

WEEK 2
LESSON GUIDE

FROM
NOW ON

BIG IDEA

From now on,
let Jesus give you peace.

BIBLE

Mark 4:36–41; Psalm 29:1–4, 10–11;
Philippians 4:6–7

ABOUT THIS WEEK

There are people in our lives who can bring a sense of calm to any situation. This week, we'll hear the story of when Jesus calmed a storm while he was on a boat with his disciples. Jesus can handle so much more than we could ever imagine, teaching us that in all situations, **from now on, let Jesus give you peace.**

WHAT? *What are we talking about today?*

ACTIVITY | Musical Chairs With A Twist

- Last week, we started a new series called *From Now On!* Each week, we will talk about Jesus in open, honest ways. The Bible talks about Jesus honestly, so we thought we could, too. Sometimes, our lives are chaos. And we feel alone! Like no one understands or has gone through what we have gone through. Let's put that theory to the test...
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *For this activity, you'll need some chairs and a playlist of songs that work for your group's culture to play a chaotic twist on Musical Chairs. To play, add as many chairs as you want, and stop the music anytime. Explain that after the music stops, players must only find a seat if the statement you read applies to them. The teenagers get out if they move to the center and don't get a chair. They are not penalized if they don't move. To make it more confusing, have volunteers take out and put in more chairs at random times. You can add other challenges to the game to make the game more chaotic! Choose a few prompts that will resonate with your group, such as ...*
 - *Ate fast food*
 - *Felt like you were too busy*
 - *Felt stressed over a friendship*
 - *Had trouble falling asleep*
 - *Listened to a song that was trending*
 - *Watched sports either live or on TV*
 - *Pushed snooze on your alarm*
 - *Spent more time than you wanted on TikTok*
 - *Finished your homework way later than you planned*
 - *Forgot something on your to-do list at school or work*
- We have more in common than we think. It can be easy to believe our struggles, fears, or feelings of anxiety are a "just us" problem, but we aren't alone. We understand each other, and Jesus understands us too.

DISCUSSION

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *If you have more than 15 students, skip this discussion and save it for small groups. If you conduct this discussion, the starred questions are designed for high schoolers, so you may want to skip them for middle schoolers.*
 - **What do you do when you need to relax?**
 - **What's the difference between peace and relaxation?**
 - ★ **Are there times when not having answers to some things can be good?**

QUESTION | "What questions do you have about Jesus?"

- There are lots of questions about Jesus. You sent in some great questions last week. It's okay and good to ask questions. Sometimes, we think we must have everything figured out to follow Jesus, but that isn't the case. As a reminder, I will put a way to send in questions you have about Jesus to us on the screen. Take a second and send in a question about him—anything that comes to mind. You can also write your questions on paper and put them in the box. We will answer a few of these questions each week throughout our series.
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *For instructions on how to set up this module, check out the "What questions do you have about Jesus?" module in Week 1 of this series. This week, encourage them to ask questions that aren't serious. After a few texts come in, spend a few minutes discussing them as a group. You could also have some adult volunteers or teenagers create a panel to answer these questions. Be prepared for no questions to come in by having a few silly questions on hand. Here are a few to get your imagination going.*
 - *Did Jesus ever get hangry?*
 - *Did Jesus ever get a cold?*
 - *Did Jesus have to do chores?*
 - *If Jesus was perfect, did he always win in kickball?*
- Okay, some of these questions are goofy, but it's fun to think about. And it's okay not to know the specific answers. Some things we know about Jesus with a high degree of certainty, and others are a mystery. But let's look at a story about what happens when our life feels uncertain, and we are not sure what Jesus is up to in the midst of all of it.

SO WHAT? *Why does it matter to God and to us?*

SCRIPTURE | Mark 4:36–38

- We all have things that seem normal to us, but if someone who isn't as familiar with what we are doing were to try it, they might feel lost. Let's say you are taking calculus. It's normal to you, but someone who hasn't taken calculus looks at the problem you are solving and would be confused as to why your math has more letters than numbers. They might see chaos, but you see order and logic because you understand it.
- We all have had an experience similar to the one we are about to watch Jesus and the disciples go through. We are about to read a story where Jesus and his followers find themselves in the middle of a dangerous storm at sea. Jesus had seen the same view everyone else could see, but where everyone else saw a storm, Jesus saw peace. Let's take a look.
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Read Mark 4:36–38.*
- Jesus wasn't concerned so much about the fierceness of a storm. He was more concerned by the terror he could see on his friends' faces.
- And the disciples may have been frustrated with Jesus and maybe even felt abandoned by him. Can you blame them? The guy who's supposed to be their leader and teacher was sleeping!

- I love that the disciples voiced their frustration, doubt, and fear. They didn't keep it in. They shook him awake and asked, "Don't you care?" Maybe this question hits close to your heart.
 - Have you wanted peace when things are a little out of control?
 - Have you ever felt like no one can help you? Not even Jesus?
 - Have you felt like things are just too much, too complicated, too weird, too inexplicably messed up for anything to feel like peace?

SCRIPTURE | Mark 4:39–41

- But the story doesn't end with their questions. Jesus responds.
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Read Mark 4:39-41*
- During this boat chaos, Jesus gets up and calms the wind and the waves by the power of his voice. The storm didn't just die down a little. It became completely calm. Then, Jesus asks a few questions. "Why are you so afraid? Do you still have no faith?" I think it's easy to read this in a condescending tone. Maybe we can imagine Jesus rolling his eyes. But what if we imagine it differently?
 - What if we imagine him saying this with compassion? That changes things. Jesus didn't want his disciples to be swept up in fear. He wanted them to see that from now on, they could have peace anywhere. Even in a storm!
 - He wanted to help them see peace is possible even before things improve. I wonder if he was saying, "From now on, let me give you peace before you panic." What would've happened if the disciples had accepted Jesus' peace before they went into panic mode? What would've happened if their focus was on Jesus and not the chaos around them?
- The disciples weren't taking their cues from Jesus. Their eyes had become fixed on other things. But what if, no matter what they felt, they navigated these things with Jesus' peace instead of whatever distracted them? What if, instead of panic mode, they went into peace mode?

DISCUSSION

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *If you have more than 15 students, skip this discussion and save it for small groups.*
 - **How would you have responded to the storm if you had been in the disciples' position? How would you have responded after Jesus calmed the storm?**
 - **Have you ever been in a difficult time and wondered if Jesus cared? How did that affect your relationship with God?**

IMAGE | Who Do You See?

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *For this image module, use the [blank slide](#) included in the graphics folder for this series to create three slides using images like the one below. As you teach, show each of these three images when the teaching indicates: [The Virgin and Child with Saint Anne](#), [Christ and the Lamb](#). A photo like this is one of [people's selfies](#) taken in the mirror of Christ and the Lamb.*
- A beautiful art piece housed in the Art Institute of Chicago is called Christ and the Lamb. It's a gold sculpture in the shape of Jesus as a kid holding a lamb. The sculpture is based on Leonardo da Vinci's famous painting *The Virgin and Child with Saint Anne*.
- Once you have the context of what the art piece is based on, it's easier to focus on seeing the outline of the figure of Jesus. There aren't any other people in the picture. It's just a mirror. But there are hundreds of selfies like this all over the internet. What do you see? Are your eyes drawn to look at the person in the reflection or to Jesus surrounding them?
- When the storms of life arise, who do we look to? Who do we look for? Do we see ourselves in Jesus? Do we see Jesus in us? Do we *just see us*? Art is meant to evoke these questions.
- If the number of selfies we take is an indication, we spend lots of time looking at ourselves. Much like the

- disciples focused on their sense of control and fears during the storm, we can tend to do the same thing.
- But this piece of art reminds us what's ultimately important is Christ's image in us and Christ's presence all around us. If we allow it to, this reality can change how we see ourselves and the difficult circumstances that arise. When Jesus looks at a storm, he sees peace. When Jesus looks at you, he sees peace. What do you see? The storm in your eyes or the God who can quiet your fears?

DISCUSSION

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *If you have more than 15 students, skip this discussion and save it for small groups. If you conduct this discussion, the starred questions are designed for high schoolers, so you may want to skip them for middle schoolers.*
 - ⊕ **When you are in the storms of life, do you tend to look at the storms or Jesus? What would it look like in your life to choose to focus on Jesus instead?**
 - ⊕ **Have you, or someone you know, experienced peace because of who God is, even if difficult circumstances didn't change? What was that like?**

SCRIPTURE | Psalm 29:1–4, 10–11

- This story intentionally calls to mind this age-old truth God's people had read in the Psalm and had been thinking and praying about for years.
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Read Psalm 29:1–4,10–11.*
- Sometimes, at the moment, we cry out to God for help, and then we forget to give thanks or ascribe all the things God's done for us. We may even look back and be tempted to take credit for navigating the storm on our own. This Psalm tells us to take a moment and thank God for everything.
- While God equips us and wants us to be confident, we find our true peace when we remember that God has given us peace. The source of our confidence isn't our circumstances or our strength but Jesus' presence in our life, so **from now on, let Jesus give you peace.**

NOW WHAT? *What does God want us to do about it?*

STORY | My Storm

- We all know life will be chaotic. There will be many days when we're flying straight into panic mode instead of peace mode because of a difficult situation. There are other moments when we have a strange sense of peace when it doesn't make sense.
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Tell a story about a time when you felt like you were in the midst of a storm. How were you feeling? Did you feel like Jesus had abandoned you? How did peace come to you, and what did it look like? How did the story resolve? While you may have had a supernatural peace in your situation, ensure teenagers see in your story that it's common not to have that experience. Choose a story of how God met you in the storm that highlights a few of the takeaway points below in your story. You can also invite a volunteer to share their experience.*
- Trusting **from now on, let Jesus give you peace** doesn't change a situation, but it can change our perspective. During your next storm, here are a few things you can do to let Jesus give you peace.
 - **SHARE WITH SOMEONE:** When the storms of life come, don't try to weather the storms alone. Share with a friend or a trusted adult about how you feel and the struggles you're facing. Vulnerability can help remind us we aren't alone.
 - **SPEND TIME WITH FRIENDS:** I wonder if there was a little comfort for the disciples when they realized they had each other in the boat during the storm. If you are going through difficult circumstances or are in a storm this week, Jesus can bring you peace through others who see,

love, and care for you. Prioritize spending time with them this week.

- **SPEND TIME REMEMBERING GOD'S WORDS.** When you commit God's words to memory and call them to mind in a difficult moment, it can help us recognize the peace God gives. Memorizing Scripture and repeating it to ourselves when our emotions are running high can connect us with Jesus and remind us of the truth of his anchoring presence when a storm is raging.

DISCUSSION

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *If you have more than 15 students, skip this discussion and save it for small groups. If you conduct this discussion, the starred questions are designed for high schoolers, so you may want to skip them for middle schoolers.*
 - **Who is a person who could ask to ask for help to pursue Jesus' peace this week?**
 - **Read Philippians 4:6–7. Why do you think it says God's peace will guard your hearts and minds? How could that play out in your day-to-day life?**
 - **For you, what would peace from Jesus feel like? What is one way you can live in Jesus' peace this week?**

PRAYER | Visual Prayer

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Have your group spread out in the room, away from each other and distractions. Have them close their eyes and walk them through this visual prayer exercise.*
- Let's take a moment and do a prayer that allows us to focus on Jesus, the giver of peace. Close your eyes and picture a storm or a challenge you're facing. It could be you're in an argument with a friend, you've just had a brutal break-up, you are moving away in a few months, or you've had a family member pass away. Picture that situation.
- Now, imagine Jesus meeting you in that situation. What is Jesus doing? How is interacting in the situation? How is he engaging with you? What does he look like? What does his voice sound like? Is his demeanor panicky or peaceful?
- How does picturing Jesus' presence in your situation give you peace? Spend a few minutes talking to Jesus about the peace you need, and listen to his response.

REFLECTION | From Now On Bracelet Or Keychain

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *For this reflection, you need [bracelet cords](#) in multiple colors and a [bead with a peace symbol](#). Before your program, be sure your adult volunteers know how to tie a sliding knot like [this one](#). These bracelets will be added every week, meaning they will need to be untied, so make sure the knots aren't tight. Before you begin the response, pass out a bracelet and corresponding bead to each teen. As you talk, invite them to start making their bracelets. If someone would rather not make a bracelet, the string can be turned into a keychain by ordering [these](#). You can let those who missed out on Week One add the "cross" bead.*
- As we move through this series, we will build on the reality that from now on, we can trust Jesus is with us, giving us peace. Today, we're adding another bead to this bracelet as a reminder of that reality. This week, remember Jesus can bring peace to every storm we encounter. No matter what you face, **from now on, let Jesus give you peace.**