

THE SURPRISING JESUS

Studies in the Book of Mark

~Week Five~

“Ruler of the Wind and Waves”

Mark 4:35-41



Life Groups

We continue our study of the book of Mark entitled “The Surprising Jesus.” Whether you work through these studies on your own, with a friend, or with a UPC Life Group, they will help you develop a HEAD that enjoys God’s truth, a HEART of love for God and neighbor, and HANDS eager to serve the King.

A reminder... These weekly studies are connected to the Sunday sermons at UPC. On Sunday morning you will hear a sermon on a passage from the book of Mark. The study guide includes a “Look Back” section to help you reflect on the sermon, and a “Look Up” section to take you through the NEXT passage in the book of Mark. If you miss a sermon, you can always listen to it online at www.upc-orlando.com.

LOOK BACK – Mark 4:1-34

This chapter of Mark’s gospel shows how Jesus used stories to communicate powerful truths of the gospel. Using everyday illustrations about seeds, soils, and lamps, Jesus connects with real people, calling those who will, to listen!

a) The longest story in this chapter (verses 1-20) is about a farmer sowing seed on various kinds of soil. Identify the four different “soils” into which the seed fell (verses 4-8):

b) What did Jesus mean by the words, “He who has ears to hear, let him hear” (verses 9, 23)?

c) In the spiritual meaning of this parable, what does the seed symbolize? (Hint: See Luke 8:11)

d) So what do the different soils represent (verses 15-20)?

e) What does the illustration about a lamp on a stand (verses 21-23) mean to you?

f) What is Jesus saying about the Kingdom of God in verses 26-32?

g) In what specific ways has your heart been moved by this section of Scripture?

LOOK UP – Mark 4:35-41

Thus far in our study of Mark's gospel we have seen the power of Jesus over sin and over Satan. In this week's episode we observe the power of Jesus over nature. Jesus' calming of the storm illustrates His authority over heaven and earth, and how we are to respond to it by faith.

Mark 4:35-36 – Jesus Seeking

a) Jesus leaves Galilee and sails across the lake to the more pagan region known as the Decapolis (the "Ten Cities"). Do you see the connection between Jesus traveling to this region and His teaching on the Kingdom in verses 26-32?

b) What do you suppose was the disciples' reaction to Jesus' instruction to sail over to the other side of the lake?

c) Who was Jesus seeking on the other side of the Sea of Galilee? (Hint: Skip ahead to Mark 5:1-21.) What does this say about Jesus' mission on earth both then and now?

Mark 4:37-41 – Jesus Saving

a) Imagine Jesus sleeping in the stern of the boat while this "furious squall" was raging (verses 37-38). What different things about the person of Jesus are revealed in these two verses?

b) Re-read Mark 1:21-27. What are the similarities between that story and the present one?

c) Jesus rebukes the disciples for their lack of faith (verse 40). How would this story read differently if the disciples had had more faith?

d) Do you find anything surprising about the disciples' emotional reaction to the calming of the storm (verse 41)?

LOOK IN – Reflect

a) What are your fears right now? Spell them out:

b) In light of this story, what should you do with those fears?

LOOK OUT – Apply

This passage of Scripture is one of many that demonstrate that Jesus came to seek and to save helpless people from destruction. One application we can take away from this story is that we who have been spared destruction ought to be seeking those still in danger. Is there someone – a friend, neighbor, relative, or co-worker – whom God has put in your path who does not know the Ruler of the wind and waves? Jesus crossed the Sea of Galilee to find a demon-possessed man. What can you do this week to take another step toward your friend in need of help?