



Week 1: November 3-9

Welcome / Introduce Guests
Celebrate! / Open in Prayer
Recall the Guidelines

10min

2min

Share the Vision: When you think about our group, don't think about a gathering, think about a team. Gatherings are something we attend and leave. We typically only think about gatherings when it is time to gather. Our group is a team that exists to work together to disciple one another and reach others.

4min

Hook Question: Can you think about a time when you felt an incredible sense of awe? What happened?

5min

Ask someone from your team to read or tell the following background for the story:

Our new series starts this week. It is called, "Our Great Hope: Finding Peace in the Wonders of God." We will focus on this series in our small groups and on Sunday mornings at Western Hills Church. Together, we will seek God and discover how knowing the wonders of God can give us hope even in our darkest times.

Jesus's disciples had just started following Jesus. They were new in their walk with Him. Jesus had spent time teaching them about faith and about the Kingdom of God, but these lessons were new and difficult for them to grasp. So Jesus invited them on an adventure – to cross the Sea of Galilee with Him.

This adventure was more intimidating than it sounds. You see, the Jews believed that the waters on the other side of the Sea of Galilee were the dwelling place of the dead. These waters were respected and feared by even the most experienced fishermen. Leaving the comforts of shore meant trusting Jesus with their very lives.

Many of these men were experienced fishermen. They knew how to navigate the seas, and they had seen their fair share of terrible weather. On this day, God would allow them to endure a terrible test. This is where our story begins...

12min

Tell the story from Mark 4:35-41: Remember to change up the storyteller often.

Rebuild the story: Group members retell the story based on what they remember.

Read the story from Mark 4:35-41: Ask the group to read these verses.

Discussion Questions: learn to talk about God's Word with others...

Head Questions: Quicker tempo.

- What do you like or dislike about this story?
- Why do you think the Bible says the disciples were afraid *after* Jesus calmed the storm?
- What does this story teach us about people?
- What does this story teach us about God? (Remember, Jesus is God.)

Heart & Hand Questions: Slow down & wait!

- What do you think God is trying to show you through this story and our discussion?
- Who could retell the story for us right here one last time?

Thank your storyteller for sharing the Word. Ask for a volunteer storyteller for next week. Close in prayer.



Week 1: Happy Holidays! For Some...

With the start of November, the “Holiday Season” kicks off in our country. For many, this is a time of joy and celebration with family and friends. For many, many others in our nation, this is their most difficult time of year. Feelings of loss, grief, and despair impact and even dominate this season. Grieving the loss of a loved one. . . Feeling alone in the world. . . Missing estranged family members. Revisiting all those emotions. . . Is it any wonder that more suicides happen in America during the “Holiday Season” than any other time of the year?

As disciple-makers and group leaders, God has called us to join ourselves with Christ and shepherd others well. This includes caring for the physical, spiritual, and emotional well-being of others.

Over the next several weeks, we will take time remind ourselves of some important principles and practices for loving others well during difficult times. As you read the coaching guide each week between now and Christmas, use it as a prompt to become more aware and intentional with those in your group and your life who need the most encouragement and love during this time of year.

Our goal for this Holiday Season at Western Hills Church:

To practice relational discipleship by loving others well and ensuring that everyone feels part of the family this Thanksgiving, Christmas, and New Year.