

Small Group Discussion Guide

Mark 6:45-56

“Veiled in Flesh”

Based on Sunday's
Sermon 1/25/2026

Background

After feeding the multitude, gathering the leftovers, and dismissing the assembly, Jesus instructed His disciples to go ahead of Him by boat. The Gospel of John tells us that He wanted to distance Himself from the crowd because they were ready to take Him by force and put Him forward as their king (John 6:15). Rather than submit to their agenda, Jesus retreated to the hill country rising above the northeastern shore of the Sea of Galilee. He planned to meet them in Bethsaida, the hometown of Andrew, Peter, and Philip (cf. John 1:44; 12:21).¹ Only Matthew's account (Matt 14:22-33) includes Peter getting out of the boat to walk toward Jesus.

Evidently Jesus had some difficulty getting them into the boat, because the phrase “Jesus made his disciples get into the boat” was a strong expression indicating urgency and pressure. The Twelve were reluctant, like children who are having a good time and do not want to get in the car to go home. Jesus corralled them, insisting that they get in the boat. Then he probably gave the boat a shove. Keep in mind that Jesus *forced* his disciples to go out onto the sea.²

Discussion Questions

Getting Started

1. Describe a time that you felt God leading you to do something you didn't want to do, but you did it anyway and experienced God's blessing as a result.

Observation

2. Read Mark 6:45-56. What was happening to the disciples before they saw Jesus walking on water?
3. What was the reaction of the disciples when they first saw Jesus walking on the sea?

¹ Charles R. Swindoll, *Mark*, Swindoll's Living Insights New Testament Commentary (Tyndale House Publishers, 2018), 174.

² R. Kent Hughes, *Mark: Jesus, Servant and Savior*, vol. 1, Preaching the Word (Westchester, IL: Crossway Books, 1989), 156.

4. What was the response of Jesus after the disciples cried out in fear?
5. What did the disciples experience on the other side of the sea that was worth the struggle to get there?

Interpretation

6. Jesus' words in verse 50, "Take heart; it is I. Do not be afraid," according to Swindoll is literally, "Be courageous. I am. Don't fear." What is the theological implication that is easily missed here? (See Exodus 3:14)
7. What was it that the disciples didn't understand? What were they missing?
8. Read Job 9:4-12. How is the description of God by Job demonstrated by Jesus in our passage in Mark 6?

Application

9. What was it that Jesus was teaching the disciples in this passage that is the same lesson for us as His disciples today?
10. The disciples didn't have the New Testament yet to help them understand the incarnation like we do. Why is our view of who Jesus is so important and how does it change how we live?
11. What is causing us pain and struggle in our lives that Christ has called us to endure as we live by faith, knowing that one day we will experience blessings as a result? How do we experience blessings in the midst of our struggle?