



### INTRODUCTION / WEEK 3 / March 3, 4, & 7

Fear is a force that is putting a lot of individuals today in a stranglehold. These fears include things like the fear of abandonment; failure; medical and relationship challenges. The good news of Jesus' death on the cross is that he sets you free from whatever fears you may have. Jesus can give you a peace that passes all understanding.

### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What are some of the fears that you have today? Have your fears ever put you in a stranglehold and prevented you from doing something? How do your fears affect your daily work and activities?
2. Why is it actually good to have some healthy fears? How has fear helped you in doing a better job on something? What does it mean to "fear and love God?"
3. Do you know someone whose life has become totally incapacitated by fear? How can fear (conspiracy theories; fear of failure; fear of losing one's health) easily consume an individual?
4. **Read Matthew 8:23-27.** Why were the disciples so afraid? Being fishermen who grew up on the sea, how bad do you think this storm was? Why were they terrified thinking they would drown?
5. What are some waves crashing against the boat your life today? What does it feel like to you when you are in the storms of life? Share a time when you may have felt like you were going to drown under all the pressures you were facing.
6. Think of Jesus sitting in the boat of your life. What does he look like? Describe his face; his eyes; his hands. Do you feel close to him? Is he a loving Savior who you feel comfortable turning to, or are you afraid to disturb him and wake him up?
7. **Read again Matthew 8:25.** Why is crying out to Jesus for help a sign of strength and not weakness? How is admitting your fears and reaching out to someone else a sign of strength? Why are individuals (especially men) often so reluctant to ask someone else for their help and support?
8. Describe how Jesus' peace is different from the peace our world offers. Describe how it feels to have the waves and storms in you calmed through the love of Jesus. How does Jesus' peace pass all our understanding?

### MOVING FORWARD

Make the sign of the cross on each person's forehead and proclaim, "Peace be with you!" Go around the small group and pray a prayer for each person. Pray that God's peace will calm whatever storms and fears they may be facing this coming week. May Jesus' presence fill you with his amazing peace.

### MOVING FORWARD

Loving God, it is very common to feel abandoned and fearful in this crazy and mixed up world. Empower us, Loving God, to cry out to you with whatever needs and fears we may have. Assure us of your love and presence so we may be filled with your peace that passes all understanding. In Jesus' name we pray, Amen.