



Smith Rock
COMMUNITY CHURCH

Community Group study guide

LUKE

J E S U S F O R E V E R Y O N E

**For the week of
24th of May 2020**

Fearful Faith



The author Malcolm Gladwell wrote a book called “The Tipping Point,” in which he examined what it took for something new such as an idea, product or habit to take hold in a culture or individual’s life. At what point would it tip the balance and outweigh the accepted way of doing things?

There is a tipping point for many things in life, boats for instance have a tipping point, and this week’s study starts with an incident where Jesus’ disciples are desperate to stop their boat reaching that point and ends with a man who’s interaction with Jesus tips his life to go out and be the first missionary and he wasn’t even a Jew.

Where is your tipping point?



22 One day he got into a boat with his disciples, and he said to them, "Let us go across to the other side of the lake." So they set out, 23 and as they sailed he fell asleep. And a windstorm came down on the lake, and they were filling with water and were in danger. 24 And they went and woke him, saying, "Master, Master, we are perishing!" And he awoke and rebuked the wind and the raging waves, and they ceased, and there was a calm. 25 He said to them, "Where is your faith?" And they were afraid, and they marvelled, saying to one another, "Who then is this, that he commands even winds and water, and they obey him?"

26 Then they sailed to the country of the Gerasenes, which is opposite Galilee. 27 When Jesus had stepped out on land, there met him a man from the city who had demons. For a long time he had worn no clothes, and he had not lived in a house but among the tombs. 28 When he saw Jesus,

he cried out and fell down before him and said with a loud voice, "What have you to do with me, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? I beg you, do not torment me." 29 For he had commanded the unclean spirit to come out of the man. (For many a time it had seized him. He was kept under guard and bound with chains and shackles, but he would break the bonds and be driven by the demon into the desert.) 30 Jesus then asked him, "What is your name?" And he said, "Legion," for many demons had entered him. 31 And they begged him not to command them to depart into the abyss. 32 Now a large herd of pigs was feeding there on the hillside, and they begged him to let them enter these. So he gave them permission. 33 Then the demons came out of the man and entered the pigs, and the herd rushed down the steep bank into the lake and drowned.

34 When the herdsmen saw what had happened, they fled and told it in the city and in the country. 35 Then people went out to see what had happened, and they came to Jesus and found the man from whom the demons had gone, sitting at the feet of Jesus, clothed and in his right mind, and they were afraid. 36 And those who had seen it told them how the demon-possessed man had been healed. 37 Then all the people of the surrounding country of the Gerasenes asked him to depart from them, for they were seized with great fear. So he got into the boat and returned. 38 The man from whom the demons had gone begged that he might be with him, but Jesus sent him away, saying, 39 "Return to your home, and declare how much God has done for you."

And he went away, proclaiming throughout the whole city how much Jesus had done for him.

Luke 8:22–39 (ESV)

Commentary

So far in Luke's Gospel Jesus' ministry has been focused in Galilee, but now it is about to be expanded even beyond the boundaries of Judaism into a gentile region. Jesus gets into a boat and tells His disciples He wants to go to the "other side of the lake." We aren't told specifically where, but across the other side of the Sea of Galilee was the Decapolis; an area deeply influenced by Greek culture.

But Jesus has to get there first, so He and his disciples set out. Jesus falls asleep; it shows Jesus humanity, and although He is God He had a body like ours which got tired after long hours and days of ministry. It's no worry for the disciples, many of them after all are experienced fishermen and have spent their whole lives out on the lake. But a storm gets up quickly, and reaches a ferocity which the disciples cannot handle, and the waves threaten to sink the boat. Jesus is still asleep!

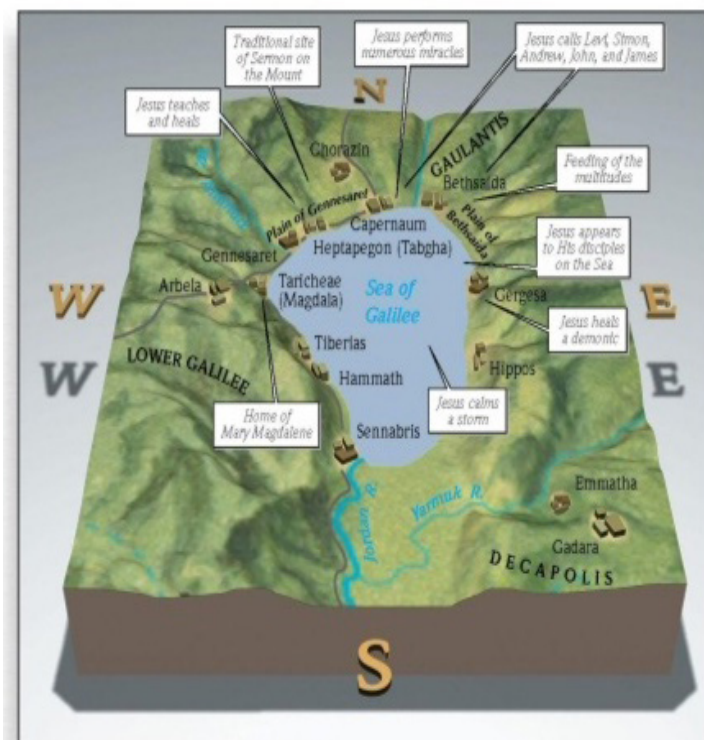
The sea is representative of chaos in the Bible, and conveys an evil intent, but when Jesus is woken by His disciples He "rebukes" the wind and the waves just as He would a demon. In the beginning of creation God separated the dry land from the water with a word, and with a word Jesus puts the sea back under His order. Jesus then asks His disciples, "Where is your faith?" This

had been a test to see where their faith was and clearly by their Response their faith had not risen to the place where they recognised Him as Lord, as their questioning among themselves shows; “who is this...?”

Jesus and His disciples reach the other side without further incident and as He disembarks He is met by a demon possessed man. While Jesus’ disciples have trouble recognising who Jesus is the demon’s don’t; “Jesus Son of the most High God.” Why is Jesus here? They know Jesus has power over them and they are frightened Jesus has come to execute judgement on them prematurely and send them to the “abyss” before He returns to the world to bring judgement and His kingdom. The demon’s had made this man’s life a living hell; he had been excluded from his community to eke out an existence amongst the tombs of a graveyard; the living dead amongst the dead. Jesus asks for the name of demon and He is told it is Legion, because they are many. A legion in the Roman army comprised 6,000 soldiers but the term is used in the Bible to signify a large number. The demons, like the disciples plead with Jesus not to destroy them, but rather a would send them into a large herd of pigs (again not an exact number of pigs for the demons) which Jesus agrees and they enter the pigs who rush over the side of a cliff into the sea displaying the demonic destructive power.

The unemployed pig herders go back to town to share the news about what has happened, and hurry out to find the formerly possessed man in his right mind fully clothes sitting at Jesus feet; the place of discipleship. The people are frightened by what they find, and Jesus receives His third request of the narrative

from the townspeople. They want Jesus to leave ASAP. Jesus agrees, and it is quickly followed by the fourth request. This time it is from the man Jesus cast the demons out of, and he wants to go with Jesus. Jesus has granted the three previous request but He denies this man's request and tells him to go back home and tell people what God has done for him. The man we are told does so, accept he tells people what Jesus has done for him. Out of the four requests, this gentile man is the only one who gets who Jesus is and responds in faith. He becomes the first missionary commissioned by Jesus and he isn't even Jewish or sent to a Jewish community!



Group Study

Open the group with prayer and discuss how you have used your application from last week's study in your life, and what you have learned from it.

What is the worst weather storm you have found yourself in?
What did you do?

What about other storms in life? What are some storms you have been through? How did you get through them?

Have you ever been in situation where you wondered where God was?

If you had been one of Jesus' disciples in the boat, at what point do you think you would have tried to wake Him? Why?

How did the disciples think Jesus could help them in the storm?

How do you think Jesus can help you in your storms?

What do you think Jesus wanted His disciples to get from this experience and what should we understand?

Who is the most surprising person you have seen Jesus travel to rescue and why?

Why is Jesus' trip to this demon possessed man so surprising?

What strikes you about Jesus' conversation with the demons and what He agrees to do?

Read the story of Jonah and compare and contrast Jesus' attitude to Jonah's. How did Jesus see the man compared to how Jonah saw the Ninevites.

Compare the response of the Ninevites to Jonah's message to the response of the towns people to Jesus.

God sent Jonah to deliver a message and Jesus sends the man, who acted in faith?

What did the disciples, the demon possessed man and Jonah all have in common?

Reread Jonah chapter two and talk about how the Lord has rescued you and your faith in response.

Personal study time

Read the following passage and using the REAP method to reflect on how Jesus is God.

9 And God said, "Let the waters under the heavens be gathered together into one place, and let the dry land appear." And it was so. 10 God called the dry land Earth, and the waters that were gathered together he called Seas. And God saw that it was good.

Genesis 1:9–10 (ESV)

8 *"Or who shut in the sea with doors
when it burst out from the womb,*

9 *when I made clouds its garment
and thick darkness its swaddling band,*

10 *and prescribed limits for it
and set bars and doors,*

11 *and said, 'Thus far shall you come, and no
farther,
and here shall your proud waves be stayed'?"*

Job 38:8–11 (ESV)

4 *Who has ascended to heaven and come down?
Who has gathered the wind in his fists?*

*Who has wrapped up the waters in a garment?
Who has established all the ends of the earth?*

*What is his name, and what is his son's name?
Surely you know!*

Proverbs 30:4 (ESV)

Reflection

Lined area for reflection notes.

REAP Method of studying Scripture

READ

Read the passages with an open heart, asking the Holy Spirit to give you words of encouragement, direction, and correction (2 Timothy 3:16). Underline the verses that seem important and that God is using to speak to you.

EXAMINE

Spend some time reflecting and writing about what you've read. Write down one or two of the key verses that stuck out to you. Ask yourself these questions and write down your thoughts:

- * What is going on in the passage?
- * Who is writing and whom is he writing to?
- * When was the author writing?
- * What are the circumstances that the author is addressing?
- * Does the writer mention anything that might indicate his purpose or intent?
- * how do you think the author wants his audience to respond?

APPLY

After examining the passage, apply the text to your own life. Ask yourself these questions:

- * What is God's word for me from this passage?
- * How will I live differently and be different today because of what I just read?

KIDS CORNER



Jesus in Charge

1. Who in your life is responsible for you?

Sometimes, it sure is nice when someone else is in charge. When you go to the movie theatre with your parents, they're the ones who purchase the tickets, allow you to have popcorn and goodies, and make sure you go to the right room for your movie. They deal with all the decisions, directions, and stress; all you do is enjoy your family outing! That's because they're in charge. Their authority improves your experience. It's the same way with Jesus, only His authority is over everything! In Luke 8, He showed that He even rules over nature, the weather, and bad spirits which seemed to have a lot of control. As He exercised His authority over those things, He was helping others and glorifying God. The Lord is in charge of all things, and He uses that

authority for good.

The older and older we get, the more it may become difficult for us to trust in the Lord's authority. Maybe we find that we want to do things our own way, live selfishly, and ignore the Lord as the one in charge. Or, maybe, we doubt that He is truly in control and has the power to intervene in our lives. Either way, it is important to remember that God is always in control and that His ways are always good. We can trust that He is much better at being in charge than we are, and embracing His perfect Lordship in our lives is the best way to live!

2. How do you view God's authority in your life?

