commit this week to pray at the start of every day letting God know that you are placing your trust in him. Ask him to rescue you from your storm. Show God that you are willing to step out of your boat and into His hands by taking initiative towards solving your problem. Take the first step this week and watch what God does with your life!