



Storm Warning: Week 1 — “Calm Before the Storm”

CONNECT: If you were offered \$100 million to fight Mike Tyson, but you had to survive the first round to get the money, would you do it?

GROW:

1. As a group, discuss this statement: *Every follower of Jesus is either in a storm, coming out of a storm, or headed for a storm.*
2. **Read Matthew 5:3-11.** In what ways does Jesus' message sound upside down and entirely backward? Does the world work this way?
3. Jesus' audience was desperate. They had been through some storms. Which of these storms have you faced, or which of them do you anticipate being hard to face?
 - Divorce breaking up a home
 - Moments of anger
 - Captivated by lust
 - People breaking promises
 - People not listening to you
 - Financial challenges
4. Scott shared the story of Leo Tolstoy hearing the *words* of Jesus, but missing Jesus *Himself*. In other words: seeing the standard, but missing the Savior. How are we tempted to do the same? What happens when we do?
5. What's the problem with trying to measure up to God's standard by our own efforts and good behavior? Does that lead to a high view of God or self?
6. A well-prepared life must be constructed on a true foundation. Many ideas, philosophies, and worldviews are available to us—what are some options people choose?
7. **Read Matthew 7:24-29.** Jesus makes the claim that if you build your life on His teachings, you'll be able to endure *anything* life throws at you. Why do His words hold up when pain, suffering, and adversity come our way?
 - What could it look like to put Jesus' words into practice? (Pick a few examples/situations from question #3 to discuss as a group.)
8. Either we build our life on Jesus, or we don't. In what ways do you sense Jesus inviting you to build on His firm foundation today?

PRAY: *Jesus, thank you for giving us a firm foundation to build our lives on. Thank you for not leaving us to face storms on our own or meet the standard by our own effort. You are an incredible Savior. Help me to trust Your words and put them into practice.*

NEXT: This week, read Jesus' entire Sermon on the Mount found in Matthew 5-7. It will only take you about 15 minutes to read. Meditate on His words and His invitation to build your life on the rock of His teachings.