

Life Group Questions

Kingdom Power – a sermon series in Matthew 8-10

Out of the Crowds, Into the Danger / Pastor Jordan Chanin / Matthew 8:23-34 / Oct. 2/3, 2021

To the Life Group leader: thank you for your ministry leading this Life Group. **Take time to review the questions selecting those that you believe will be most helpful for your group study.** You will not have time to use all the questions. Ask the Holy Spirit to guide you as you lead, as you select questions and as you guide the discussion. As a team we're praying for the Holy Spirit to guide you, lead you and speak through you.

When you think about following Jesus, how much does the word “danger” enter into the picture? Do you see Jesus as someone who does everything he can to keep us from danger, to provide us with the greatest amount of safety possible? Or do you believe he is someone who leads us into dangerous places, places that risk all of our comfort, even our lives?

Today's text gives us a snapshot of what it can be like to follow Jesus, and the type of places he will lead us if we are truly willing to give him everything?

Reconnect

Come together with these preliminary questions:

- What is your initial response to the thought of stepping into danger?
- Have you ever willingly stepped into danger? Share your experience with the group.
- What made you willing to face the danger?

Open in Prayer

Message Recap

Review the message using these questions

1. What stood out to you most in this week's message?
2. What was the most meaningful thing you heard in the message? Why?
3. What questions are still lingering?

Choose discussion and application questions

1. What crowd did you step out of to follow Jesus?

Read Matthew 8: 23-27

- a. Why did you choose to follow Jesus?
- b. Did you have any fear in making the decision to follow Jesus? Explain.
- c. Shortly after the disciples got in the boat they faced a huge storm. While the disciples' experience was physical, often the storms we face when we choose to follow Jesus are relational and spiritual.
 1. What “storms” did you face when you decided to follow Jesus?
 2. Some people did experience physical danger because of their decision to follow Jesus. If that was your experience, share it with the group.

3 How did Jesus meet you in your “storm?”

d. Pastor Jordan said, The sea was known as the dwelling place of evil to 1st century Jews. There is an element of it representing chaos, the demonic powers, and death itself. For Jesus to calm the storm at sea did not only show his power over nature, but also his power over the demonic and all forces of darkness. This was a multi-layered, powerful statement.

The gospel of Mark and Luke record this same story, and they mention that the disciples were terrified after they witnessed Jesus calm the storm. Not only because of Jesus’ authority over nature, but also because of his power over the dwelling place of evil and the demonic. They thought the sea was a place to be feared, but now one is here who is far more powerful, evoking an even greater sense of fear to them.

- 1 Why do you think Jesus calmed the storm?
- 2 What did the disciples need to learn?
- 3 What did you learn from Jesus calming the “storms” you faced?
- 4 How did the “storms” equip for following Jesus and ministering to others?

e. Jesus said, “You of little faith, why are you so afraid?” v. 26.

Pastor Jordan said, it seems like it was sort of a test for their faith. Jesus called the disciples out for lacking faith. They were going through a very real, very serious storm, BUT, they were WITH JESUS. That’s the key difference. Storms like this before they met Jesus would have been terrifying, and rightly so! However, their lives were different now. They were called by God, they stepped out of the crowds, into the boat, and ultimately into the inherent danger of following Jesus.

- 1 How has being “with Jesus” impacted the way you face life’s “storms?”
- 2 How has being “with Jesus” impacted the way you face Covid?

2. Be aware of Jesus’ presence as you step into danger

Read Matthew 8:27-34

a. Vs. 27 notice how quickly the disciples moved from fear to amazement.

- 1 Have you had experiences where Jesus’ ministry moved you from fear to amazement?
- 2 How did that experience impact your view of facing danger?

b. Jesus’ led the disciples from the storm on the sea to a much greater “storm” in dealing with the two demon possessed men. Vs. 28-29

- 1 How did the demons respond to Jesus?
- 2 Why did Jesus send the demons into the pigs?
- 3 How did the town respond to the healing of the two men?
- 4 How did the town respond to loss of their pigs?
- 5 Pastor Jordan asked three important questions,
 - a Where in this crowd of townspeople are you more likely to find yourself?
 - b Are you afraid of Jesus because of his power over everything in your life, not to mention this world?
 - c Are you more concerned with your personal wealth and the economy than you are with the mission of Jesus?

c. Has following Jesus felt safe or dangerous for you?

- 1 Why did you choose the answer you gave?

3. Only by following Jesus into the danger will we experience Kingdom Power.

a. Point 3 begs the question, do you want to experience Kingdom Power in your life? Why or why not?

- b. Where is Jesus asking you to step out into “danger?”
- c. What is encouraging you or stopping you from stepping out?

Choose Your Next Step

What next step will you commit to for the upcoming week (and beyond)?

□ Individual

- Do you have behaviors or attitudes that are stopping you from following Jesus into “danger?” If yes, confess those to God.
- If you are unsure if you have any areas of your life that are not submitted to Jesus, ask the Holy Spirit to show them to you.
- Ask Jesus to forgive you for not trusting him in the “danger.”
- Commit each area of your life that you have held back from Jesus to him. Ask God to fill you with the Holy Spirit to walk in trust of Jesus rule every day.

□ Christian Community

- Tell a trusted friend where you sense God calling you to step into “danger” and ask them to pray for you as you seek to trust and follow God in these areas.
- Reach out to your Christian community to talk through the things that pull you away from God and his ways. Ask for the group to pray for you and tell them how they can support you in your walk with Jesus.

□ The world

- Ask God to guide as you bring his kingdom wherever you go.
- Ask God for discernment to see where this earthly kingdom is in conflict with God’s kingdom and how you can live out God’s priorities in your world.

Closing Prayer

A closing prayer is an effective way to point people back to our Loving Father as they seek to apply their new learnings throughout the week. If we remain connected to the power of the Holy Spirit, He will remind us of His call for us and give us the strength to follow through. Ask group members to share what they sense God calling them to. Pray for each other and commit to continue to do so during the week as people step out in obedience to God’s leading.