



## WEEKLY STUDY

### Week 2

This week, as we continue to look for God's better story for our lives, we are exploring the story of Jesus walking on water. Moments of distress and chaos can test our trust in Jesus. He shows up with power and mercy.

Peace of Christ,  
Pastor Mark

If you are studying with your Providence Small Group or Discipleship Group, you can share from daily readings as well as the additional question at the bottom of this guide. If you would like to get connected to a Providence Small Group visit [prov.church/smallgroups](http://prov.church/smallgroups).

Find a time each day to read the passage of scripture, follow the daily prayer prompt, and then pray this or your own prayer.

*Jesus, I put my trust in you.*

*The waves that beat me up are real.*

*But you are real. Your power and your strength to quiet the waves are real.*

*Walk to me wherever I am and give me peace to marvel at your power.*

*Amen.*

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## DAILY STUDY

### MONDAY: JOHN 6.16-21

*When evening came, his disciples went down to the lake,<sup>17</sup> where they got into a boat and set off across the lake for Capernaum. By now it was dark, and Jesus had not yet joined them.<sup>18</sup> A strong wind was blowing and the waters grew rough.<sup>19</sup> When they had rowed about three or four miles, they saw Jesus approaching the boat, walking on the water; and they were frightened.<sup>20</sup> But he said to them, "It is I; don't be afraid."<sup>21</sup> Then they were willing to take him into the boat, and immediately the boat reached the shore where they were heading.*

- There are three accounts of this story in three of the gospels. It is interesting to note the behavior of the disciples in each. In John's account, the disciples were *willing* to take Jesus into the boat after he told them who he was and that they should not be afraid. If you were on the little boat in rough waters, wouldn't you hope that a rescuer would just force his way onto your boat and take you to safety? That's not Jesus' way. Are you willing to let Jesus into your troubles?

- *Jesus, I don't want to be afraid anymore. Open my eyes to see that you have moved toward me to lift me out of troubled waters.*

## **TUESDAY: MATTHEW 14.25-33**

*Shortly before dawn Jesus went out to them, walking on the lake.<sup>26</sup> When the disciples saw him walking on the lake, they were terrified. "It's a ghost," they said, and cried out in fear.*

<sup>27</sup> *But Jesus immediately said to them: "Take courage! It is I. Don't be afraid."*

<sup>28</sup> *"Lord, if it's you," Peter replied, "tell me to come to you on the water."*

<sup>29</sup> *"Come," he said.*

*Then Peter got down out of the boat, walked on the water and came toward Jesus.<sup>30</sup> But when he saw the wind, he was afraid and, beginning to sink, cried out, "Lord, save me!"*

<sup>31</sup> *Immediately Jesus reached out his hand and caught him. "You of little faith," he said, "why did you doubt?"*

<sup>32</sup> *And when they climbed into the boat, the wind died down.<sup>33</sup> Then those who were in the boat worshiped him, saying, "Truly you are the Son of God."*

- Matthew's account of the same story is wildly different from John's. The intensity of the storm. The invitation made to Peter to walk on water. The wind died down. The disciples worshiped. These details are included or excluded because the writers are aiming toward specific parts of the bigger story. I wonder how Peter would feel about John's account. Do you ever feel like your story is overlooked? God knows every detail of your story—and the one He is writing still.
- *Thank you God for being the author of my life—you are writing a better story.*

## **WEDNESDAY: PROVERBS 3.5-6**

*Trust in the Lord with all your heart  
and lean not on your own understanding;*

<sup>6</sup> *in all your ways submit to him,  
and he will make your paths straight*

- We will never figure out God. We can search and search the greatness of God our whole lives (and we should), but we will never understand our way to God. Our heart can take the lead in trusting God which allows us to submit our life to Him and His ways for us. If you picture your life as a path—most likely it rarely looks straight. So much growth takes place in the twists and turns. A path made straight by God is never without adventure and growth, but it guides us to God's better story for us.
- *God, I submit my life to you today. I will do it again tomorrow and the next day. I'm learning to trust in you with my whole heart.*

## **THURSDAY: JEREMIAH 17.7-8**

*"But blessed is the one who trusts in the Lord,  
whose confidence is in him.*

<sup>8</sup> *They will be like a tree planted by the water  
that sends out its roots by the stream.*

*It does not fear when heat comes;  
its leaves are always green.*

*It has no worries in a year of drought  
and never fails to bear fruit."*

- Most of us can relate to the image of a boat being tossed by the waves. The feeling of being out of control and without an anchor can be frightening and lead to anxiety and doubt. The prophet Jeremiah wrote that trusting God and putting our confidence in God will allow us to be anchored. He actually used the image of a tree to show how trust leads us to be deeply rooted in God so that we can withstand the drought and difficulties of life.
- *Jesus, you are my anchor. May I be deeply rooted in you—ready to bear fruit when circumstances seem most difficult.*

### **FRIDAY: JAMES 1.5-6**

*If any of you lacks wisdom, you should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to you. <sup>6</sup> But when you ask, you must believe and not doubt, because the one who doubts is like a wave of the sea, blown and tossed by the wind*

- In the stormy sea, the disciples were ready to cry out. They were doubting the outcome of their trip. James writes that crying out to God is a good thing. Ask for God's intervention and then believe that God can save you. Otherwise, you will remain bouncing around in the waves.
- *Jesus, I invite you to show up in the details of my life today. I believe in your ability to give generously...help my unbelief.*

### **SATURDAY: ROMANS 5.3-5**

*Not only so, but we also glory in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance; <sup>4</sup> perseverance, character; and character, hope. <sup>5</sup> And hope does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit, who has been given to us.*

- Paul outlines a bit of the path toward a better story in Jesus. Each step along the way is not easy, but it can lead to a better story. When we persevere, our character is strengthened and made more complete. That development of character leads to hope in God's love which has been poured into our very hearts. It's going to be a good story.
- *God thank you for sustaining me through suffering. You waste nothing in my story. Make me into a person of character within your story of redemption.*

## **SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION**

- Pastor Angela referred to a time when she felt like she was stepping out in faith. When have you experienced storms? When were you buffeted by the waves of chaos and destruction? How did Jesus show up? Did you notice at the time?
- As a group, pray for Jesus to walk into each situation and speak his peace.