



Discipling Disciple

Session 4 - Jesus' Temptation



CHRIST CENTRAL

Part 1 (looking back: hospitality/catching up/review)

identity

worship

community

Spend time catching up with everyone's week – consider that eating food together can be a good context of building friendship and trust in the group. After everyone has shared a bit, ask how everyone found crafting and telling the story. This is the time for caring for those in your group, hearing about what's going on in their lives, asking questions, listening, and praying.

Prayer and worship

Spend some time at the beginning in worship – this can be singing together, or it can be declaring truths about God, each person reading a verse or psalm from scripture etc. This sets the tone for all that follows – we are engaging with the living God - not learning a syllabus.

Part 2 (Looking into God's word)

identity

mission

worship

i) **Ask 3 people to read the story out loud (in different versions)**

Jesus' Temptation (Matthew 4:1-11)

- ii) **Act out the story** - Talk about the characters in the story and choose them. If you know anything about the characters, talk about him / her
 - a. Determine where the scenes will be acted out and the spacing of the story
 - b. Act out the story with one person narrating
 - c. Act out the story at least one more time, with people switching parts. This time stop at crucial points in the story, and certainly at the main action(s) of the story that illustrate the main point of the story. Each time you stop consider how each of the characters must have felt. Describe the scene to each other a bit more, describing what everyone in the scene is doing.
 - d. If you forget parts of the story, the entire group can work together to remember what happened next, or what was said.

iii) **Ask the questions about the story**

- 1. What do you like about this story / what stood out to you?
- 2. What bothered you about this story?
- 3. What does this story show you about God?
- 4. What does this story show you about people?

Part 3 (application and commission)

identity

worship

mission

Ask the remaining questions:

- 5. If this story is true, what does this story mean for your life? How will you live your life differently having learned this story? What is God showing you? What does this story show us about what it means to be a follower of Jesus? How will you respond? (it is really important to give time in this section for reflection and response. Don't settle for superficial answers, hopefully as you model honesty and vulnerability this will be imbibed by the group. However, you may want to help people go deeper, by asking some follow-on questions. Don't be afraid to do so.)
- 6. Who are you able to tell this story to?



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iv) Now, get each person to tell the story they have crafted

Encourage everyone in the group to think of people in their life whom they could retell the story to; mention that at the next session we will ask who was able to tell the story. Again, it is helpful to emphasise the reason for going and telling the story ourselves is that it is the best way for us to remember the story and we are learning these stories to share the gospel with others.

A note on Prayer

Make sure time is guarded to pray. You may want to do it at the beginning of the meeting or wait till the end.



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For next week

Try crafting the story when Jesus calms the storm (in Mark 4:35-40, it is also in Matthew and Luke) using the story crafting process we gave you.

Notes for day 4

This is the first in a trilogy of stories probably meant to illustrate Jesus' power over nature, evil, and death. The sea and wind in this story have characteristics of evil forces, and Jesus seems to react to them—with rebuke and powerful words—in the same way that he reacts to evil spirits. He brings life where there is death and destruction.

Story Outline

1. Setting and problem presented (Mark 4:35-37)
2. Jesus' action (Mark 4:38-40)
3. Followers' response (Mark 4:41)

Cultural and Biblical Background

Other boats were on the lake, but Mark gives no indication of what happened to them. This detail, however, is evidence that this is an eyewitness account. This story includes other details characteristic of an eyewitness account (e.g. the cushion on which Jesus laid his head). Inclusion of these easy to remember details will add validity and interest to this story.

Jesus was asleep, and this description of his calmness is meant to contrast with the panic of his disciples. His sleeping shows his humanness, in that he needed sleep. It also shows his confidence in God, in that he remained asleep even through the storm.

The followers had a sharp tone of rebuke in their voices, as they asked Jesus whether or not he cared that they might drown. They were clearly close to him, and panicked when they spoke, evidenced in the fact that their grammar was familiar rather than formal when they addressed Jesus.

Jesus stilled the storm with the power of his spoken word, proving his authority over the forces of nature.

For the disciples, whose understanding of God was rooted in the Old Testament, supernatural acts over nature's elements is even more indicative of God's power than healings. The disciples would have realised that this act of power over the elements is a clue to Jesus' divinity.

In Greek, the waves were *throwing themselves* into the boat repeatedly. In the NLT, the waves were **breaking into** the boat. Use an appropriate and descriptive phrase in your language.

Be still comes from the noun *muzzle* for a beast's mouth. It means to stop the mouth in order to make it silent. Jesus **rebuked** the storm, giving the storm human characteristics. The verbs used for rebuking and silencing the storm in this story are the same verbs used in other stories for rebuking and silencing demons. This does not necessarily mean that Mark believed that the storm was derived from evil influences, but it is more likely a product of Mark's colourful storytelling.



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The Sea of Galilee is surrounded by high mountains, causing an environment where strong storms immediately followed by calm can develop rapidly. Violent winds enter from the southwest. The winds are almost always stronger in the afternoon than in the morning or night, so fishing is usually done in the night. When a storm develops in the evening, it is very dangerous, and the fishermen with Jesus would have been very aware of this.

Words and phrases

Closest Followers

Jesus' closest followers were with him for much of his public ministry, traveling with him everywhere, learning from him, and sometimes being sent out by him to preach the Good News of the Kingdom and to heal the sick. If you think your audience will not understand the term **disciples**, you could say *closest followers* for the twelve and *followers* for others. These men were not yet "sent out ones," so the term **apostles** does not yet fit in this story.

Teacher

This is a respectful form of address used by Jesus' followers to show that he was a teacher of the things of God and had disciples/students who followed him and listened to his teachings. In the synoptic versions of this story (Matthew, Mark and Luke), other titles were given to Jesus, such as *Lord/master*. Mark's title is slightly less important and respectful, possibly showing the followers' frustration with Jesus at the time.

Faith/trust

This describes man's response to God's promise. It probably implies more than mental agreement, but putting one's faith/confidence in God. In this case, the object of the followers' trust should have been Jesus. You could make that implicit information explicit in the story by saying something like "Why are you afraid? Do you still *not trust in me?*"

See http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sea_of_Galilee_Boat for a photo of a boat from that time period that might have been like one used by Jesus and his followers.