

## Teaching Notes- Mark 4: 35-41

*For a one-hour, interactive, inductive study using a manuscript of the text.*

**Note:** the key to this study is to have the group generate questions based on and flowing out of the text, then spend the bulk of the time answering the questions together. In this way you interpret the text as a group. Then the teacher summarizes the main points, and leads the group in processing (“applying”) the passage.

**Note:** These notes are only SUGGESTIONS. It is very important for you to develop your own study, and practice it before leading it at Urbana!

**5 minutes- Introduction to Manuscript study and to the Study** (*This should normally take just a minute but this is the first study of Urbana so some intro to Manuscript study may be needed*).

### **Intro to Manuscript Study**

What do you notice that is different between this Manuscript of the passage and your regular Bible?

- no verses, paragraphs, chapter divisions, helps.
- lots of white space

What are some advantages of this, do you think?

- it doesn't “look” like a Bible, so you can have a fresh look at it and eliminate some preconceptions
- It allows you to see the themes more easily, circle words, and make connections.
- It gives you plenty of room to mark up the text, write questions and responses.

### **Intro. to how to enter the text:**

Creative idea: Pretend you are a movie director. How would you set up the “scene” described in this story? What special effects would you have? What would be the “motivation” for the actors? What camera angles would you use? Etc.

OR

Alternate idea: “There are three ways to enter a text:

1. Find the specifics by answering the “newspaper questions” – who, what, when, where, how?
2. Find relationships or “connections” in the text. Are there words or phrases that repeat? That are similar? That contrast? A cause that leads to an effect? Mark them.
3. Put yourself emotionally into the story. Become a character in the story. What are you seeing, feeling, smelling, experiencing?”

**5 minutes.** Pray, and give them time for personal study, using the ideas for entering the text you have just told them. Also, tell them to write down questions they might have, “As you are reading and studying the passage, write down any questions you may have that jump out at you from the text. Is there anything that interests or intrigues you? Anything you don't understand?”

**15 Minutes.** Have a few participants describe how they set up their movie. Share observations and questions from the passage together. Just note the questions as they share them, don't work at answering them yet. Keep this part lively.

**20 minutes-** (the heart of the study!) Walk through the passage again and answer in sequence the main questions that they had. Work on answers together from the text. Here are some of the main questions we hope they come up with, and some possible answers.

<b>Question</b>	<b>Possible Answer</b>
“on that day”- what day was it?	From the context, it was a long day of teaching for Jesus. He had told His most important parable, the parable of the soils, talked to His disciples about the secret of the Kingdom, and told many more parables.
What does it mean “just as He was”? Why would God be asleep during a storm?	“Just as He was” possibly means that He went right into the boat after teaching, so He would be REALLY tired. Jesus was fully man as well as fully God, so as a human being He would naturally sleep soundly after giving Himself to people all day by teaching them and interacting with them.
What does it mean “other boats were with him?”	Perhaps Mark included that detail to show that others were affected by this storm also and witnessed it, so it was not a mythological occurrence. In witnessing the storm and then the calm they too benefited from Jesus’ power,
What are the disciples motives in waking Jesus up? How do they perceive Jesus at that point in the storm?	This is a key question. The disciples were desperate, they thought they were going to DIE! They needed everyone to help with bailing. And they express some annoyance at Jesus for not getting up earlier and helping. They call Him “teacher” since that was what He did all that day, and it seems that that was their perception of who He was at that point.
What is Jesus’ attitude toward the disciples when He wakes up, and why does He ask them “why are you afraid?”	His goal was to train them as fishers of men, makers of disciples, and citizens of His Kingdom. Their response to the crises brought to the surface their lack of understanding of who He was, and their lack of trust in Him. His attitude toward them and questions about their faith reflect His interest in probing where they were really at in understanding Him.
What is “faith” for them at that point?	In the context of this story, “faith” would be 1. Being in awe of Jesus 2. Realizing that He is more than a teacher, that according to Psalm 107:23 He is God, 3. Actively trusting Him to help them.
Who is Jesus revealing Himself to be in this passage?	These were Jewish men, so they would know the Old Testament very well, especially the Psalms. In Psalm 107:23-32 there is a story

	<p>with many parallels to this story in Mark: sailors go out to the sea in ships, a fierce storm arises, the description of the storm in Psalm 107: 25-27 is very similar to Mark's description; the sailors cry out for help, God stills the storm, the waves are calm, they get to the place they are going. The main point in Psalm 107 is, that GOD causes the storm, then GOD stills the storm. Jesus is trying to show the disciples that He is more than they expected. He is more than a great Teacher, which He is. He is GOD, the creator-God of the Old Testament who make the universe, and who stills storms.</p>
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**5 minutes- Summary:**

A summary of Mark 4:35-41 (Jesus calms the storm) could look as follows:

After a full day of teaching, Jesus asks the disciples to row across the lake. A huge storm hit and the disciples were sent into the first crisis of the passage, "Are we gonna die?!" To make matters worse, Jesus sleeps through the emergency. After waking him, he commands the wind and the sea to be still and they obey him! Jesus' handling of the situation sends them into the second crisis of the passage, "Who then is this?!" Jesus is more than they expected. He isn't just a teacher, he is the creator of the whole universe. Like the disciples, following Jesus will lead us into situations, which press to the surface the true state of our understanding of him. Jesus will take us into crisis in order to reveal more of himself to us.

OR

Jesus is more than the disciples, or we, expect!

Jesus is the creator/God of the Old Testament!

Following Jesus will often lead us into situation which press to the surface the true state of our understanding of Him.

Jesus can bring calm to storms in our lives- but the teaching is more than that. Jesus sometimes takes us into crises in order to reveal more of Himself to us!

**10 minutes- Process/apply.** (Don't "skimp" on this time!!)

POSSIBLE application questions, depending on where God is has been leading the group as they see the main points of the passage. Pick no more than two:

*In what ways has Jesus been more than you expected? Praise Him for this!*

*What storms are you experiencing in your life right now? How is Jesus using this to press to the surface the true state of your understanding and trust in Him? What is He trying to reveal to you about Himself?*

*What would "calm" look like for your storm?*

*We often lose sight of the reality that Jesus, whom we follow is the creator of the whole universe. What areas your life are you struggling to trust Him in? What difference does it make to you in those areas that He controls creation?*

*Do you struggle more to believe in Jesus' care for you or His power? Talk to Him about those struggles and pray for Him to increase your faith.*

*On the back of your sheet, make 3 columns. Title them fear, stress, and distress, respectively. List areas of your life where you are currently experiencing any of those.*

*In Ps. 107:23-32, those in distress because of the storm cried out to the Lord. The disciples accuse Jesus rather than ask for His deliverance. Are you more likely to accuse the Lord or pray when you hit difficulty? Give an example.*

*Spend time praying in pairs about the difficulties you are currently experiencing.*