

LIFEgroups

OPEN

Go around and let everyone answer...

Have you ever taken a trip that ended up being more like a comedy, full of mishaps and misadventures? Tell about it.

DIG & APPLY

Read Matthew 8:18-22

¹⁸When Jesus saw the crowd around him, he gave orders to cross to the other side of the lake. ¹⁹Then a teacher of the law came to him and said, "Teacher, I will follow you wherever you go." ²⁰Jesus replied, "Foxes have dens and birds have nests, but the Son of Man has no place to lay his head." ²¹Another disciple said to him, "Lord, first let me go and bury my father."

²²But Jesus told him, "Follow me, and let the dead bury their own dead."

- Have someone retell this incident.
- Before Jesus can begin his trip, he is interrupted by a teacher of the law. Why might Jesus respond to him the way he did? Do you think it likely the man rescinded his offer to go with Jesus anywhere?
- From Jesus's answer to him, what was the second person really saying? What was Jesus saying about the nature of being a disciple?
- Do you really want to do whatever it takes to be a disciple of Jesus, no matter what?

Read Matthew 8:18-27

²³Then Jesus got into the boat and started across the lake with his disciples. ²⁴Suddenly, a fierce storm struck the lake, with waves breaking into the boat. But Jesus was sleeping. ²⁵The disciples went and woke him up, shouting, "Lord, save us! We're going to drown!" ²⁶Jesus responded, "Why are you afraid? You have so little faith!" Then he got up and rebuked the wind and waves, and suddenly there was a great calm. ²⁷The disciples were amazed. "Who is this man?" they asked. "Even the winds and waves obey him!"

- Have someone recount what happened in the middle of Jesus's journey. Why would the disciples be so frightened? Why would they be so amazed? How might this experience have affected these disciples in years to come?
- How can you prepare so that your fear doesn't overwhelm your faith when the storms of life hit?

Read Matthew 8:28-34

²⁸When Jesus arrived on the other side of the lake, in the region of the Gadarenes,^[a] two men who were possessed by demons met him. They came out of the tombs and were so violent that no one could go through that area. ²⁹They began screaming at him, "Why are you interfering with us, Son of God? Have you come here to torture us before God's appointed time?" ³⁰There happened to be a large herd of pigs feeding in the distance. ³¹So the demons begged, "If you cast us out, send us into that herd of pigs."

³²"All right, go!" Jesus commanded them. So the demons came out of the men and entered the pigs, and the whole herd plunged down the steep hillside into the lake and drowned in the water. ³³The herdsmen fled to the nearby town, telling everyone what happened to the demon-possessed men. ³⁴Then the entire town came out to meet Jesus, but they begged him to go away and leave them alone.

- Have another person tell what happened when Jesus reached his destination. Is there a clue here about why Jesus might have wanted to make this journey? What do you think of the way the townspeople responded to Jesus's goodness and power?
- Do you know the goodness and power of Jesus? What is your response?

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Leaders

Sermon Series

This discussion guide comes from the current lesson in a series from the Gospel of Matthew. This series focuses on Matthew's message of establishing that Jesus is King over all.

Big Idea

This lesson focuses on three events that occurred in one trip Jesus took with his disciples. Each encounter focuses on different aspects of what it means to follow Jesus.

Group Discussion Reminder

Every group encounter is unique due to the people present, the circumstances of that day, and the topic being discussed.

Therefore, do not expect each group meeting to flow in exactly the same way. If there is a lot of discussion, do not feel obligated to read all the questions or all the verses on a particular discussion guide.

This is especially important with a lesson that covers more verses, or more events. Do as much as is possible with your group and then stop the meeting at the designated time. Make it enjoyable.