



the **GOSPEL**PROJECT.

# FROM WONDER TO REJECTION

ADULTS / DAILY DISCIPLESHIP GUIDE / SUMMER 2023 / VOL. 8



# GOD'S WORD TO YOU

## A SUMMARY OF THE BIBLE

In the beginning, the all-powerful, personal God created the universe. This God created human beings in His image to live joyfully in His presence, in humble submission to His gracious authority. But all of us have rebelled against God and, in consequence, must suffer the punishment of our rebellion: physical death and the wrath of God.

Thankfully, God initiated a rescue plan, which began with His choosing the nation of Israel to display His glory in a fallen world. The Bible describes how God acted mightily on Israel's behalf, rescuing His people from slavery and then giving them His holy law. But God's people—like all of us—failed to rightly reflect the glory of God.

Then, in the fullness of time, in the person of Jesus Christ, God Himself came to renew the world and to restore His people. Jesus perfectly obeyed the law given to Israel. Though innocent, He suffered the consequences of human rebellion by His death on a cross. But three days later, God raised Him from the dead.

Now the church of Jesus Christ has been commissioned by God to take the news of Christ's work to the world. Empowered by God's Spirit, the church calls all people everywhere to repent of sin and to trust in Christ alone for our forgiveness. By God's grace in Christ, repentance and faith restores our relationship with God and results in a life of ongoing transformation.

The Bible promises that Jesus Christ will return to this earth as the conquering King. Only those who live in repentant faith in Christ will escape God's judgment and live joyfully in God's presence for all eternity. God's message is the same to all of us: repent and believe, before it is too late. Confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe with your heart that God raised Him from the dead, and you will be saved.

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# THE EDITOR

When Jesus came on the scene, He ushered in the kingdom of God. The kingdom of God was in their midst (Luke 17:21) and Jesus performed signs to demonstrate such. He healed the blind, the deaf, and the lame. And He came to seek and save the lost to bring them into God's kingdom, offering forgiveness to those who would accept it. He came to save us from sin and death through His own sinlessness and sacrificial death that we may spend eternity with Him.

Being God, Jesus has authority over all: the storms and seas, sickness and health, even life and death. Fully trusting this, we have nothing to fear, and we live as disciples to reflect His glory that the world may know Him and find purpose, hope, and eternal life in His kingdom.

The kingdom of God is here, although it is not yet fully fulfilled. In the meantime, then, how will we respond to Jesus's offer of salvation and His anticipated return? Will we reject and scoff at Him like some of the Pharisees? Or will we accept and work out our salvation with fear and trembling (Philippians 2:12-13)? Will we live for the kingdoms of this earth, or will we live for God's spiritual kingdom as children of God?

Joy awaits us when we trust in the only One who can save us, redeem us, and pay the ransom for our sins (1 Timothy 2:6). It is a narrow door but the only way. Jesus Christ is Lord and Savior. Let us continue living for His glory alone.

## **Y Bonesteele**

Content Editor

The Gospel Project for Adults

## **The Gospel Project®**

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Ed Stetzer and Trevin Wax  
Founding Editors

Daniel Davis  
Team Leader

Y Bonesteele  
Content Editor

Rachel Myrick  
Content and Production Editor

Dwayne McCrary  
Manager, Adult Ongoing Bible Studies

Brian Daniel  
Director, Adult Ministry

Ken Braddy  
Director of Sunday School

### **Send questions/comments to:**

Team Leader by email to [daniel.davis@lifeway.com](mailto:daniel.davis@lifeway.com) or mail to Team Leader, The Gospel Project: Adult Daily Discipleship Guide, 200 Powell Place, Suite 100, Brentwood, TN 37027-7707; or make comments on the web at [lifeway.com](http://lifeway.com).

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**We believe** that the Bible has God for its author; salvation for its end; and truth, without any mixture of error, for its matter and that all Scripture is totally true and trustworthy. To review Lifeway's doctrinal guideline, please visit [www.lifeway.com/doctrinalguideline](http://www.lifeway.com/doctrinalguideline).

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# THE WRITERS

**Jared Bumpers** (Unit 24, Sessions 1-3) serves as Assistant Professor of Preaching and Evangelism at Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Kansas City, Missouri. He is also a pastor at Fellowship KC in the Parkville area. He is married to Kim, and together they have four children: McCartnie, Rush, Maverick, and Jett.

**Matt Capps** (Unit 22 Introduction) is the Senior Pastor of Fairview Baptist Church in Apex, North Carolina. Matt earned an MDiv from Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary, a DMin from Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary, and is currently a PhD student in New Testament at Ridley College. Matt and Laura have three children: Solomon, Ruby, and Abby.

**Andrew Hall** (Unit 23, Sessions 1-5) is the Lead Pastor of Community Bible Church, located in Ilderton, Ontario, Canada. He is a graduate from The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. He and his wife, Melanie, have four children.

**Jonathan Hayashi** (Unit 23 Introduction) has a BA of Pastoral Ministry, an MA of Congregational Leadership, and a DEdMin of Biblical Counseling. He presently serves on the Executive Committee at Southwest Baptist University and on the Board of Trustees at Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. He is the author of *Ordinary*

*Radicals: A Return to Christ-Centered Discipleship and Making Lemonade: Turning Past Failures into Gospel Opportunities.* He and his wife, Kennedy, have four children: Kaede, Seiji, Anna, and Ren.

**Leslie Hudson** (Unit 22, Sessions 1-5) loves her mornings of silence, coffee, and Jesus—not in that order. She lives with her husband and kids in White Bluff, Tennessee, where they raise blueberries, figs, and bees. She loves to spend her free time reading, writing, journaling, and helping others know and follow Jesus.

**Kevin M. Jones Sr.** (Unit 24 Introduction) serves as the Dean of the School of Education at Cedarville University. In addition, he serves as the Managing Editor of *The Gospel Project*. He started his teaching career as a first grade teacher in Lexington, Kentucky. He and his high school sweetheart, Demica, have three children: Kennedy, Kevin Jr., and Karsynn. He serves as a lay pastor at St. John Missionary Baptist Church in Springfield, Ohio, where they live.

# ALL AGES STUDY PLAN

## **VOL 1: From Creation to Chaos**

(Genesis) Fall 2021

**Unit 1:** The Heavens Declare the Glory of God (Gen. 1–2; Pss. 8; 96)

**Unit 2:** Let Us Make a Name for Ourselves (Gen. 3–11)

**Unit 3:** I Will Make Your Name Great (Gen. 11–50)

## **VOL 2: From Captivity to the Wilderness**

(Exodus–Deuteronomy) Winter 2021–22

**Unit 4:** Out of Egypt I Called My Son (Ex. 1–15)

**Unit 5:** To Dwell in the House of the Lord (Ex. 16–40; Lev.)

**Unit 6:** Be Holy, Because I Am Holy (Num. 13–14; 20–21)

## **VOL 3: From Conquest to a Kingdom**

(Joshua–1 Samuel) Spring 2022

**Unit 7:** Lord, Teach Me Your Statutes (Josh. 1; 3–4)

**Unit 8:** Fear the Lord and Worship Him (Josh. 2; 6–11; 23–24)

**Unit 9:** There Is No Fear of God Before Their Eyes (Judg.; Ruth; 1 Sam. 1–6)

## **VOL 4: From Unity to Division**

(1 Samuel–1 Kings) Summer 2022

**Unit 10:** Because of Your Hardened Heart (1 Sam. 8–15)

**Unit 11:** Create a Clean Heart for Me (1 Sam. 16–17; 2 Sam. 6–7; 11–12)

**Unit 12:** If You Walk Before Me with a Heart of Integrity (1 Kings 1–12)

## **VOL 5: From Rebellion to Exile**

(1 Kings–The Prophets) Fall 2022

**Unit 13:** Your Passions Wage War Within You (1 Kings 12–18; 2 Kings 1–5; Isa. 44)

**Unit 14:** Seek the Lord, All You Humble of the Earth (2 Chron. 24; Isa. 22; 25; 30; Zeph.)

**Unit 15:** He Has Made Every Nationality (Jonah; Nah.; 2 Chron. 36)

## **VOL 6: From Captivity to Restoration**

(The Prophets, Ezra–Esther) Winter 2022–23

**Unit 16:** The Lord Keeps His Eye on Those Who Fear Him (Jer. 29–30; Dan.)

**Unit 17:** Take Refuge in the Lord (Ezra 1–6; Zech. 13–14)

**Unit 18:** For Look, the Day Is Coming (Esth.; Neh.; Mal.)

## **VOL 7: From Heaven to Earth**

(The Gospels) Spring 2023

**Unit 19:** Here Is the Lamb of God  
(John 1–2; Luke 2; Mark 1; Matt. 4)

**Unit 20:** God’s Love Was Revealed  
Among Us in This Way (John 3–4)

**Unit 21:** Without Faith It Is Impossible  
to Please God (Luke 4–5)

## **VOL 8: From Wonder to Rejection**

(The Gospels) Summer 2023

**Unit 22:** The Works That I Do in My  
Father’s Name Testify About Me  
(Mark 4; 8; Luke 5; Matt. 9; John 10)

**Unit 23:** The Kingdom of God Is in Your  
Midst (Matt. 5–7; 13; 24; Luke 15; 17)

**Unit 24:** God’s Glory in the Face of Jesus  
Christ (Luke 13; John 11)

## **VOL 9: From Death to Resurrection**

(The Gospels) Fall 2023

**Unit 25:** Jerusalem, Jerusalem,  
Who Kills the Prophets  
(Matt. 21–25; Mark 1; John 6; 14)

**Unit 26:** The Hour Has Come  
(John 12; Matt. 26)

**Unit 27:** The King of the Jews  
(Luke 22–23; Matt. 27–28)

## **VOL 10: From Many People to One People**

(The Gospels, Acts) Winter 2023-24

**Unit 28:** I Am with You Always  
(Luke 24; John 20–21; Matt. 28)

**Unit 29:** You Will Be My Witnesses  
(Acts 1–2)

**Unit 30:** Every Day the Lord Added to  
Their Number (Acts 2–5)

## **VOL 11: From One Nation to All Nations**

(Acts and Epistles) Spring 2024

**Unit 31:** Every Knee Will Bow  
(Acts 5–8; Phil. 2)

**Unit 32:** The Power and the Wisdom  
of God (Acts 9–12; 1 Cor. 1; 12)

**Unit 33:** A Prisoner of Christ Jesus  
(Acts 9; 13–14; Philem.)

## **VOL 12: From This World to the World to Come**

(Acts, Epistles, Revelation) Summer 2024

**Unit 34:** Ambassadors for Christ  
(Acts 15–19; 2 Cor. 5; Eph. 4)

**Unit 35:** That I May Gain Christ  
(Acts 20–28; Phil. 3)

**Unit 36:** A New Heaven and a New Earth  
(Rev. 4–5; 19–22)



# HOW TO USE THE DAILY DISCIPLESHIP GUIDE

*Central to your personal and group experience with The Gospel Project for Adults is the Daily Discipleship Guide. Here's how to make the most of your time with it:*

## BEGIN WITH PERSONAL TIME IN THE WORD

We recommend beginning your week with the daily devotions. These devotions lay a foundation for what will be explored and discussed in your group time as you build healthy rhythms of personal discipleship.



### DAY 1

**READ:**

**Mark 4:35-41**

**FOCAL PASSAGE:**

**Mark 4:37-39**

**NOTES**



**KEY DOCTRINE #21:**

**GOD IS OMNIPOTENT**

God is all-powerful; there is nothing God cannot do so long as it does not contradict His own nature or law. God has power and authority over the universe He created, from the largest solar system to the smallest particle. Affirming that God is all-powerful does not mean that God can sin—since that would go against His perfect moral nature. As Christians, we rest in the belief that the God who has all power is good, and we gain great comfort by knowing that an all-powerful God is working for our good and joy.

There's nothing like big water to remind you how small you are.

Our family had been preparing for months for our children's first visit to the ocean. They had seen rivers, lakes, and streams, but we figured every kid needed to see the Atlantic Ocean in all its glory. So we headed to the east coast of Florida several years ago.

My daughter, a precocious 3-year-old, had looked through every book we could find about the ocean; she was thrilled. She had declared dozens of times as we drove, "When we get to the ocean, I'm going to walk right into the water and grab a fish!"

We drove straight to the beach first thing. It was a windy, overcast day, and the ocean was roiling with stern agitation. My daughter, who had been full of boasting about the ocean not one hour earlier, grabbed my husband's hand, walked backward, and declared, "I do not like the ocean!" She barely got her feet wet.

We can only imagine what ocean explorers, overseas captains, and sailors have pondered and wondered as they gazed out at the endless sea. From the creatures to the wind and the waves, surely they wondered about the force behind the power of such an immense expanse.

It's good for us to ponder the overwhelming power and bigness of God. It encourages us to humble ourselves and be amazed by the powerful God we serve.

**When have you realized your own humble status in the face of nature's glory?**





## STUDY THE BIBLE WITH YOUR BIBLE

Reading and studying the Bible is absolutely life-changing, and we believe the best way to study the Bible is to use the Bible you own. Whether you read from the CSB, ESV, NIV, KJV, or many other translations, the Daily Discipleship Guide helps you engage with the session not only with our book but your Book.



## GET BACK TO BASICS

As you read and study, we recommend using the tool found in your Daily Discipleship Guide called the “7 Arrows of Bible Reading.” The 7 Arrows guide both novice and experienced students of the Word through the basic mechanics of Bible study by asking a few key questions of any passage (see pages 10-11 for more information).

### 7 ARROWS OF BIBLE READING

by Matt Rogers

There is often a vast disconnect between the awareness of the need for disciple-making and practical tools that actually aid in this work. Three factors are essential: Scripture, relationships, and time. Discipleship happens when the life-changing truth of Scripture is infused into genuine relationships over an extended period of time.

Our desire was to create a simple, reproducible strategy that would facilitate this process. This led us to develop a simply strategy for small clusters (2-3 people) to meet together regularly and talk about the Scriptures and apply them to their lives.

The seven arrows of Bible reading were an attempt at developing a tool for proper hermeneutics to power these relationships. We did not want our people to simply talk about the Bible. We wanted them to understand the Bible and know how to apply it to their lives. Each cluster would read a predetermined passage of Scripture and discuss it using these seven arrows.

The diagram consists of seven questions arranged vertically, connected by arrows. From top to bottom: 1. A circular arrow pointing clockwise above the question "What does this passage say?". 2. A horizontal arrow pointing left above the question "What did this passage mean to its original audience?". 3. A vertical arrow pointing up above the question "What does this passage tell us about God?". 4. A vertical arrow pointing down above the question "What does this passage tell us about man?". 5. A horizontal arrow pointing right above the question "What does this passage demand of me?". 6. A horizontal arrow pointing left above the question "How does this passage change the way I relate to people?". 7. A circular arrow pointing clockwise above the question "How does this passage prompt me to pray?".

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## DISCUSS AND APPLY IN COMMUNITY

Each session concludes with a two-page discussion guide. This guide includes the key points of the session along with interactive questions and activities designed to address the needs of a variety of learning styles. Mark up the discussion guide, make notes, fill in the blanks, do the activities, write out questions and thoughts—make it yours!



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**What does this passage say?**



**What did this passage mean to its original audience?**



**What does this passage tell us about God?**



**What does this passage tell us about man?**



**What does this passage demand of me?**



**How does this passage change the way I relate to people?**



**How does this passage prompt me to pray?**

**ARROW 1:** The goal was for the clusters to start by summarizing the main point of the passage as succinctly as possible, ideally in one sentence.

**ARROW 2:** Next, the clusters sought to discern authorial intent for the passage by asking what it meant to its original audience. Since a text of Scripture can never mean what it never meant, it is necessary to begin by discerning what the text meant. Often this may require the clusters to consult other study tools or cross-reference other biblical texts to arrive at the meaning of the text.

**ARROW 3:** Thirdly, we asked what the text tells us about the nature and character of God and specifically His work through the person and work of Jesus Christ.

**ARROW 4:** Fourthly, the text was analyzed to see what it tells us about humanity. Bryan Chappell refers to this as the “fallen condition focus” of the text. What does the text reveal about sin and humankind’s need for the gospel?

**ARROW 5:** Then we moved the clusters to application. Since we had rooted the clusters in the meaning of the text, they were now positioned to rightly apply it’s meaning to their lives.

**ARROW 6:** From there we wanted our clusters to apply the Scripture to their relationships with others. Ideally, they would discuss how the text shaped both how they related to other believers and how they lived on mission in the world.

**ARROW 7:** Finally, the clusters rooted their prayers in the Scriptures. Hopefully, the previous six arrows kindled the flames of passionate prayer in the lives of the clusters—both for their own sanctification and for their mission to the lost.

With this model, we touched on three important areas for discipleship:

**Scripture**—Disciple-making was rooted in a rightful understanding of Scripture and not in simply doing life together, unpacking another sermon, or dependance on classroom instruction.

**Simplicity**—Disciple-making was simple enough for everyone to get involved. All believers could take these principles, a Bible, and a relationship with a young Christian and get to work.

**Stickiness**—Disciple-making through understanding and applying Scripture was etched in the minds of our young church. They could use these same arrows not only to guide their cluster discussions but also their personal Bible study, small group leadership, and comprehension of sermons.

These arrows have proven to be a unique tool in our disciple-making toolbox that the Lord is using to call and build faithful and fruitful followers of Jesus.

Matt Rogers is the teaching pastor at The Church at Cherrydale in Greenville, South Carolina. His church developed the Seven Arrows tool to help people read and understand Scripture within their small groups. The concept has gone on to form the basis of a 52-week devotional for teens from Lifeway Students, the Seven Arrows Bible from B&H, and is now featured in The Gospel Project for Adults and Students.

## UNIT 22

+

**THE WORKS**

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**THAT I DO IN MY**

---

**FATHER'S NAME**

---

**TESTIFY**

---

**ABOUT ME**

---

# “Who Then Is This?”

by Matt Capps

“Who do you say that I am?” (Matthew 16:13; Mark 8:29; Luke 9:20). This question posed by Jesus to His disciples is the single most important question that has ever been uttered in human history. No other question has inspired greater devotion or ignited greater disagreement, and rightly so. For a Christian, what one believes about Jesus is the sum and substance of the faith. In the end all people will be judged by their Christology. Therefore, this is a question we must answer ourselves.

Throughout history, disagreements over the person and nature of Jesus Christ have rotated through the same theological issues and questions: “Is Jesus truly God?” And, “If Jesus is truly God, how could He also be truly man?”

Other world religions and philosophical systems have offered their assessments of Jesus, sometimes applauding His words and deeds while disavowing His divinity. Some have proposed that Jesus was a divine being who merely pretended

to be human. Others have taught that Jesus was a human who became divine, a type of super-venerated saint. And some have even argued that Jesus was simply called a “god” out of respect for His wisdom or courtesy for His distinctive humanitarian efforts. However, all of these attempts fall short of the testimony of the New Testament. The description of Jesus’s person and nature in Scripture is unremittingly clear: He is fully God and fully man.

## WHAT SCRIPTURE AFFIRMS

First, Scripture affirms that Jesus is truly God. His divinity is on display in passages that describe Him as being equal with God (John 1:1-18; Philippians 2:5-11; Colossians 1:15-20; Hebrews 1:1-3). The New Testament also points to the deity of Christ by showing how He possesses attributes that God alone possesses (Micah 5:2; John 1:4). Jesus performs works that only God performs, as only God has the authority to forgive sin (Mark 2:5-12; John 10:28; 17:2). Moreover,

He Himself claims to be the Son of God (Matthew 26:63-64; John 8:58; 10:30; 17:5).

Yet, Scripture also affirms that Jesus was truly human. Jesus grew and matured; He experienced the full range of non-sinful emotions. He hungered, He thirsted, He endured pain, and ultimately He suffered death (Matthew 4:2; 26:37; Luke 2:40,52; John 2:15; 4:7; 11:35; 19:28).

Even though there is a certain element of mystery surrounding the nature of Christ, there are several divinely revealed distinct theological categories that should frame our understanding of Jesus Christ.

### **DISTINCTIVES ABOUT JESUS**

First, Jesus was not created, but the eternal begotten Son in the position of the “first-born of all creation” (Colossians 1:15-19). The New Testament presents Jesus as being in the beginning with God as a distinct member of the Trinity, thus truly God. Paul affirms that He is “before all things,” and “in him all things hold together” as the fullness of the Godhead dwells in Christ. Jesus is deity and humanity in one person—God in human flesh (John 1:1-18; Hebrews 1:1-14).

Second, Jesus was born of a virgin (Luke 1:34-37). Jesus was born by conception of the Holy Spirit. Christ was conceived without Adam’s original inherited and imputed sin (John 8:29; Romans 5:18; 2 Corinthians 5:21; Hebrews 4:15; 7:26; 1 Peter 2:22-24). For this reason, Paul refers to Christ as the second or last Adam (Romans 5:12-19; 1 Corinthians 15:21-22).

Third, as the last Adam, Jesus lived a perfect and sinless life. Jesus knew no sin, committed no sin, and in Him was found no sin (2 Corinthians 5:21; 1 Peter 2:22; 1 John 3:5). Jesus passed the test that Adam failed, that you and I fail. While perfect, Jesus being fully human enables Him to sympathize with our weaknesses (Hebrews 4:15).

Finally, God Himself testifies that Christ is His divine Son. This is affirmed by the Father at Jesus’s baptism and at His transfiguration (Matthew 3:13-17; 17:1-9; Mark 9:2-10; Luke 9:28-36). This is also asserted in His resurrection and coronating ascension. From creation to the cradle, from the cross to the crown, Jesus is and has always been the divine Son of God.

*Jesus knew no sin, committed no sin,  
and in Him was found no sin.*

From creation to the cradle, from the cross to the crown, Jesus is and has always been the divine Son of God.

### TESTIMONY OF THE SAINTS

Being part of a great cloud of witnesses, we also have the testimony of Christians throughout centuries who have clarified and articulated essential biblical doctrines. We stand on the shoulders of faithful saints who have gone before us, especially the early church, regarding the nature of Christ.

Jesus is deity and humanity in one person—God in human flesh.

The Apostles Creed (AD 200) affirms that Jesus Christ is God's Son and our Lord who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of a virgin, was crucified, died, and buried, to be resurrected and then ascended to heaven, from where He will come to judge the living and the dead. The Council of Nicaea (AD 325) also defends Jesus's divine nature, namely, that He shares the same essence with the Father. Jesus was not merely similar to God, but

is God. Finally, we would agree with the Council of Chalcedon (AD 451) that Jesus is truly God and truly man: one person with two natures (human and divine), united without separation or division.

If Jesus were not truly human, He could not have entered our plight as our Redeemer by taking upon Himself our sins as our sinless sacrifice. Moreover, we take great comfort in knowing that Jesus, being fully human, is able to sympathize with us as He is with us in our difficulties and sufferings (Hebrews 4:15-16; 7:25). Finally, since Jesus is truly God, we must go beyond acknowledging His deity and personally submit to Him in faith and worship (Romans 12:1). So, the question before each of us is "Who do you say Christ is?"





# JESUS OVER NATURE

**+** **SESSION IN A SENTENCE:**

In calming a storm, Jesus revealed that He is the Son of God, the One who has all authority over nature.

**+** **BACKGROUND PASSAGE:**

Mark 4

**+** **SETTING:**

Jesus continued to reveal Himself through His actions. Here in the Gospel of Mark, He was by the Sea of Galilee and began teaching. He eventually had to get on a boat because of the large crowds (Mark 4:1). As we consider today's passage, let this background invade your senses: smell the crowd; taste the salty air; hear the authority of Jesus; see the Sea of Galilee, vast and mighty. The disciples didn't realize it, but this lecture from the teacher would be followed quickly by a pop quiz.

# DAY 1

## READ:

Mark 4:35-41

## FOCAL PASSAGE:

Mark 4:37-39

## NOTES



### KEY DOCTRINE #21: GOD IS OMNIPOTENT

God is all-powerful: there is nothing God cannot do so long as it does not contradict His own nature or law. God has power and authority over the universe He created, from the largest solar system to the smallest particle. Affirming that God is all-powerful does not mean that God can sin—since that would go against His perfect moral nature. As Christians, we rest in the belief that the God who has all power is good, and we gain great comfort by knowing that an all-powerful God is working for our good and joy.

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It's good for us to ponder the overwhelming power and bigness of God. It encourages us to humble ourselves and be amazed by the powerful God we serve.

**When have you realized your own humble status in the face of nature's glory?**

# DAY 2

## READ:

Mark 4:35-41

## FOCAL PASSAGE:

Mark 4:35-39

## NOTES

## VOICES from CHURCH HISTORY

“The ship carried his humanity, but the power of his Godhead carried the ship and all that was in it. In order that he might show that even his humanity did not require the ship, instead of the planks which a shipwright puts together and fastens, he, like the architect of creation, made the waters firm and joined them together solidly under his feet.”<sup>1</sup>

—Ephrem the Syrian  
(c. 306–373)

When I was an elementary-school girl, my family owned a boat. Before you get the wrong mental image, let me describe it to you: it was probably a twenty-year-old fishing boat that my dad bought for \$1,000 in 1990. Every single time we took it to the lake, the boat refused to start. Luckily, my dad was just enough of a mechanic that he could get it started again in an hour or so. My dad had grown up boating, so he knew about all the aspects, and we had confidence in his authority.

One day, the boat engine died, and no amount of magic could convince it to crank. Unfortunately, we were on the other side of the lake, miles from the dock. But a nice guy in a shiny, new, huge boat saw us in our plight and asked if we'd like a tow. We had a ball being towed back to the dock, rocking with the waves.

Well, I had a ball. When the boat was loaded and the friendly stranger gone, my dad revealed the truth: our boat had almost tipped over. We'd been towed too fast, and at one point my dad had to leap to the other side to keep us upright. But I never knew it; I had confidence in my dad, his judgment, and his boating skills. I never knew we were in danger.

Jesus did the same thing, believing His Father was in full control. He had no trouble dozing during a storm.

**How does Jesus's presence give you comfort?**

# DAY 3

## READ:

Mark 4:35-41

## FOCAL PASSAGE:

Mark 4:39

## NOTES

In Mark 4:39, Jesus commanded the wind and waves to be quiet and still. In Exodus 14:14, Moses informed the people of Israel, upon seeing the Egyptian army approaching to return them to slavery, that the Lord would fight for them, and that they just needed to be quiet and silent.

What tone of voice do you hear from these two quotes? When Jesus commanded the wind and waves, did He speak with gentleness and care, as one would address a class of kindergarten students? Possibly not. When Moses realized he'd had enough of the complaining, blaming whininess of the Israelites, do you assume he spoke with the same tender tone he used with his flocks? Probably not either.

The commands to be quiet in Mark and in Exodus actually have a similar meaning. Though they are two different words in two different languages, both are verbs and both carry the emphasis on peace. In the King James Version, the command to be quiet is actually rendered "ye shall hold your peace." And the Greek word in Mark is actually interpreted "peace" in a number of different translations.

We as believers would be wise to hear these words in our own hearts when we feel the storms within causing us to take our eyes off God. The peace of God surpasses all understanding (Philippians 4:7) and He declares peace to His faithful people (Psalm 85:8). Regardless of the situation, we can know the peace of God because we know we have peace with Him through Jesus (Romans 5:1) because He has authority over all.

**What tends to make you panic, and how do you find God's peace in the midst of it?**

# DAY 4

## READ:

Mark 4:35-41

## FOCAL PASSAGE:

Mark 4:35-41

## NOTES

When I was a child, I was afraid of lions. I lived in a subdivision in Lexington, Kentucky, but evidently my first-grade teacher did a great job of describing the ferocity of a lion to us. I would lie awake at night, afraid that a lion would break down our front door and come into my room. (After all, they were incredibly strong, right?)

When I was a teenager, I was afraid of my car breaking down. That was a legitimate fear; I had a 10-year-old clunker that was known for simply cutting off the flow of gas to my engine. Every time I headed down the road, I had to be sure I had everything I needed in case I found myself stranded.

As a college student, I was afraid of hurting my hands. That seems silly, but as a music major who played piano, my future rode on those hands: a hand injury meant no playing, which meant no graduation.

Our fears change over time. But the more we see God clearly and fear Him in a holy and reverent way, the less other fears are able to creep into our minds and hearts. I recently talked to a man in his 60s who had been diagnosed with cancer. As he talked over treatment options with his doctor, he said, "I'm not afraid to die." That's the kind of statement we can make when we have a holy fear of God that trumps all other fears.

**What makes you fearful today, and what would God say to you about that fear?**

# DAY 5

## READ:

**Jonah 1:1-17**

## FOCAL PASSAGE:

**Jonah 1:1-5**

## NOTES

You read through Mark 4:35-41 over the past few days. In it, you saw Jesus and His disciples in a boat, a great storm that threatened everyone on the water, Jesus's sleeping like a baby in the midst of it, and finally the calming of the sea by the One who created it.

Funny enough, there are several shared elements between the story of Jesus's calming the storm and Jonah 1. For starters, a great wind and a great storm threatened even seasoned sailors (v. 4). As this was going on, a man slept in a boat while everyone around him panicked (v. 5). When the sailors woke the sleeping man, they scolded his rest and asked for help (v. 6). At the end of both stories, no one wondered who was in charge of the sea: only God had the power to start the squall, and only He could put a stop to it.

For all the similarities, there are also differences: Jonah was actively and intentionally running away from God, while Jesus was smack dab in the center of God's plan. Jonah was asleep out of ignorance; Jesus was asleep out of total fulfillment and rest in His Father. Jonah had no power over the storm; Jesus as Creator of all had all power over everything and access to the Father.

Both were in a storm, both fell asleep, and both woke up to panic around them. Only One had confidence in the One who wielded the storm; the other was afraid to face Him.

**When facing struggles in your life, how are you more like Jonah or Jesus?**

# GROUP

NOTES

## **POINT 1: The Son of God rests in the care of His Father** (Mark 4:35-38).

Jesus sometimes \_\_\_\_\_ His disciples to places of difficulty and challenge so they can experience and \_\_\_\_\_ Him more fully.

**?** When has Jesus led you through times that were difficult, confusing, or overwhelming, and what did He reveal to you through that situation?

Being God and \_\_\_\_\_ over all, Jesus has no fear and can \_\_\_\_\_; thus, we, His disciples, can do the same.

## **POINT 2: The Son of God exerts authority over His creation** (Mark 4:39).

Jesus \_\_\_\_\_ to our situations and our fears with power and \_\_\_\_\_.

**?** From Day 4: What makes you fearful today, and what would God say to you about that fear?

### **KEY DOCTRINE #21: GOD IS OMNIPOTENT**

God is all-powerful: there is nothing God cannot do so long as it does not contradict His own nature or law. God has \_\_\_\_\_ and authority over the universe He \_\_\_\_\_, from the largest solar system to the smallest particle. Affirming that God is all-powerful does not mean that God can sin—since that would go against His perfect moral nature. As Christians, we rest in the belief that the God who has all power is good, and we gain great comfort by knowing that an all-powerful God is working for our good and joy.

### **VOICES from CHURCH HISTORY**

“Let not the wave master you in this troubled state of your heart. Yet since we are but men, if the wind should drive us on, and stir up the affections of our souls, let us not despair; let us awake Christ, that we may sail on a tranquil sea.”<sup>2</sup>

—Augustine (354–430)





How might you respond differently to a crisis if you truly believe that God is all-powerful?

**POINT 3: The Son of God calls for faith from His followers** (Mark 4:40-41).

Jesus calls His followers to \_\_\_\_\_, especially in response to \_\_\_\_\_ and difficult circumstances, to believe that He is truly Lord of all.



How might asking ourselves why we are afraid bring us to see our own faith honestly?

Faith sees \_\_\_\_\_ clearly, as who He says He is—God in flesh—realizing He is more \_\_\_\_\_ than anything else we might have feared.



How can we intentionally study the Bible to see God more clearly?

**MY RESPONSE**

Because we are loved by God, who has authority over all creation, we seek to demonstrate bold faith in Him no matter our circumstances so that others might come to trust in Jesus for salvation.

- **HEAD:** What are some ways God reveals His omnipotent power today?
- **HEART:** For what areas of your life can you confess that you are afraid to walk in obedient faith?
- **HANDS:** How can you show God’s compassion and mercy by being compassionate and merciful in Jesus’s name this week?



Scan this QR code to access this session’s Scripture passages.

**VOICES from CHURCH HISTORY**

“For when he arose, and rebuked the sea, and silenced the storm, he plainly disclosed two things: that the storm of the sea was not simply from winds, but from the fear of the Lord who walked upon it; and that the Lord who rebuked it was not a creature, but rather its creator.”<sup>3</sup>

—Athanasius (c. 296–373)