



Lesson Overview

Week of June 13

1 Life Need:

Discuss what causes us to panic.

2 Bible Learning:

Learn how Jesus responded to the disciples' panicking.

Suggested Material:

■ *Adult Teacher's Resource Kit*: Poster and Reproducible Sheet—Faith in a Powerful Lord

3 Bible Application:

See how Jesus can keep us from panicking.

Suggested Material:

■ *Adult Teacher's Resource Kit*: Reproducible Sheet—A Sovereign God in Sudden Storms

4 Life Response:

Dwell in Jesus' presence. Don't panic!

Church/Home Theme:
We are the Body of Christ.

Lesson Focus:

Don't panic! Jesus is in the boat.

Lesson Scripture:

Matthew 8:23-27

Delivered from Fear

Calming the Storm—"Do not fear" was one of Jesus' frequent sayings. He repeated it to His followers many times and taught them lessons about being courageous. Some of those were real life lessons, like the time He overruled nature and calmed a storm. Jesus and His 12 disciples boarded a boat in Capernaum, then He laid down and went to sleep. The men ventured out into the Sea of Galilee, typically known for sudden storms, and soon the waves from a storm threatened to capsize the boat. These experienced fishermen were alarmed and afraid, but they forgot two critical things. One, the original Maker of the wind and the rain lay sleeping in their craft. And two, He said to His disciples at the beginning of the trip, let us go to the other side of the sea. He mentioned nothing about the entire crew drowning. When Jesus is present—all is well.

The Response of Jesus—The panic-stricken disciples woke up Jesus; they called out to Him to rescue them. The disciples considered the situation utterly hopeless. Imagine the Savior's calm demeanor. He spoke one sentence; the sea calmed down.

The men stood amazed. Here was this ordinary man exercising extraordinary power. They turned to each other asking, "Who is this? Who can this be?" Perhaps they later remembered the Scripture: "O LORD God of hosts, who is a strong LORD like unto thee? or to thy faithfulness round about thee? Thou rulest the raging of the sea: when the waves thereof arise, thou stillest them" (Ps. 89:8-9, KJV). "He maketh the storm a calm, so that the waves thereof are still" (Ps. 107:29).

The Important Question—When confronting a rough time, the important question to ask is, who's in your boat? Who is taking this life's journey with you? What is God telling you? Do you have "little faith" like the disciples in this passage? That usually means a failure to hear Jesus' voice. Great faith is not mustering something up. No, it's just the opposite. Great faith means to get quiet and listen to the Lord. He speaks through the Holy Spirit, the Bible, and other Christians.

When traveling through the storms of life, there is no need to be afraid when Jesus is in your boat. It's a quiet time to experience His peace within.

As Your Students Arrive

Before class, write on a whiteboard or poster board a list of things or situations that lead people to panic—for example, global viruses, death in the family, cancer, car accident, financial

crisis, unemployment. Underneath these things, write the question: “What causes you to panic?”

Allow your students a few minutes to think about this question and have several students share their answers. Listen to their answers without commenting or judging. Then ask them to reflect on why we panic when problems or storms come our way. Panicking often results from us looking at the problem (storm) and not what God can do with the storm or us.

Link to Last Week

Let some students share about their efforts to SEEK God this past week.

1 Life Need

Discuss what causes us to panic.

Comprehensive Bible Study Student Book Reduction

Lesson 2 • June 13 • Page 12

Delivered from Fear

Andrew’s mind was a blur. He was in his SUV on Interstate 10 and was traveling more than 10 miles over the speed limit. His wife, Whitney, had called 15 minutes ago. Their 13-year-old son, Latrell, had been hit in the head with a baseball during one of his games and been knocked unconscious.

Everything had been going so well. Latrell’s team was headed to the state championships. Andrew’s department was finally fully staffed. Whitney’s herbal supplement business had really taken off. Now it seemed like Andrew had been engulfed in a deep, dark hole.

What will happen? Andrew wondered. Latrell wouldn’t die, would he? Would he get to his son in time?

“Help us, Lord!” Andrew heard himself say. His involuntary cry directed his attention to the Lord. Andrew began to pray. The prayer was desperate and disjointed.

Then Andrew let his voice and mind rest. He had very nearly worked himself into a frenzy. It was a few minutes later when he heard the Holy Spirit speak reassurance to his mind, soul, and spirit. The Lord had proven to be faithful to Andrew and his family over and over again, just like now.

“Forgive me, Lord. I trust You,” said Andrew as he pulled into a parking space outside of the hospital’s emergency room.

1. Why do we panic when big storms come into our lives?

2. What role does Jesus want to play when storms enter our lives?

3. What should be our response when storms come into our lives?

Read the anecdote in *Comprehensive Bible Study*, then form small groups for discussion and respond to **Questions 1, 2, and 3.**

Question 1 directs your students to reflect on what about big storms causes us to panic. Is it fear as a result of not being able to control the storms in our lives? Guide your students to recognize that fear is the result of looking at the storm and not at God.

Question 2 guides your students to know and believe that Jesus is always present in their lives, even during storms. Lead them to understand that there is no storm too big for Jesus.

Question 3 provides an opportunity for your students to consider what the best response to storms in their lives would be. Encourage them to discuss how any storm that enters their lives is not a surprise to God. Remind your students that Jesus promises to always be with us, even during storms.

Fear doesn’t result in panic when we know that Jesus is with us during storms.

LESSON FOCUS: Don’t panic! Jesus is in the boat.

2 Bible Learning

Learn how Jesus responded to the disciples' panicking.



On the poster sheet, read the third paragraph, and on the poster note the photo of a painting of the storm on the Sea of Galilee.

THE DISCIPLES' PANIC

Read Matthew 8:23-25 and note

the following points in your classroom discussion:

- When Jesus' disciples were crossing the Sea of Galilee, a violent windstorm came unexpectedly upon their boat.
- Jesus was in the boat with them, but He was sleeping during the storm.
- The disciples panicked, pleading with Jesus to save them from the storm.

BIBLE EXTRA

The Sea of Galilee

The Sea of Galilee is not a "sea" in the normal sense of a body of salt water, but rather is a freshwater lake. It is also known by three other names: the Sea of Kinnereth (Josh. 11:2), the Lake of Gennesaret (Luke 5:1), and the Sea of Tiberias (John 6:1).

At its farthest distances, the lake is 13 miles long and 7.5 miles wide. In places it reaches a depth of 160 feet. The lowness of the lake surface, almost 700 feet below sea level, contributes to the almost tropical character of the weather.

The lake's setting is beautiful. The lake itself abounds with fish. Beyond the shoreline of pebbles and shells, wildflowers grow. High green hills ring most of the lake, and the surrounding land is exceptionally fertile for growing crops.

SUGGESTED ANSWER TO QUESTION 4

Sometime prior to the episode recorded in this week's lesson, Jesus had summoned the Twelve to become His disciples. Each, in turn, gave an affirming response. Their commitment, then, to Jesus meant that wherever He went, they faithfully followed Him. They "entered boats" with Him many other times.

Comprehensive Bible Study Student Book Reduction

Week of June 13 • Page 13

The Disciples' Panic

Matthew 8:23-25, KJV

23 And when he was entered into a ship, his disciples followed him.

24 And, behold, there arose a great tempest in the sea, inasmuch that the ship was covered with the waves: but he was asleep.

25 And his disciples came to him, and awoke him, saying, Lord, save us: we perish.

Matthew 8:23-25, NIV

²³Then he got into the boat and his disciples followed him. ²⁴Suddenly a furious storm came up on the lake, so that the waves swept over the boat. But Jesus was sleeping. ²⁵The disciples went and woke him, saying, "Lord, save us! We're going to drown!"

Three of the four Gospels recount this story, and they all indicate that it was at Jesus' initiative that He and His disciples crossed over to the other side, the east side, of the Sea of Galilee (Matt. 8:18; Mark 4:35; Luke 8:22). Mark 4:36 adds that other vessels set out with them.

During a severe drought in 1986, an ancient boat was discovered in the lake's mud. Radiocarbon dating indicated that the boat would have been in service about the time that Jesus lived. Constructed mostly of cedar and oak, the boat measured about 27 feet long, 7 feet wide, and 4 feet deep. The vessel had a centrally located mast and sails, along with oars that could be used in the absence of any wind to propel and maneuver the boat. It could support about one ton of weight—either 15 passengers or five crew members and their catch of fish. Vessels such as these were also used to transit people between cities on the Sea of Galilee, as well as to conduct trade.

Luke 8:23 indicates that as Jesus and the Twelve sailed across the lake, He fell asleep, perhaps due to exhaustion from ministering all day to crowds of people. Then, His disciples were caught off guard when a great storm came up and threatened to swamp the boat.

As the boat began to fill with water, the situation



SUGGESTED ANSWER TO QUESTION 5

The verse draws attention to the fierce storm that struck the lake. The phenomenon was so intense that the boat was being filled with water. Yet, remarkably, amid all the commotion, Jesus remained sound asleep.

SUGGESTED ANSWER TO QUESTION 6

In the midst of the storm, the disciples became unnerved. They were also gripped with intense

fear, possibly matching the fury of the wind. Moreover, the sight of the surging waves filled Jesus' followers with panic and dread.

THE SAVIOR'S POWER

Read Matthew 8:26-27 with your class and highlight these important points in the text:

- The disciples' panicking at the storm demonstrated a lack of faith in Jesus.
- Jesus spoke and the storm ceased immediately.
- Calmness surrounded the disciples and Jesus in the boat.
- The disciples were amazed that Jesus had such control over nature.

became dire. The Greek noun appearing in Matthew 8:24 to refer to the "tempest" (KJV) is *seismos*. In some contexts, the term could be used to refer to an earthquake. Here the emphasis was on the turbulent agitation of the sea (which was caused by the windstorm), somewhat like the rolling that one might encounter during an earthquake.

Mark 4:38 reveals that amid all the commotion, Jesus was in the stern of the boat and sound asleep on a cushion. Amazingly, not even the forceful jostling of the vessel could awaken Jesus from His slumber. After waking Jesus up, Matthew 8:25 records the Twelve's plea for help: "Lord, save us! We're going to drown!" Regrettably, as Mark 4:38 reveals, they questioned whether Jesus genuinely cared about their welfare and safety: "Teacher, don't you care if we drown?"

4. *What might have prompted Jesus' disciples to get in the boat with Him?*

5. *What remarkable event is recounted in Matthew 8:24?*

6. *What emotions did Jesus' disciples exhibit?*

The Savior's Power

Matthew 8:26-27, KJV

26 And he saith unto them, Why are ye fearful, O ye of little faith? Then he arose, and rebuked the winds and the sea; and there was a great calm.

27 But the men marvelled, saying, What manner of man is this, that even the winds and the sea obey him!

Matthew 8:26-27, NIV

²⁶He 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.

²⁷The men were amazed and asked, "What kind of man is this? Even the winds and the waves obey him!"

The Twelve succeeded in awakening Jesus from His sleep. Next, He countered their claim that He did not care about their wellbeing with two claims of His own. On the

BIBLE EXTRA

The Theme of Discipleship

Matthew 8:18-22, the passage which immediately precedes this week's lesson text, emphasizes the cost of being a disciple of Jesus. Jesus' response to several would-be followers indicates that being His disciple was a serious commitment. It is one that many would forsake when the demands of following Jesus proved to be too great for them to accept.

Aside from Judas Iscariot, who eventually betrayed Jesus, the rest of the Twelve maintained a fledgling commitment to Him. During the time they spent with Jesus, His disciples learned about the importance of obeying Him, along with ordering their priorities to align with His will. Furthermore, these early followers of Jesus regarded Him as their Lord and sought to conform their thoughts and actions to His priorities.

Once Jesus had risen from the dead and ascended into heaven, His disciples went beyond imitating His life and circulating His teachings. The Holy Spirit transformed every aspect of their lives. Others, in turn, could see that the Son of God truly dwelt within His followers.

BIBLE EXTRA

A Fisherman's Life

The daily life of fishermen in first century A.D. Galilee was characterized by long hours and demanding labor. There were times when fishermen would work throughout the night, which was a favored time to fish in those days (Luke 5:5; John 21:3). Afterward, the fishermen would return to shore to wash, mend, and stretch their nets (Luke 5:2).

Two methods of fishing were commonly used. The first approach involved several men standing on the shore of the lake, casting out their small, circular nets, and then dragging in whatever fish they caught (Matt. 4:18). The second method required the use of modest-sized sailing vessels outrigged with larger, weighted nets. The fishermen would put these in the water on one side of their boat and keep the craft stable by placing floats on the other side. Then, as the vessel moved through the water back to shore, the nets accumulated fish (Matt. 13:47-48; John 21:6).

BIBLE EXTRA

Severe Windstorms on the Lake

The "great tempest" (Matt. 8:24, KJV) that overtook the disciples' boat on the Sea of Galilee is a common phenomenon. This is due, in part, to the location of the lake and its low elevation compared to the Mediterranean Sea. Another factor are the steep hills encircling the body of water, particularly near its eastern slopes.

This topography comes into play when cool air descends on the lake from such elevated regions as Mount Hermon, which towers at 9,232 feet above sea level. When chilly winds come into contact with the warmer air rising up from the lake's lower elevation, a temperature inversion layer is created. In turn, severe windstorms materialize on the lake. Much of that energy is transferred to the surrounding water and causes it to agitate in a violent, uncontrollable manner.

SUGGESTED ANSWER TO QUESTION 7

The Savior responded with a strong challenge (Matt. 8:26). He pushed back on His followers for their lack of trust in Him. He also questioned why they were terrified by the circumstance facing them.

SUGGESTED ANSWER TO QUESTION 8

Unlike Jesus' disciples, He remained focused and in control. After questioning His followers, He "rebuked" (Matt. 8:26) both the winds and the sea. As a result, everything became "completely calm."

Comprehensive Bible Study Student Book Reduction

Week of June 13 • Page 15

one hand, Jesus questioned why they were so "fearful" (Matt. 8:26, KJV). On the other hand, Jesus drew attention to His disciples' "little faith." The fact that the disciples cried out, "Lord, save us!" (Matt. 8:25), shows that they believed Jesus was powerful enough to turn to when they couldn't control their circumstances.

"Faith" is a key theological term in the Gospels and can be understood as having four recognizable elements. First is cognition or an awareness of the facts. Second is comprehension or an understanding of the facts. Third is conviction or an acceptance of the facts. Fourth is commitment or trust in what is reliable and dependable.

From Hebrews 11, we learn the following about God-given faith: it is certain of His promises and confident in His power (vs. 1); it perceives the divine design (vs. 3); it acts on God's promises (vss. 8-28); it esteems the Savior above all (vs. 26); and it overcomes great odds (vss. 29-40).

Mark 4:40 suggests that none of the above were present in the current episode involving the Twelve. Indeed, the verse records Jesus bluntly asking them, "Do you still have no faith?" As this verse makes clear, genuine faith is evidenced by more than mere words. It leads to an unshakable confidence in the Savior, regardless of the nature of the circumstance one is facing.

Jesus, after making His point, got up and "rebuked" both the winds and the waves (Matt. 8:26). The Greek verb translated "rebuked" can also be rendered "commanded." In fact, Mark 4:39 indicates that Jesus directed the waves both to be "quiet" and "still." Immediately, the "storm subsided" (Luke 8:24) and the lake became "completely calm" (Matt. 8:26).

At this juncture in the relationship of the Twelve with Jesus, they had witnessed Him do amazing things, including the healing of many people. Yet, when they cried out to Him for help amid the raging windstorm, it seems that they did not anticipate how He would rescue them. Thus, they were not only "amazed" (vs. 27), but also "terrified" (Mark 4:41; see also Luke 8:25).

SUGGESTED ANSWER TO QUESTION 9

The Twelve were awestruck at what they had just witnessed. After all, their teacher, who outwardly seemed to be an ordinary person, exercised complete control over the storm.

Comprehensive Bible Study Student Book Reduction

Week of June 13 • Page 16

The disciples' feelings of being overwhelmed prompted them to ask, "What kind of man is this?" (Matt. 8:27). They had just seen Jesus exercise supreme authority over creation by commanding the elements into silence. That is why the Twelve exclaimed, "Even the winds and the waves obey him!"

Although Jesus' disciples did not fully grasp His true identity as the divine-human Messiah, they still followed Him. Upcoming episodes in Jesus' life and ministry would demonstrate to His disciples that Nathanael, one of the Twelve, was correct when, upon first meeting Jesus, he declared: "Rabbi, you are the Son of God; you are the king of Israel" (John 1:49). After all, only the Creator revealed in the Old Testament could exercise control over the earthly realm.

Consider, for example, Psalm 65:7, which states that the Lord silenced the "roaring of the seas, the roaring of their waves." Added to this is 89:9, which indicates that the Creator rules supreme over the "surging sea." Moreover, the psalmist, in 107:28-30, recounted an incident involving some mariners who, amid a raging ocean, "cried out to the LORD in their trouble." The Creator responded by calming the "storm to a whisper," as well as hushing the "waves of the sea."

7. What was Jesus' initial response to His disciples?

8. How did Jesus respond to the dire situation unfolding around Him?

9. In what way did Jesus' disciples respond to Him?



Storm clouds gather over the Sea of Galilee.

BIBLE EXTRA

Ancient Galilee

The ancient region of Galilee extended from Mount Hermon in the north to Mount Carmel in the south, between the Mediterranean Sea and the Jordan River. Unlike Judea, Galilee remained under the rule of King Herod's descendants (Acts 12:1-2) during the first half of the first century rather than a Roman governor.

Galilee, meaning "circuit," "district," or "cylinder," was surrounded and heavily influenced by Gentiles. Herod the Great depopulated Judea by resettling Jews in new or rebuilt cities in Samaria and Galilee. Jews to the south derided its mixed population by calling it "Galilee [circle] of the Gentiles [nations]" (Isa. 9:1; Matt. 4:15).

The region was known for its prosperous fishing industry and fertile lands. It also benefited from trade as a crossroads between Egypt to the south and Damascus to the north.

WINDOW ON THE WORD

'Do Not Be Afraid'

Panic often results from fear. God continually commands us, "Do not be afraid." It is estimated that some variation of the phrase "Do not be afraid" is written approximately 365 times in the Bible—that's one for each day of the year. Whether or not it is exactly 365 times, the emphasis on us not being afraid verifies that when God is in the boat, we do not have reason to panic.

3 Bible Application

See how Jesus can keep us from panicking.

This lesson step provides your students an opportunity to see how Jesus' presence in our lives can keep us from panicking. Make copies of this page and give the instructions to each group. Also, make copies of the handout sheet from the Resource Kit for the group using it.



Handout:

'A Sovereign God in Sudden Storms'

Read the handout and follow the instructions. After you have completed the handout, share your answers with each other and the whole class.

GROUP ACTIVITIES

Discussion Group

Read "Panic or Prince of Peace" from the student book and respond to **Questions 10, 11, and 12**. Serious health issues such as cancer can cause panic, but God can reassure us that He is with us through any crisis. If we keep our eyes on Him, the crisis becomes less front and center, and we can find the peace He talks about. Everything may not turn out "positive" in our eyes, but we also know that His ways are the best.

Keeping Our Eyes on Jesus

Your group should read Matthew 14:22-33 and answer these questions:

1. What happened when Peter first got out of the boat to walk to Jesus? (Peter walked on water, vs. 29.)
2. What did Peter do to cause him to start to sink? (He turned his eyes from Jesus and looked at the wind, vs. 30.)
3. What was Jesus' immediate response to Peter sinking? (Jesus immediately reached out His hand to save Peter, vs. 31)
4. What can we learn from Peter taking his eyes off Jesus? (We need to keep our eyes on Jesus when there is a storm in our lives.)

Comprehensive Bible Study Student Book Reduction

Week of June 13 • Page 17

Panic or Prince of Peace

Fear and uncertainty overcame Charmaine and her husband as they heard the words "Stage 3 breast cancer" from the doctor. Her feelings of fatigue the past months had led her to suspect something was wrong in her body.

Throughout the next steps of chemo, surgery, and radiation, Charmaine tried to focus on God's Word, but the pain and negative thoughts kept her from seeking Jesus' presence. Instead of experiencing peace from the Prince of Peace, she had panic attacks before each chemo treatment.

On day 284, when she rang the bell at the hospital declaring that she was cancer free, she realized she had let panic rob her of Jesus' peace during the past 284 days. Charmaine had chosen fear over the Prince of Peace.

Then, fear and confusion overwhelmed Jeanne when the doctor said she had stage 4 lung cancer. Jeanne hadn't smoked in over 40 years. Yet, her body had given her the signs that it was true. She prayed for Jesus to surround her with His peace.

Throughout her chemo, amid the nausea and pain, Jeanne's soul rested in Jesus' loving arms. She acknowledged and thanked God for giving her two wonderful years of remission. Jeanne traveled, enjoyed time with her grandchildren, and gave thanks for each day she woke up healthy. Two years later, the dreaded disease returned with a vengeance. Jeanne fell to her knees and asked God to give her strength to go through to the end. Her last two weeks alive, Jeanne could feel Jesus' presence with her. One night she peacefully laid in her bed to sleep and went to meet her Prince of Peace.

10. *How is it possible to have peace during a health crisis?*

11. *How can refocusing your eyes on Jesus keep you from panicking during any storm?*

12. *Does experiencing Jesus' presence during a difficult experience mean that the outcome will be positive?*

4 Life Response

Dwell in Jesus' presence. Don't panic!

Your class has discussed how there is no need to panic when sudden storms come into their lives because Jesus is always with us. Now, they will have an opportunity to discuss and choose what they can specifically do in order not to panic the next time a storm occurs in their lives.

Ask your students to read "Dwell in His Presence" in the student book and take time to discuss as a class how they can dwell in Jesus' presence. Remind your students that God desires for us

to trust Him and not panic when storms come into our lives. Encourage them to start practicing dwelling in God's presence before storms come into their lives, then they will always have established a habit of turning to Jesus. Dwelling with the Lord keeps us from panicking. We can also allow God to speak as we study His Word daily; spend time with Him in prayer in a two-way conversation, both talking and listening; and transform our minds through meditating and memorizing Scripture.

Comprehensive Bible Study Student Book Reduction

Week of June 13 • Page 18

Dwell in His Presence

The disciples panicked even though Jesus was in the boat with them. They even questioned if Jesus cared about their safety. As Christians, we often panic and wonder if Jesus cares for us when storms enter our lives. Just as Jesus was able to calm the storm with the disciples, He can calm all storms in our lives. As Psalm 91:1 says, "He who dwells in the shelter of the Most High will abide in the shadow of the Almighty."

► *What must you do to experience the Lord's calmness in the midst of a crisis?*

KEY VERSE

And he saith unto them, Why are ye fearful, O ye of little faith? Then he arose, and rebuked the winds and the sea; and there was a great calm. —Matthew 8:26, KJV

He 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, NIV

DAILY BIBLE READINGS FOR NEXT WEEK'S LESSONS

Week of June 14 through June 20

(See *The Quiet Hour* and *Cross* devotionals on these passages.)

- Mon.** Numbers 15:37-41—Tassels, An Aid to Remember God's Commandments.
- Tues.** Luke 8:40-42a, 49-56—Disciples and Family Witness Girl's Healing.
- Wed.** Luke 8:42b-48—Woman Testifies to Jesus' Healing Touch.
- Thurs.** Matthew 9:27-31—Jesus Opens Eyes of the Blind.
- Fri.** Matthew 9:32-34—Jesus Restores Speech to Mute Man.
- Sat.** Matthew 9:35-10:1—Join the Lord's Harvest Today.
- Sun.** Matthew 9:18-26—Faith in God Heals Many Ills.

Close the class in prayer, thanking Jesus that He is always with us, even in the storms. Encourage your students to continually dwell in Jesus' presence through the week.



As the class members are leaving, hand out copies of this week's *Power for Living*. Take or mail copies of *Lesson Leaflet* to those who couldn't be with you today, or send them to those you would like to join your class.

Before Teaching Next Week's Lesson

Before next week, read Matthew 9:18-26. Ask your students to think this week about this sentence: "I need to have this kind of heart when I seek Christ."