

MULTIPLICATION VALUES SMALL GROUP STUDY GUIDE

#4 CONFIDENCE in GOD: Facing up to Fear

Introduction:

When things change there is usually more going on than meets the eye. One of those “going on” realities is the emotional currents that run below the surface. Change of most any sort, including the idea of multiplying ministry in a church plant, usually involves an “emotional toll booth” and the #1 emotion is usually fear. Fear that some of our comfort will be exchanged for discomfort and that some predictable things will become unpredictable. When things change there is usually more going on than meets the eye and the sooner we face those things the better.

Church planting, usually kicks up a number of predictable fears. Fear that some dear people will leave our circle of friends to be part of the new church. Fear that the cost of the new church will swamp our church budget. Fear that the new church will struggle and not survive (There is also that fear that if we do nothing we will have failed to lead and advance the Kingdom of God as he would have us!). Thousands of congregations have faced these common fears and moved through the challenges into a positive outcome but none would deny that the process is simple and without emotional challenges. Fear makes giants out of the unknowns and uncertainties. We are tempted to crawl back to our place of safety.

In this small group study we look at the practice of living with full confidence in God despite circumstances. Believing that where God leads, God provides is a key principle that is “bread and butter” to anyone who seeks to be on mission with God including those who join in on the experience of church planting. But first we get honest about the feelings that come when change launches us out of our comfort zone in mission.

Text:

Matthew 14:22-33

Warm Up:

Describe the biggest faith risk you have ever taken. What did you learn through that experience?

What have you learned about fear? How does it impact you as a person? How can it effect an organization like the church? Check out the “Navigating Parenting Fears” clip at www.m-moves.com

Where does God seem to be moving and where do you seem to have an opportunity to join with Him?

Dig In:

1. What indicators in the story seem to suggest that Jesus orchestrated this encounter in a storm with his disciples in order to teach them?
2. What do you make of Peter in this account. What seems to make all the difference in his “sink or stand” moment? What are the “triggers” that cause you to focus on the circumstances around you rather than upon the promises of God?
3. What is the essential truth Jesus wants Peter to believe in his moment of crisis? What is the essential truth God may be challenging you to believe in the face of your individual or organizational anxieties?
4. Peter takes a big faith risk in this story. He does so in response to a simple word from Jesus...”come”. Where is Jesus calling you? How have you sought to discern that call?

Wrap Up:

One of the temptations we all face is to reduce the dimensions of our God to the size of our faith. One way to change that is to hear the stories of the past where God has done great things. What builds your vision of God thereby growing your faith?

As your congregation moves into discernment and obedience to God’s voice it will likely be in the face of a storm. What are the challenges you see around you (finding a planter, finances, plant location, unity)? What must you do to keep your eyes on the Lord?

Believing God and his word for you is a very simple thing...though we can make it very difficult. What do you believe to be the simple act of faith God wants you to exercise?

Prayer:

Pray into the greatest concerns you are aware of. Pray for a planter, for the resources, for unity, for the right location, for leaders.

Pray for obedience to take the next known step. To trust God with the unknown and be obedient with the known.

Pray for hearts of faith to believe God and the guidance that has come to you. Lord we believe, help our unbelief!

Ben Ingebretson, *Multiplication Moves 2012*