



**TOMORROW, November 13
6PM in the Worship Center**

The potluck starts at 6PM, with praise and worship beginning at 6:45PM, followed by the meeting. Members and attendees are encouraged to attend, even if you can't bring a dish to share. We will discuss church updates, welcome new members, and have a time of worship and prayer together with East Campus. If you require childcare, sign up online under the Events tab at parkviewchurch.org.



**OCC Packing Party
Saturday, November 18
9AM in the Worship Center**

We will be packing remaining boxes, and preparing all packages for shipment. Assembly lines will be set up on November 18. Filled shoeboxes can be returned to the office or Room 107 until November 18.



**Thursday, December 7
7PM in the Chapel**

Join us in worshipping God by remembering who He is and what He has done for us. We'll sing traditional Christmas songs together, and hear special music and testimony that points to the work of Christ in this special season. There is no sign-up required for this event.



**Perspectives on the World Christian Movement
Sundays, 1:15-4:15PM
January 21-May 7**

Grace Community Church, North Liberty

Perspectives allows you to hear from 15 different instructors over the course of 15 weeks. This class is for believers from all walks of life. Hear how God has been and continues to work throughout the world. Learn more about God's kingdom and His glory. Find out what your part is in this exciting movement. No matter who you are or what you do, Perspectives will help you learn how to live for GOD'S KINGDOM.

Register online at perspectives.org/IowaCity2018.
Register by December 1st and receive an Early Bird Discount.
For more information email Jean at jeank@graceb3.org.

The Crown and The Cross: A Study of Mark's Gospel

DARK NIGHT OF THE SOUL

Mark 6:45-56

Pastor Jeff Gilmore
November 12, 2017

THESIS STATEMENT:

The storms of life may seek to drown us; but God, the great "I AM," is with us. In His presence we have nothing to fear, not even death itself. We do not need to hear a philosophical response regarding suffering, what we need is a divine encounter that transcends it.

I. THE NECESSITY OF DARK NIGHTS (Mark 6:45-48)

A. Commanded into the Storm

Immediately he made his disciples get into the boat and go before him to the other side, to Bethsaida, while he dismissed the crowd. And after he had taken leave of them, he went up on the mountain to pray.

Mark 6:45-46

- Jesus wanted to place His disciples in a position of trust.

B. Footprints on the Sea

And when evening came, the boat was out on the sea, and he was alone on the land. And he saw that they were making headway painfully, for the wind was against them. And about the fourth watch of the night he came to them, walking on the sea. He meant to pass by them,

Mark 6:47-48

- We often find ourselves in the middle of a storm because we obey the Lord!
- We face storms in life so we can see God in the storm.

II. THE PERCEPTION OF DARK NIGHTS (Mark 6:49-52)

but when they saw him walking on the sea they thought it was a ghost, and cried out, for they all saw him and were terrified. But immediately he spoke to them and said, "Take heart; it is I. Do not be afraid." And he got into the boat with them, and the wind ceased. And they were utterly astounded, for they did not understand about the loaves, but their hearts were hardened.

Mark 6:49-52

- Their fear kept them from recognizing Jesus.
- Their fear caused them to be terrified of Jesus.

III. THE BENEFIT OF DARK NIGHTS

- Dark nights open eyes to experience the divine love of God who is loyal, tenacious, and patient.
 - ❖ Jesus moves us _____ our fears.
 - ❖ Jesus _____ our fears.
 - ❖ Jesus calls upon us to _____ Him with our fears.
 - ❖ Jesus moves us _____ our fears.

Discussion Questions:

Begin your discussion by asking the group about their individual study of God's Word and hearing God's Word preached. The Spirit is working among you! Spend some time asking the group about what God is teaching them. If this is challenging, or if no one is sharing, take some time to remind the group about God's abiding presence in them through the Holy Spirit to help them understand truth and convict them of sin.

Specifically ask people to share some of their reflections for the Going Deeper section in the third individual study called "The 'I AM' and the Dense Disciples."

Orient Your Minds to God's Word

- Read Mark 6:30-56, or select a specific passage (6:30-44 or 6:45-56)

Ask some basic questions:

- Can anyone paraphrase this passage in their own words?
- What surprises you?
- If you gave these verses to someone who had never heard of Jesus before, what do you think their response would be?
- Share some observations about the disciples' experience. What is Jesus trying to teach them?
- As the disciples are seeking rest, they are asked to step up and help Jesus minister to the hungry crowds. How do you think they reacted? How do you react when you're tired and fatigued?
- How does Jesus rest in this passage (v. 46)?
- What is Jesus showing us about His abilities?

Application for the Heart and Life

(This section is designed for Formation Groups = small (2-3) gender-specific groups for confession of sin and reminding one another of Gospel truth)

Gospel growth: Confession and Repentance

As we study this passage, we see a very real application in the area of perseverance and sacrifice. Often God calls us to love our neighbor, spend time with our family, or have an exhausting conversation when we are already tired and have zero energy. Our response in those moments often reveals an idol of comfort.

- How do you struggle with laziness, apathy, and comfort?
- In moments of fatigue, how could you find strength to persevere? Where does Jesus find it?
- Denying the idol of comfort is not always neglecting rest. What are some ways you rest in the Lord vs. resting in the flesh?

Gospel promise

Jesus calls us out of comfort and into intimacy with God. Encourage one another that Jesus is better than earthly comforts, and remember He always "gives more grace" (James 4:6). Rest in His grace and fight to lean into discomfort for His glory.