

**GOOD NEWS FROM THE KING**  
**A Study of the Gospel According to Mark**  
**Mark 4:26–41**

*Holy Bible, New International Version ©2011*

*"He also said, 'This is what the kingdom of God is like.'" Mark 4:26a*

**Before you read:**

In Mark 1:15 Jesus proclaimed, "The time has come... The kingdom of God has come near." What do you think of when you hear the phrase "the kingdom of God"?

**Pray for the Holy Spirit to open your heart to his word.**

Read through this week's passage and jot down any thoughts and questions you may have.


**Read Mark 4:26–29.**

1. In the Parable of the Sower, the seed is the word of God (4:14). In this parable, what does the farmer do with the seed? (v. 26)
  
2. What does the farmer contribute to the growth of the seed? (vv. 27–28)
  
3. The sowing of seed and the process of germination began with Jesus' earthly ministry. What does the harvest represent? (Joel 3:12–13; Revelation 14:15–16)
  
4. The farmer confidently expects a harvest, and his confidence is justified. As believers, what confidence do we have about the kingdom of God? (vv. 28–29; Daniel 2:44; Matthew 24:14; Revelation 11:15)

**God's Kingdom Grows**


"We do not need to be anxious and struggle: the seed will bear fruit of its own accord. We cannot understand the process of spiritual growth, any more than we can understand the process of natural growth, but we do not need to understand in order to share in it. The seed needs only the right conditions for growth. Harvest is a promise..."<sup>1</sup>

**Read Mark 4:30–34.**

5. How does the world tend to assess status and material things—houses, clothes, schools, vacations...?
  
6. Consider what the appearance of the mustard seed might lead you to expect, yet what becomes of the seed? (v. 32; \* Ezekiel 17:22–24)


7. How is Jesus the seed that this kingdom parable is describing? (John 1:14; 12:23–24; Philippians 2:5–11)
  
8. In the kingdom Jesus describes, small and simple things take positions of honor and bring blessing to others.
  - a. In what ways do worldly assessments distort the way you look at people, the church, and even the kingdom of God?
  
  - b. In what ways could a clarified perspective change the way you live? (Matthew 18:2–4; John 12:24–26; 1 Corinthians 1:18–29)
  
  - c. Who is given the privilege of understanding the mysteries of the kingdom of God? (v. 34)

**Read Mark 4:35–41.**

9. Jesus initiates the trip across the Sea of Galilee at night and a “furious squall” (v. 37) comes upon them. How do the disciples react? (v. 38)
  
10. How does Jesus show that he has mastery over the wind and the waves? (v. 39)
  
11. The disciples were in a very scary situation, but the loving and powerful Jesus questions their lack of faith (v. 40). How do you think Jesus wants his disciples to react?
  
12. The terrified disciples ask the question “Who is this?” (v. 41). What is the answer? (Mark 1:1; Psalm 89:8–9;  Psalm 107:28–30)
  
13. Consider a situation that is causing you to doubt whether Jesus cares for you or not.
  - a. What question(s) are you asking him?
  
  - b. What question(s) might he be asking you?
  
  - c. What have you learned about Jesus and his kingdom that strengthens your faith?

---

This lesson on Mark’s Gospel is adapted from “Life of a Servant” by New Life Glenside Women’s Bible Study, 2002–2003.

\* indicates the passage is for further study.

<sup>1</sup> R. Alan Cole, “Mark” in *New Bible Commentary: 21<sup>st</sup> Century Edition*, consulting editors D. A. Carson et al., (Downers Grove: IVP Academic, 1994), 958, (note on Mark 4:26–34).