

THE ILLUSION

Discussion Questions for the week of October 5th

BIG IDEA: Just as a magician chooses to reveal something only when he wants to reveal something, we tend to “put on a show” with our lives and not be identified in the freedom of Jesus Christ. We make it seem like everything is ok, but it is just an illusion, we put on a fake smile or live in a false identity. Paul tells us in 2 Corinthians that we are new creations, “the old has gone, the new has come.” We can live in freedom if we stop living the illusion and be identified in Christ.

Everyone feels shame. Everyone has something they are trying to hide. In our sin, hurt, sadness, shame, etc. we try to cover ourselves to hide from the world. But God has us covered by the blood of his son Jesus. We don't have to hold on to our shame and live the illusion any more.

ICE BREAKER:

The Fair is here!! What are you most looking forward to about visiting the State Fair?

DISCUSSION:

1. Read Matthew 14:22-24. This is an account of Jesus walking on water but in these first verses we're just setting up the context. Paul, our guest speaker this week, taught us that words like “therefore” or “immediately after this” should send us looking even further back for context ... What had just happened in Matthew 12?
Jesus fed the 5,000
2. So Jesus performs a miracle and then sends his disciples out to sea with out him, what then does Jesus go to do instead? (Pray) Read now verses 25-33.
Interpretive note: we believe 4th watch of the night is referring to between 3am-6am. So the disciples have potentially been struggling against a storm for 6hrs if they were sent out at 9pm or even longer
3. Why would Jesus let the boat get a long way from land (vs 24) and the night get late before He would come for them? Have you ever felt like God has “left you at sea”? When?
4. In another telling of Jesus walking on water the book of Mark verse 48 it says “He came to them walking on the sea. He meant to pass by them.” Why would Jesus intentionally be walking beyond them? Does He want them to drown or fail?
Jesus wanted and wants us to see His glory, He knows that in our pain/ failure we will cry out to him but we often fall in “self fixing”, I'm-doing-ok, I-can-just-try-harder ruts that prevent us from asking for help sooner.
5. So this is the same bunch of disciples that just saw Jesus feed 5,000 people and yet for approximately 6hrs they have battled a storm without crying out for help and then when help arrives what do they say Jesus is? Who does Jesus say He is? (hint: remember what Paul, our guest speaker said about times Jesus' name is used)
A Ghost. – Then Jesus says “do not fear IAM or Yahweh is here” Jesus is revealing himself as Lord.
6. Still clearly shaken by the storm, Peter asks Jesus to “prove himself” by doing what (vs 29)? What happens when Peter is reminded of the storm (vs 30)?
Call me out onto the water. – Then Peter seeing the wind is afraid and begins to sink
7. Does Jesus punish Peter's doubting? Did he let the ocean swallow him up? Or lightning smite him dead? What did Jesus do? *He took hold of him and got in the boat with Him and calmed all the storms.*
8. Do you think God is ok with us doubting him? Do you think God withholds when we don't ask for help or if we doubt?

APPLICATION:

9. Sometimes in our hiding or shame or doubting God we just try our very best on our very own. We want to do it ourselves and we want others to know we're “making it ok” and don't need help. When have been times in your life when you've created the illusion that you're “making it” just fine?
10. Isaiah 41:10, reminds us God is in charge, Isaiah 55:8-9 reminds us that God is more powerful than we imagine, Psalm 46:1-2 reminds us that God is our help. Does God want His children to seek Him for all things? Should we try first on our own and then come to him? What does God desire of us? Psalm 63:1-3 is probably the attitude we should take with God.
11. Hillsong released the song “Oceans” a few years back which is written on this passage. The lyrics, “Lead me where my trust is without borders, let me walk upon the waters, wherever you have called me.” Where might Jesus be calling you outside of the boat? Where might he call you even in the storm?