



## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

### Trust

1. Take a moment to read Mark 3:1-6. **Another time Jesus went into the synagogue, and a man with a shriveled hand was there. <sup>2</sup> Some of them were looking for a reason to accuse Jesus, so they watched him closely to see if he would heal him on the Sabbath. <sup>3</sup> Jesus said to the man with the shriveled hand, “Stand up in front of everyone.”<sup>4</sup> Then Jesus asked them, “Which is lawful on the Sabbath: to do good or to do evil, to save life or to kill?” But they remained silent. <sup>5</sup> He looked around at them in anger and, deeply distressed at their stubborn hearts, said to the man, “Stretch out your hand.” He stretched it out, and his hand was completely restored. <sup>6</sup> Then the Pharisees went out and began to plot with the Herodians how they might kill Jesus.** As you read this passage what words, phrases or concepts stand out to you?

What is God saying to you through this passage?

2. Take a moment to read Mark 4:35-40. **That day when evening came, he said to his disciples, “Let us go over to the other side.” <sup>36</sup> Leaving the crowd behind, they took him along, just as he was, in the boat. There were also other boats with him. <sup>37</sup> A furious squall came up, and the waves broke over the boat, so that it was nearly swamped. <sup>38</sup> Jesus was in the stern, sleeping on a cushion. The disciples woke him and said to him, “Teacher, don’t you care if we drown?”<sup>39</sup> He got up, rebuked the wind and said to the waves, “Peace! Be still!” Then the wind died down and it was completely calm.<sup>40</sup> He said to his disciples, “Why are you so afraid? Do you still have no faith?” This is a very famous story; you may have read it before.** When this story was originally read in the first century what do you think they took from it?

All of us at times encounter “storms” in our lives. Storms of emotional uncertainty or storms of relational or vocational crisis. The disciples felt abandoned in the storm. Do you think the disciples were in any real danger? Why does Jesus challenge their fear and lack of faith?

The early church rejoiced in the power of Jesus and at the same time, took this story as a metaphor to describe their experience. The church was, in many ways, a boat in the storm, their job was to hold on to their faith, to believe and trust that Christ was with them. Could this story be a metaphor in your life?

3. Now please read Mark 6:7-13. **Calling the Twelve to him, he began to send them out two by two and gave them authority over impure spirits. <sup>8</sup>These were his instructions: “Take nothing for the journey except a staff—no bread, no bag, no money in your belts.<sup>9</sup>Wear sandals but not an extra shirt. <sup>10</sup>Whenever you enter a house, stay there until you leave that town. <sup>11</sup>And if any place will not welcome you or listen to you, leave that place and shake the dust off your feet as a testimony against them.” <sup>12</sup>They went out and preached that people should repent. <sup>13</sup>They drove out many demons and anointed many sick people with oil and healed them.** What an interesting story. Why do you think they were sent out two by two?

Why not bring bread or a bag or money or an extra tunic?

Why stay at the same house the whole time?

When I read this story, I am reminded that there is a time to sit back and watch, a time to focus on the hard work of your own personal growth in Christ and to build your faith; but eventually we are all called into service. We must eventually move from being spectators to being servants who serve with authority. Do you agree? Right now, where do you feel God is calling you to serve? How does the authority you have in Christ impact your service?

4. One of the consistent themes of these three stories is the need to trust God. The disciples don't need to take bread or a bag or money because they are to learn to trust God; the storm brings fear and panic because trust and faith were lost as the waves swamped the deck; the teachers of the law had hard hearts because they refused to trust who Jesus was. Proverbs 3:5-6 famously teaches us to; **<sup>5</sup> Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding. <sup>6</sup> In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths.** Take a moment to evaluate your trust in God. How might you consistently grow your trust in him?