



ENTER God's presence

**The Lord watches over you—
the Lord is your shade at your right hand;
the sun will not harm you by day, nor the moon by night.
The Lord will keep you from all harm—
he will watch over your life;
the Lord will watch over your coming and going
both now and forevermore.** — Psalm 12:5-8

Heavenly Father, everything you have prepared for us is good. As we gather around your word, prepare us to receive all that you have again for us today. Fill us to overflowing with you Holy Spirit so that even when enemies surround us we will know your presence with us. Amen.



SHARE life together

1. Share your highs and lows with each other?
2. Share how you went with your living purposefully from last time?
3. What is something that causes your heartbeat to race, your palms to sweat and your heart to fear?
4. What's the biggest storm you have encountered in your life. Did you feel like the Lord abandoned you or was he present in that storm? Share.

Storms are a part of life. They come in many shapes and sizes. We have all encountered them. They hit us unannounced, blow us off track and into unfamiliar territory, beat against us with a ferocity and power that is unrelenting, cause us to feel like we are drowning and going under. That's what storms do. They make us vulnerable, leave us powerless, deplete our energy and cause us fear. Perhaps you are in the midst of a storm right now. When you turn the page of your life and encounter a storm, God wants you to know that the Spirit of God within us is more powerful than the wind that howls around us, the power of God is stronger than any waves that batter against us, the love of God is deeper than any water which wants to drown us. For when your story is connected to God's story, whatever storms you encounter in life, you can experience the peace that comes from his protection.

Week beginning:
Sunday 18th October 2020

Worship series:

His Story...Your Life



VERSE for the week
**Jesus replied, "You of little faith, why are you so afraid?"
Then he got up and rebuked the winds and the waves, and it was completely calm.**

- Matthew 8:26



REMEMBER this week

Jesus doesn't promise smooth sailing in life but he does promise safe passage.



LISTEN attentively

Read Matthew 8:23-27

5. What questions/comments/observations come to mind as you hear this passage?
6. Put yourself in the disciples' position. How do you think you would have reacted given the same circumstances?
7. Why do you think Jesus asked the question, "why are you so afraid?"
8. What connection does Jesus make between fear and faith in verse 26?



GROW deeper

The word that Matthew uses for storm in this passage is "seismos". He only uses this word two more times in the whole Gospel, at Jesus' death and resurrection.

9. Read Matthew 27:54 and Matthew 28:2. How is the word translated in these other passages and why do you think that Matthew compares the storm in 8:23-27 to a trembling eruption of sea and sky!
10. In 'seismic' moments in our lives, God reveals something about his character. What does he reveal here and what has he shown you in the seismic moments in your own life?

The real storm is not outside the disciples but the one that is churning in their hearts. It is the feeling of vulnerability, being powerless, the fear of facing an unknown future. These are the spiritual storms of life that blow us off course, beat against our faith and trust, rise up and overwhelm us making us feel like we are drowning. Sometimes in those situations we lash out at others or Jesus, like the disciples did, accusing him of not caring for or abandoning them, or being asleep on the job. Otherwise we dig deep within and are tempted to think that if we can just get out of the storm or through the storm that everything will be okay.

11. In stormy times, is your default response to lash out and blame, to feel like God or others don't care, or is it to steel yourself to fight through the struggles or something other?
12. Why are neither of these approaches the best way to deal with the storms of life and what alternative does Jesus offer?

Notice that the howl of the wind did not wake Jesus, the ferocity of the storm did not move him. It was the cries of his people that woke Jesus. It was when they turned to him and asked him to save and rescue them that he brought peace. Storms will happen in life. Often unexpected. Often unannounced. Faith, more faith, better faith, stronger faith, the right kind of faith do not eliminate the storms of our lives. Faith does not change the storm. It changes us. Faith does not take us around the storm but through the storm. Faith allows us to see and know that Jesus is there with us. Faith in Jesus is what allows us to be still, to be peaceful in the midst of the storm. Faith knows the promise of Jesus that we will get safely through the storm.

Read John 16:33

13. Why is Jesus' promise significant and what hope/encouragement does it give you in this season of life?
14. What is one way that you can live out this verse in the face of your fears?

Read Philippians 4:6-9

15. What is being said in this passage? Why does it matter?
16. How does the peace of Jesus guard your heart?



LIVE purposefully

17. What is the biggest storm in your heart that you are battling at this time? Share.

18. What is one take home from this LifeGroup study that has spoken to you at this time and how will you apply that to the storms you are facing?



PRAY intentionally

- Praise God for his power, authority and protection over all things. Thank Jesus for his presence in your life which brings peace. Ask the Holy Spirit to guard your heart and life in Jesus Christ.
- Pray for those who are experiencing stormy weather in their lives, whether physical, mental, emotional, or spiritual that they may cry out to Jesus who hears the cries of his people and brings his peace in the storm.
- Pray for all HSC students that they may know the peace and calm of Jesus' presence in this stormy and chaotic time.



BLESS one another

You might like to address one person in your group and make the sign of the cross in the air as you say...

[Name], the Lord watches over you. Amen.