**1. Motivate**

What do you remember about learning to ride a bike or teaching a child to ride a bike.

* Some kids don’t want help, some do
* it’s a good idea to have them practice or learn on a lawn, not on the street (never near a hill)
* some get it right away, some take many tries
* when they finally get it, you quit running and holding – and they don’t realize it
* there might be a skinned knee (or worse)
* they have to figure out how to coordinate the pedals
* make sure they know how to put on brakes …

**2. Transition**

Children are often afraid in that learning process.

* Our lives are filled with things we could fear about.
* In Jesus’ presence we have no need of fear.

A video introduction is available. Watch it at <https://tinyurl.com/4yxdkc39> If you don’t have wi-fi where you teach, it is best to download the video file to your computer from <https://tinyurl.com/4dhukrja>

**3. Bible Study**

3.1 Storms Will Rise

Listen for the perfect storm.

John 6:16-18 (NIV) When evening came, his disciples went down to the lake, 17 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. 18 A strong wind was blowing and the waters grew rough.

Jesus sent the disciples to Capernaum.

* Went down to the lake
* Got in the boat
* Set off across the lake

List words and phrases describe what happened to hinder their journey?

* darkness
* strong wind blowing
* waters got rough

What, if anything, did the disciples do that caused them to be in this stormy situation?

* certainly not their fault – weather happens
* maybe they didn’t or couldn’t see the approaching storm
* might have been dark and they couldn’t see stars for guidance

How does this scene depict the spiritual struggles we often face in life?

* just like weather, life happens – accidents, financial reversals, illness
* we don’t see it coming
* often no fault of our own
* these kinds of “storms” are dangerous, even life threatening
* even worse if we try to navigate them without Jesus’ presence

What emotions do you think the disciples felt as they faced the storm at sea?

* surprise at suddenness of the storm
* confusion – couldn’t see stars for guidance, waves and currents got them off track
* worried they could be washed up on a rocky portion of coast
* fear of being capsized or swamped

How do their emotions reflect our own struggles in life?

* we can be easily surprised by a sudden illness, accident, loss of job, breakdown of relationships
* confusion about how to handle a given situation
* worried about loss of job, total health failure
* fear of a life changing illness, loss of a loved one

Why might Jesus allow us (and the apostles) to go through stormy situations where His presence seems absent?

* if the stormy situation is of our own making, we need to learn to avoid that action or attitude (like when a parent says, “Let that be a lesson to you for next time”)
* in either case, we need to learn that Jesus’ presence is needed
* we learn His power, authority and love for us
* we learn that He really is there, all the time … we maybe didn’t depend on Him
* need to learn to go to God first, whatever the situation

3.2 Jesus Comes

Listen for a surprise.

John 6:19-20 (NIV) When they had rowed three or three and a half miles, they saw Jesus approaching the boat, walking on the water; and they were terrified. 20 But he said to them, "It is I; don't be afraid."

The disciples had rowed just more than 3 miles.

* They saw Jesus approaching the boat.
* He was walking on the water.
* They were afraid.

How might they have been feeling about being alone during a challenging journey?

* afraid, terrified, anxious
* abandoned, deserted, forsaken
* maybe upset, feeling Jesus had sent them into danger
* wishing Jesus was with them

Why do you think the disciples were afraid when Jesus DID come, walking on the water?

* they were already worried about making headway in the storm
* they didn’t initially see it was Jesus
* people don’t normally walk on water
* this must have been some paranormal occurrence
* given the dark and the storm, this was spooky

What does this tell us about our perception of God’s presence in difficult times?

* we don’t focus on God’s presence
* we focus on the surrounding dangers, problems, uncertainty
* we don’t recognize that God is right there, in the midst of the problem
* we need to learn to be certain of God’s presence … also His power, authority, and love for us
* look for Jesus in whatever the situation – good or bad
* in good situations, Jesus is there, making it happen
* in bad situations, Jesus is there, protecting and providing

How can we remind ourselves of Jesus’ presence when we feel overwhelmed by fear or difficulties? What practical steps can we take?

* study and meditate on the attributes of God – love, omnipresence, omnipotence, omniscience…
* communicate with God daily – reading His Word, worshiping, confessing, seeking, praying
* when we are on 1 to 1 speaking terms with God, we will be totally convinced of His presence, no matter what is going on
* in fact, when you are that close to God, you will be quick to see Him at work just then

What does this passage teach about the difference between human limitations and divine capabilities?

* God is able
* He can move mountains, conquer giants
* He loves us, works to protect and provide for us
* there is a sense in which we limit God by the smallness of our faith

3.3 Jesus Sees Us Through

Listen for immediacy.

John 6:21 (NIV) Then they were willing to take him into the boat, and immediately the boat reached the shore where they were heading.

How does the recognition of Jesus’s presence change everything?

* He is *not* a ghost
* He is their teacher, protector, rescuer, savior
* His presence encouraged them
* they felt safe
* for us, it dawns on us that Jesus is ready and willing to come alongside and protect, provide, give direction

What does this teach us about trusting Jesus in the midst of life’s storms?

* He *is* present during these “storms”
* we need not despair, fear
* He is in control
* He knows what is coming, what we need, when we need it
* His power and authority is sufficient

When do we tend to leave Jesus behind and “out of the picture” of our lives?

* when things are going well
* when I think “I’ve got this”
* when we are straying from what we know is right, living in disobedience

Why are we sometimes unwilling to allow Jesus to enter our problems or troubling situations?

* the “storm” is of our own making, our own fault
* we are proud to ask God for help
* we think our “storm” is too small for Jesus to bother with
* or it is too big, for even God to fix
* you forget about taking it to God – you have been ignoring Him of late

The passage emphasizes that immediately after Jesus enters the boat, they reach their destination. What might this suggest about trusting God's timing and guidance?

* God is in command of time and space
* He can accomplish things with perfect timing
* It has been said, “God is never late, and His timing is always perfect. What may have felt like a delay was actually preparation.”

Use the last page as a handout so your learners can take home the application points of this week’s lesson.

Application

Surrender.

* Make a list of the times that you have tried to “row the boat on your own” in your life versus letting Jesus take control.
* Ask God to help you avoid those choices in the future.

Worship.

* Read the lyrics for “It Is Well with My Soul.”
* Worship the Lord and thank Him for seeing us through the storms of life.

Share.

* Consider how storms from the Lord are for the purpose of helping disciples see who Jesus is.
* Write down something you have learned about Jesus from this week’s study.
* Share that truth with someone else in your life this week.

Fallen Phrases Puzzle

We have a situation here … a car has crashed into the billboard and caused most of the letters to fall off, straight down. We need a wrecker for the car and a repair crew (that’s you) for the billboard. They’ll need to fix the columns with a single letter first. Then look at the short words and try letters that make sensible words. Contact the pastor of the church that rented the billboard when you finish. Technical help and more Fun Family Activities are available at <https://tinyurl.com/4dhukrja>

