

# EASTER

*A New Day*

## WEEK 2. EXPERIENCING JESUS TODAY

This week we'll continue to look at ways that Jesus encountered people as they walked with Him. We'll reflect on ways that God has been encountering us in our recent past, and gain vision for how we might be able to share those with the friends around us. (If you haven't covered week 1 yet please cover that first.)

**Introduction Question:** What was a recent situation you've had that you've needed help for and how did it resolve? (If you've got a large group you might consider breaking people off into groups of 3-4 to share.)

**Get into small groups of 3-4 (or stay in the same groups if you already split for the intro question):** Everything we do tonight will be in these small groups. Folks can simply open up this lesson on our website or app and guide themselves. We're continuing to use the Discovery Bible Study method to look at scripture so that we all can experience a simple way to lead others to discover and respond to Jesus through scripture. In your small groups, be sure to give everybody a chance to share each of the answers, especially question 4. Next week, we will revisit the answer to that question.

### **Encountering Jesus (Matthew 14:22-33):**

**22** Immediately Jesus made the disciples get into the boat and go on ahead of him to the other side, while he dismissed the crowd. **23** After he had dismissed them, he went up on a mountainside by himself to pray. Later that night, he was there alone, **24** and the boat was already a considerable distance from land, buffeted by the waves because the wind was against it. **25** Shortly before dawn Jesus went out to them, walking on the lake. **26** When the disciples saw him walking on the lake, they were terrified. "It's a ghost," they said, and cried out in fear. **27** But Jesus immediately said to them: "Take courage! It is I. Don't be afraid." **28** "Lord, if it's you," Peter replied, "tell me to come to you on the water." **29** "Come," he said. Then Peter got down out of the boat, walked on the water and came toward Jesus. **30** But when he saw the wind, he was afraid and, beginning to sink, cried out, "Lord, save me!" **31** Immediately Jesus reached out his hand and caught him. "You of little faith," he said, "why did you doubt?" **32** And when they climbed into

*the boat, the wind died down. 33 Then those who were in the boat worshiped him, saying, "Truly you are the Son of God."*

**Discovery Bible Study (30 min):**

- What strikes you from this story?
- What do we learn about Jesus?
- What do we learn about ourselves?
- What can you apply from this passage this week? (We'll have time to share about this with each other next week.)

**Sharing our stories about Jesus (15 min):** Recall a time where you have experienced the saving hand of Jesus (comfort, provision, healing, etc.). Share this testimony in 2-3 minutes with each other. Take this as an opportunity to practice sharing in a way that would make sense for those outside of the church. This is to prepare us for opportunities that arise as we are praying for our friends and looking to invite people to encounter God.

**Inviting others to encounter Jesus (15 min):**

1. The parable of the four soils (Luke 8:4-15) is helpful for understanding where people might be in their journeys toward God. Briefly read the passage together as we begin to discern where people might be.
2. If you were here last week, take out your list of highlighted names that you worked on this past week. If you weren't here last week, ask the Holy Spirit to bring to mind people from your various weekly communities (e.g., work, neighborhood, gym, hobbies) who might not be in relationship with Jesus yet and write them down.
3. Ask the Holy Spirit to show you which people might be open to the gospel (i.e., have good soil) and to show you the hindrances that might be keeping these individuals from fully following Jesus.
4. Share with your small group the people on your highlighted list.
5. Put your lists (papers or phones) in the middle and lay your hands on them.
  - a. Pray:
    - i. for their faith to increase and doubt to decrease
    - ii. for the hindrances in their lives that keep them from Jesus to fade away;
    - iii. for the Holy Spirit to draw them into relationship with Jesus.
  - b. Pause and ask if there are specific people on the list that God wants you to pray by name right now.
  - c. Keep praying daily for these people in this next week.
6. Reach out to the people on your list this week. If appropriate and prompted, tell them you are praying for them and ask if there are any specific things they need prayer for. If your list is still pretty long, do what you did last week and ask the Holy Spirit if there are certain people who He is highlighting and wants you to focus on for the remaining weeks before Easter.
7. Remember to bring this list back to lifegroup next week!