

# Discussion Guide

Week of November 18, 2012

Mark 4:21-34

## Passage Overview:

Mark 4 contains a series of parables about the kingdom, or “rule,” of God. The OT speaks of a day when God will once again rule the earth after defeating the kingdoms of the world and saving his people. Accordingly, Mark portrays Jesus as God’s King (Mark 1-3) who has come with God’s authority to God’s world to usher in God’s kingdom. And yet it comes secretly (v11) through the word of God so that people have an opportunity to repent and escape God’s judgment. But his kingdom’s secret coming will give way to open glory and triumph in the future when God’s rule will one day fill the world (v32) for all to see (v22).

## Understanding God’s Word—Read Mark 4:21-34.

- In vv21-23, who is the lamp? What is the purpose of the lamp?
- There is a promise and a warning in vv24-25. What are they?
- What do the last two parables (vv26-32) teach us about the kingdom of God?

## Living and Applying God’s Word

- The parable of the four soils (4:1-20) tells us that responses to the kingdom of God will be varied and frequently disappointing—only one of the four soils bears fruit! How does Jesus’ illustration in vv21-22 give us assurance that he is bringing forth his kingdom just as he intends to do?
- The parable of the grain (vv26-29) teaches us that there is power in God’s Word, particularly the Word of the gospel. Even though its power may be hidden and mysterious, it grows “all by itself” (v28) and has spiritual power of its own. How is the Word of God powerful? Consider James 1:10-11; 1 Peter 1:23-25, and Romans 1:16-17.
- When it comes to sowing the Word (i.e., evangelism), what can we do and what can’t we do? Read 1 Corinthians 3:5-9.

## Turning to God in Faith and Repentance

- What are the priorities of Jesus’ kingdom (see vv21-34)? How can your life more accurately reflect these priorities? How can we as a group embody these priorities more faithfully?
- In the parable of the mustard seed (vv30-32), the Word looks insignificant but produces results out of proportion to itself. In what ways is the Word like a mustard seed? In other words, how does the Word of the gospel produce fruit in our lives? How does it transform us? How *is* the Word of the gospel transforming you?

## Pray

Thank God that he has put off the glorious return of King Jesus to give time for the gospel of grace to bring salvation to sinners. Ask God to help you and CrossPointe to stay faithful in sowing God’s Word, even when the harvest seems very small. Pray also for International Friendship Ministries serving in Columbus.

## Announcements

- Homes Needed for Soldiers’ Thanksgiving (*E-mail sigourney@insidecrosspointe.com.*)
- CP’s offices close at noon on Nov. 21, reopen at 9 a.m. on Nov. 26.
- No youth activities Nov. 21 or Nov. 25
- Starting Pointe membership class (Nov. 30-Dec. 2) *RSVP to robert@insidecrosspointe.com.*
- Children’s Ministry Orientation (Dec. 9, 9 a.m.)
- Ski Retreat (Jan. 3-6) *RSVP to will@insidecrosspointe.com.*