

Bible Study Questions
August 2, 2020
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Peace in the Time of Pandemic, part 2
Mark 4:35-41

1. Like the passengers of Gilligan's Island, who embarked on a three-hour cruise only to be stranded on an uncharted island, have you ever had a vacation go astray? What happened? How did you handle it?
2. Looking at Rembrandt's painting, *Christ in the Storm on the Sea of Galilee**, what most strikes your eye? How does the light and darkness enhance the drama of the story? Look at each man onboard. Which one do you most identify with? Why?
3. What had Jesus' disciples witnessed and learned about Jesus by the time this episode occurred? (Look at Mark 1-4). Yet they are still afraid when the storm descends on their boat. Why do you think they were so afraid? What were they still learning about Jesus?
4. A key Christian doctrine is that Jesus is fully God and fully man. The Nicene Creed (first formulated in 325 AD) states that Jesus was the "only begotten Son of God . . . very God of very God . . . being of one substance with the Father." It goes on to say that He was "incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the Virgin Mary, and was made man." What evidence of Jesus' humanity do we see in this story? You may want to look at the accounts in Matthew 8 and Luke 8 as well. What evidence do we see in this story that makes clear that Jesus is God?
5. The practice of examen is ancient yet always pertinent. Psalm 119:66 says, "Teach me good discernment and knowledge, for I believe in your commandments." A prayer for discernment at the end of each day helps us see the ways God has been present to us – and of how we have been absent from Him. This daily practice helps open our eyes to new ways of recognizing God at work in our lives. Sometimes this presence may take the form of an interruption in our day; something we noticed for the first time, or in a long time; a word of encouragement from a stranger...the ways God makes Himself known to us are endless! Take a few moments to reflect on your day. Ask the Holy Spirit to show you where God has been present to you this day, and thank Him for those times. Then ask the Holy Spirit to show you where you were blind to His invitation or ignored His presence. Ask for forgiveness for those times and help to do better by becoming more aware of His everlasting, ongoing presence in your life.

*viewable online at:

<https://www.gardnermuseum.org/experience/collection/10953#:~:text=Rembrandt%E2%80%99s%20most%20striking%20narrative%20painting%20in%20America%2C%20Christ,city%E2%80%99s%20leading%20painter%20of%20portraits%20and%20historical%20subjects>