

THE WIND AND THE SEA OBEY

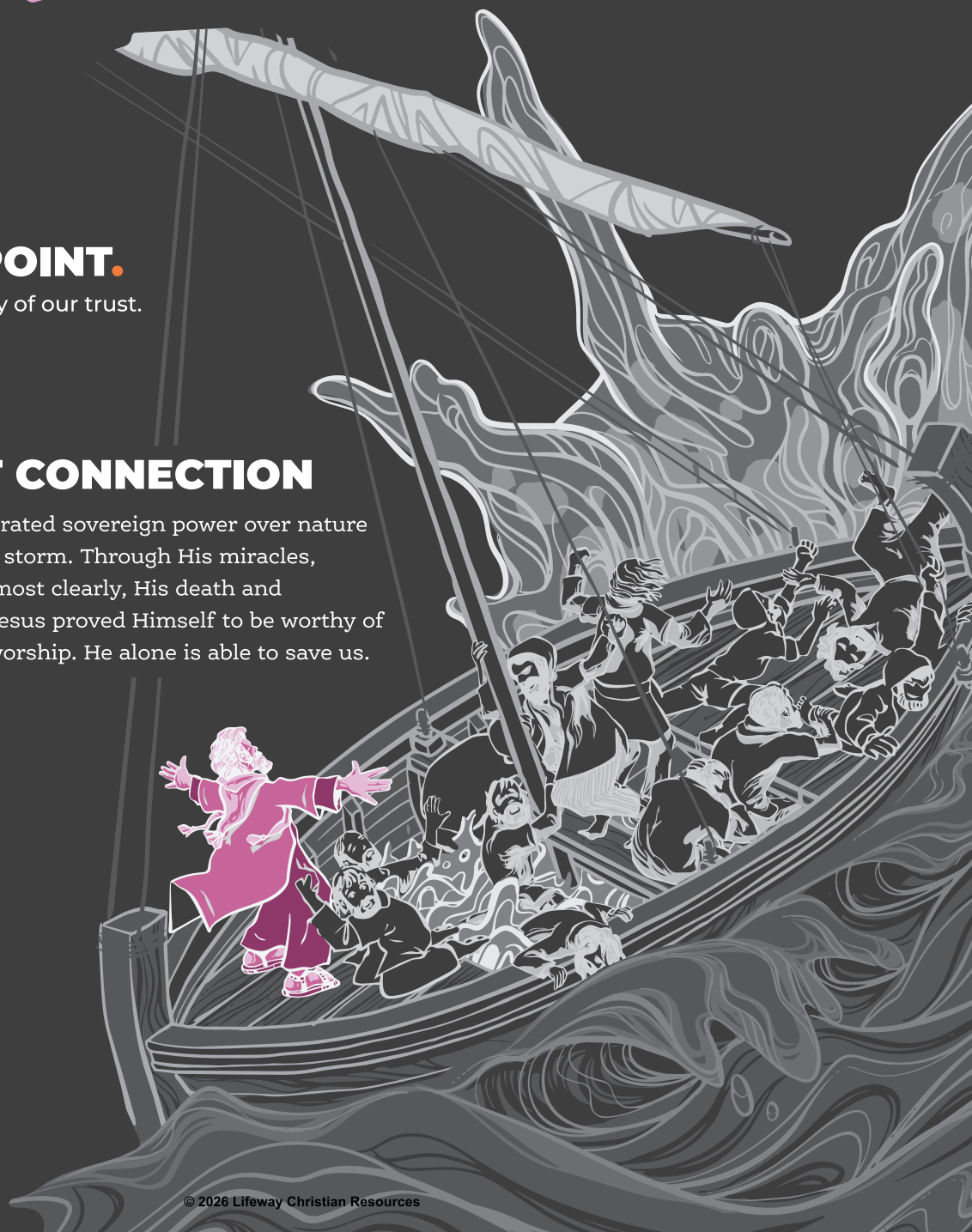
MAIN POINT.

Jesus is worthy of our trust.



CHRIST CONNECTION

Jesus demonstrated sovereign power over nature by calming the storm. Through His miracles, teaching, and most clearly, His death and resurrection, Jesus proved Himself to be worthy of our faith and worship. He alone is able to save us.



***PRESENCE* AND POWER**

This week, we're covering the passages and main points below. But we encourage you to read all of the content on the timeline as you prepare to teach.

Mark 4

STORMS ARE NOT GOD'S ABSENCE

MARK 4:35-38

35 On that day, when evening had come, he told them, "Let's cross over to the other side of the sea." 36 So they left the crowd and took him along since he was in the boat. And other boats were with him. 37 A great windstorm arose, and the waves were breaking over the boat, so that the boat was already being swamped. 38 He was in the stern, sleeping on the cushion. So they woke him up and said to him, "Teacher! Don't you care that we're going to die?"

STORMS REVEAL GOD'S AUTHORITY

MARK 4:39-41

39 He got up, rebuked the wind, and said to the sea, "Silence! Be still!" The wind ceased, and there was a great calm. 40 Then he said to them, "Why are you afraid? Do you still have no faith?" 41 And they were terrified and asked one another, "Who then is this? Even the wind and the sea obey him!"

BEFORE YOU TEACH

MAIN POINT.

Jesus is worthy of our trust.

Leaders: You exemplify how to trust in God's care and provision. Even when the enemy wants you to forget God's faithfulness, cling to the truth that He is sovereign and good, showing students He is worthy of their trust too.

BIBLICAL COMMENTARY

STORMS ARE NOT GOD'S ABSENCE

MARK 4:37

"The squalls that fall upon Lake Galilee are often sudden and severe. On the east shore the mountains rise quickly to a height two thousand feet above the lake's surface. When the wind is channeled through ravines that descend through those heights, the danger to an overloaded little fishing boat becomes fearsome indeed. When this happened to the disciples, they must have exercised all their skill and bailed as fast as they could, but still the high waves and wind brought them to the brink of disaster."⁸

STORMS REVEAL GOD'S AUTHORITY

MARK 4:40

"Certainly Mark understood the meaning to be faith in the saving power of God as revealed in the action of Jesus. Mark likely intended to indicate that faith is more than intellectual assent, that it is trust in a Person. This kind of faith Jesus's original disciples should have had and all subsequent disciples should have."⁹

MARK 4:40

"Faith does not end when we accept Christ. We also need faith to continue to grow in sanctification. How does a search for evidence help here? We search to find what kind of God we are serving. If my investigation leads me to a God who does not care, does not show compassion, does not take care of the birds and the lilies of the field, then perhaps this God is not trustworthy. However, in Scripture we find a God who cared so much that He sent Christ. We find a God who heals outcasts. We find a God who weeps over the unrepentant. We find a God who feeds the hungry with a few pieces of bread and fish. If this is the kind of God we serve, we can trust Him to calm the storms or go through them with us."¹⁰



CONTEXT

One major theme of Mark's Gospel was that Jesus has full authority over the world because He is the Son of God. Mark displayed Jesus's authority over nature, demons, and death, all impossible for humans to control. Mark included events that would help people believe in Jesus and in His authority as the Messiah. We must also remember that the event in today's passage is one part of a larger narrative about Jesus's authority. Mark aimed to prove that all of creation ultimately bows to the Lord, and we should as well. Many scholars believe that Mark wrote his Gospel by gathering stories from Peter about his time with Jesus. Peter was in the boat during the storm and could've accurately conveyed the fear the men felt. This storm was more than light rain or a little wind; it was a dangerous and monstrous event. These men, who had fished on the Sea of Galilee all their lives, were scared they would not survive. In their fear, they modeled how we can respond to our fears: running to the Lord of all creation, who is present and in control at all times.

THEOLOGY CONNECTION



Jesus's Deity

The person of Jesus Christ has two natures—the divine and the human. Scripture teaches He is fully divine and fully human. His divinity is on display in passages that describe Him as being equal with God (John 1:1-18; Phil. 2:5-11; Col. 1:15-20; Heb. 1:1-3). The New Testament also points to the deity of Christ by showing how He possesses attributes that only God possesses, how He performs works that only God performs (Mark 2:5-12; John 10:28; 17:2), and how He Himself claims to be the Son of God (Matt. 26:63-64; John 8:58; 10:30; 17:5).



LEADERS' PRAYER

LORD, WE BELIEVE YOU ARE IN CONTROL. WHEN WE FACE DIFFICULTIES OR STORMS IN LIFE, HELP US TO BRING OUR FEARS TO YOU AND TO TRUST THAT YOU WILL PROVIDE IN A WAY THAT GLORIFIES YOU AND IS GOOD FOR YOUR PEOPLE.



KICK STARTER

♥ HEART CHECK

Last week we talked about the **kingdom of God** being the most important thing in our lives and how to make it our priority. How did you prioritize the **kingdom of God** last week? When did you struggle with focusing more on our worldly kingdom?

These optional activities are designed to help your students interact. You'll find a Discussion Activity and a Cultural Connection, which touches on a relevant topic in today's teen culture. Each group is different, so adapt these activities to fit your group's needs. The goal is for students to connect more to the lesson as they connect to the topic and to one another.

1

STORMS

SUPPLIES LIST: NONE

Ask the following questions, allowing time for students to share responses:

- **WHAT IS THE SCARIEST NATURAL DISASTER? WHY ARE STORMS SO SCARY TO US?**
- **WHO ARE THE PEOPLE YOU TURN TO IN A STORM, EITHER IN A REAL STORM OR A STORM IN YOUR LIFE?**
- **WHAT DO YOU DO WHEN LIFE FEELS OUT OF CONTROL? HOW DO OTHER PEOPLE AROUND YOU TEND TO RESPOND?**

A major reason we fear storms is because we have no control over them. Storms in our lives work the same way. We know that many situations are bigger than us, and even with the best people around us, we just can't control some parts of life. As we'll see today, Jesus has control over every storm, and He never leaves us alone in our fear and uncertainty.

2

CULTURAL CONNECTION

We don't enjoy difficult situations; usually, we do anything we can to avoid them. Regardless, bad things do happen. Sometimes, we want to blame God or ask why He wasn't there when we needed Him. We naturally question why God allows pain. Satan may even attempt to use our pain as twisted evidence that God isn't real or that He doesn't care. Storms do come—but not because God is uncaring or absent. Storms come because we live in a broken world. Sin entered the world in Eden and touched every part of humanity. Even nature experiences the effects of sin. While this may be difficult for us to see in our moments of pain, God hates our pain more than we do. He sent Jesus to make right what sin destroyed. The Lord is present with us in our pain. He walks with us through difficult times. He has ultimate authority over the world! God doesn't keep His children from experiencing struggles, but He sustains us as we depend on Him, and through Jesus, we have assurance of an eternity free from pain and sorrow.

DISCUSSION

MAIN POINT.

Jesus is worthy of our trust.

STORMS ARE NOT GOD'S ABSENCE

READ MARK 4:35-38



WHAT WAS THE DISCIPLES' MAIN FEAR? WHAT DID THEY NOT REMEMBER?

Storms on the Sea of Galilee come quickly and powerfully. The men were confused and upset that Jesus slept while they were in danger. How could He ignore their circumstances? **The disciples questioned Jesus because they didn't fully understand His identity and His authority: God's Son, Lord of all creation.** At the core of their fear was the idea that though Jesus knew, He didn't care. Like them, we experience moments when, though we know Jesus, we ask, "Don't you see? Don't you care?" We forget He is for us and with us. But our lack of trust doesn't change the truth that Jesus is sovereign over everything.



DO YOU THINK THAT THE STORM WAS A *SURPRISE* TO JESUS? WHY WOULD HE SLEEP IF HE KNEW A STORM WAS COMING?

The storm wasn't a surprise to Jesus. In fact, crossing the sea at that exact time was His idea. He knew what was to come. Jesus was fully man, which means He needed to eat, drink, and sleep just like anyone else. However, Jesus was not only man; He is also fully God. Since He is fully man and fully God, Jesus knew the boat would be battered by waves; He knew the disciples would fear for their lives. But Jesus rules over the wind and waves; they shift at His command. He never lost control and knew His disciples wouldn't be harmed that day, even though it appeared that way to the men in His care. What does this mean for us? **Because Jesus was fully man, He understands what we go through. He can empathize with us because He lowered Himself and took on human flesh. Jesus being fully God means that all things come under His authority. These truths should help us remember that Jesus is compassionate and trustworthy. He is sovereign over all things, and we can rest in His care.**

WHEN HAVE YOU STRUGGLED TO FEEL GOD'S PRESENCE DURING A STORM IN YOUR LIFE?

Though Jesus doesn't walk with us like He did with the disciples, He is with us in every moment and in every storm. As believers, we have the Holy Spirit living within us to guide, comfort, and encourage us. Maybe you struggled to feel God's presence with you in a hospital room or when you lost a loved one, when your parents divorced or when you battled loneliness. You may not see Him with your eyes, but the Lord never leaves you. **He isn't unaware of your storms. He promises to use them for His glory and for your good (Rom. 8:28)—the good of knowing Jesus and being made more like Him.**

STORMS REVEAL GOD'S AUTHORITY

READ MARK 4:39-41



WHY IS THE WAY JESUS CALMED THE SEA SIGNIFICANT?

Mark's Gospel centers on the theme that Jesus has authority over creation. Many people posed as possible messiahs, but Jesus was the promised One—the Word who created the universe (John 1:1-3; Col. 1:16)! **We get to be in relationship with the One who created the storms and the oceans; He wants us to know Him, to walk with Him, and to be like Him!** If Jesus has control over nature, sickness, and death and commands creation with only a word, then we can trust Him with every part of our lives.



WHY DO WE STRUGGLE TO TRUST GOD WHEN STORMS COME? HOW CAN STORMS EITHER HELP OR HURT OUR UNDERSTANDING OF GOD'S CHARACTER?

Sometimes, you may feel like your life is falling apart. You may wrestle with unimaginable pain, fear, or loss. And trusting the Lord may be difficult because you can't see any way out. The storm in this passage was one of those moments for the disciples. They couldn't imagine Jesus calming the waters. Even worse, they couldn't understand why Jesus didn't seem to care about their safety. Here's the tough truth: Jesus can calm every storm, but often, He allows them to continue. **He chooses to reveal more of Himself by letting us experience wind and waves. Storms often open our eyes to a greater understanding of God's love and care, reminding us of how desperately we need Him near us at all times.**

WHY DO YOU THINK THE DISCIPLES RESPONDED THE WAY THEY DID TO JESUS CALMING THE STORM?

The disciples begged for help but were terrified when they witnessed Jesus's incredible power and authority. This moment would help them confidently know that Jesus truly is the Son of God. Consider this: **The severity of the storm is what helped them so confidently trust in Jesus that they later risked their lives to carry the gospel to the world. They believed so deeply in who Jesus is because they saw with their own eyes.** You may not have a moment quite like this storm, but if you reflect on all the Lord has done to sustain you, you might be astounded too. Ask Him to open your eyes. Seeing Jesus's authority can help you follow Him in confidence because you trust He sees, He knows, and He cares.

WRAP-UP



HOW CAN YOU PAUSE TO REFLECT ON GOD'S SOVEREIGN CARE IN YOUR LIFE? HOW CAN YOU LIVE IN GRATITUDE TO HIM THIS WEEK?

We live busy, distracted lives, so we can easily lose sight of all the Lord has done for us. When life is painful or uncertain, we have a difficult time remembering how God has been with us in the past. And isn't that what the enemy wants—for us to forget God's faithfulness so we'll be bound by fear and doubt? **Taking intentional time to remember how God has been with you in the past helps dispel the lie that He isn't with you now.** Set aside time this week to reflect on the past, on moments that felt impossible to face; remember how the Lord was with you then and how He cared for you through other people. Write down what you remember. As you reflect on those moments, thank the Lord for His presence! **When you spend time reflecting on the Lord's faithfulness in your life, you'll trust Him to be faithful again. This doesn't mean you won't struggle or face difficulty, but the knowledge that God is walking with you will change everything about the storm's purpose and outcome.**