

# LifeGroups

## “Cross-Shaped Fame”

Mark 3:7-12

*UPC is engaged in a careful study of the book of Mark entitled “The Cross-Shaped Life.” The goal of this weekly discussion guide is to help you, your family, and your Life Group dig into the Sunday sermon and the Bible in community with one another. As Christians in the first century were devoted “to the apostles’ teaching and the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers” (Acts 2:42), we want our Life Groups to be places where life-changing encounters with God and with each other are constantly taking place.*

***This week’s main point:*** *It didn’t take long for Jesus to make enemies as well as admirers. Last week we saw that the religious establishment was offended by Jesus and plotted how they might destroy him. This week we discover that the crowds were attracted to Jesus because of his miraculous power. But they did not yet grasp his true identity. The demons did, and trembled.*

*When you come face to face with the real Jesus, you cannot be indifferent. He is the watershed issue, the pivot of all humanity. You will either fall upon him, or he will fall upon you. He will be either your greatest friend, or your worst enemy. So the question every human being must one day answer is, What will you do with Jesus of Nazareth?*

## Share

*Have you ever enjoyed a moment of celebrity? Talk about a time when you were in the limelight, if ever so briefly. Perhaps you won an award, were recognized for an achievement, acted in a play, belonged to a winning team, had your photo taken with a famous person, etc. What did “fame” feel like? Did you enjoy it? Did it have a downside?*

## Study

1. **Read Mark 3:7-12.**
2. *How does this week’s passage contrast with last week’s (Mark 2:23-3:6)?*
3. *What do you find noteworthy about Mark’s mention of the growing number of people who started following Jesus “from Galilee and Judea and Jerusalem and Idumea and from beyond the Jordan and from around Tyre and Sidon”?*
4. *Don’t miss the detail in Mark 3:7. As in Mark 2:1-13, Jesus is on the move and surrounded by people. What is different now, however? What is Jesus doing for his disciples as they travel together?*

## **S**ee Jesus

1. *What is Mark emphasizing about Jesus in this week's passage?*
2. *Why did Jesus give the unclean spirits strict orders not to divulge his identity to the crowds?*
3. *Why did the demons "fall down" before Jesus? How does this expand Mark's portrait of the identity and character of Jesus? How does this portrait compare or contrast with the way Jesus is regarded in popular culture today?*
4. *Notice the word "crush" in Mark 3:9. **Read Isaiah 53:4-10.** Isaiah talks about a different "crushing" that happened to Jesus. Why did the crowds crush Jesus as their hero now but forsake him when the Father crushed him for their sins?*

## **S**end

1. *Can you think of ways we idolize Christian celebrities in much the same way the Jews of Mark 3:7-12 idolized Jesus?*
2. *What can we learn about worship from the demons of Mark 3:11?*
3. *In general, what kind of people were attracted to Jesus? Who found him offensive? What does this say to the evangelical church of today?*

4. *Here's a good question to ask yourself in light of this week's passage: Am I following Jesus because I need Jesus, or because of what I can get from him? What if he doesn't give me what I want; would I still love, trust, and follow him?*

## **S**upplicate

- ◆ *Pray that we at UPC will make the greatest contribution possible to the completion of the Great Commission.*
- ◆ *Pray for RUF campus minister Ande Johnson, as he gears up to lead and disciple the students of UCF in 2014.*
- ◆ *Pray for continued unity, friendship, and camaraderie among our pastors, elders, deacons, and staff this year.*
- ◆ *Pray for people to come to faith through the gospel proclamation and gospel demonstration of UPC.*
- ◆ *Pray for our church of the week: Faith Assembly*
- ◆ *Pray for our missionary of the week: The ESL Team*
- ◆ *Pray for our unreached people group of the week: Comorian of Madagascar*