



Make It Simple

A Resource for Stewardship Education and Annual Response

Facing the Truth

Use this Bible Study outline to take participants deep into the scriptural basis for the theme “Facing the Truth,” from Psalm 51:10-12 and Mark 4:37-41. Choose from among the discussion questions—and possible activities—to form a plan of guided sharing that will help participants see God’s word as valuable for their daily living, and invite them into both simplicity and generosity.

Opening Prayer

Loving God, you are the calming presence in the midst of our raging seas of life. Gather us in your presence and surround us with your loving arms. Place within us a new spirit filled with joy and peace. Strengthen us in our faith, embolden us in our trust in you, and send us forth as disciples of your Son to share your good news with all whom we meet. In Jesus name we pray, Amen!

Read Psalm 51:10-12 and Mark 4:37-41.

Discussion Questions and Activities

1. As you heard or read these verses from the Gospel of Mark, how do you envision this story—what details does your mind add that are not in the text?
2. Where is the greater storm—inside or outside the boat? Why?
3. What are the “great windstorms” that arise in your life? In what ways is your boat swamped?
4. Take out your wallet, keys, checkbook, cell phone, and calendar (if you have them with you). Your wallet is the tool to obtain things, the keys protect that which you deem valuable, the checkbook symbolizes what you value spending money on, your cell phone is about accessibility, and your calendar is where you commit your time. Which of these symbolize the great storms in your life (the places that feel beyond your control)?

5. Watch the MAKE IT SIMPLE video segment, “Daddy, Will You Catch Me?” Talk about these matters:
 - What strikes you most about Barb and her story?
 - After Jesus calmed the wind and the sea he asked the disciples, “Why are you afraid? Have you no faith?” As Deb described her storm moment, when she chose to give her son over to God, it was a defining moment for her to entrust her son, his addiction, and her life to God. In the busy-ness of our lives that is not easy for us to do. What are the things that are most difficult for you to give over to God, trusting in God’s presence?
 - In the face of the storms in your life, of what are you afraid? Where do you put your faith?
6. The theme for this stewardship appeal is MAKE IT SIMPLE. As you wrestle with the complexities of your daily life, why might it be so hard for you to “MAKE IT SIMPLE?” What are the obstacles for you to living more simply?

Closing Prayers

In closing, pray in thanksgiving for God providing for the needs of the members of your group, of the congregation, of your community and the world. Pray for the storms that members of the group are facing, seeking Jesus’ calming presence and faith that sees them through to truth. End with the Lord’s Prayer.