

# LifeGroups

## *“Cross-Shaped Kingdom”*

Mark 4:21-34

*As a church family, we are engaged in a study of the book of Mark entitled “The Cross-Shaped Life.” We hope you are finding these weekly sermon discussion questions to be a helpful tool to reflect on and apply what you hear from the pulpit on Sunday mornings.*

***This week's main point:*** *The "secret of the kingdom" that we talked about last week (Mark 4:11) was not intended to be kept secret. It was meant to be shared by followers of Jesus. But honestly, most of us feel inept at spreading the gospel. We also think our contribution to the growth of the kingdom is miniscule.*

*If that's how you feel, this week's study should encourage you. Let's talk about the incredible power of the gospel message and the fact that God uses our weakest efforts to advance his purposes in the world.*

## Share

*How did you come to faith in Christ? Did God use a certain person or group of people to introduce you to Jesus? Was it a dramatic, life-changing experience or more of a gradual process?*

## Study

- 1. Read Mark 4:21-34.**
2. *What is Jesus driving at in vss. 21-23?*
3. *According to vss. 24-25, why is it important for believers to apply what we hear from Jesus?*
4. *What is Jesus saying about the kingdom of God in the parable in vss. 26-29? What does the seed stand for? Where does the seed's power come from? What is the outcome of the seed being sown?*
5. *What's the point of Jesus' parable in vss. 30-32? What is its connection to the previous parable? How should this parable affect your desire to share the light of the gospel with people?*

## **S**ee Jesus

1. *What is Jesus revealing about himself in this week's passage?*
2. *How was Jesus' work on the cross like a grain of mustard seed sown on the ground?*
3. *In the Bible, light is a frequent image of hope and salvation. The very first words of God recorded in the Bible are "Let there be light" (Genesis 1:3). The prophets spoke of a light dawning upon Israel in the future (Isaiah 9:2). Jesus called himself "the light of the world" (John 8:12). In what specific ways has Jesus Christ brought light into your life? Into what particular areas of darkness has he introduced hope and redemption?*

## **S**end

1. *Have you been keeping the light of the gospel to yourself rather than sharing this "secret" with others? If so, what are the obstacles you feel are in the way of being more vocal about your faith?*
2. *How do the two parables in this week's passage speak to those obstacles?*
3. *Last week and again this week we've heard Jesus say, "He who has ears to hear, let him hear." What lessons about listening to Jesus have you gathered from our study? What will you specifically do to listen to Jesus and apply what he says?*

# Supplicate

- ◆ *Pray for our mission of making disciples: ask God to strengthen our determination to see the kingdom advance through our proclamation and demonstration of the gospel.*
- ◆ *Ask God to give your Life Group a stronger desire to bless your neighborhood or community.*
- ◆ *Friday is Valentines Day. Pray for the married couples of UPC, that their relationships will flourish and reflect the love of Christ for his people.*
- ◆ *Pray for our church of the week: Summit Church - Waterford*
- ◆ *Pray for our missionary of the week: Caleb & Caitlyn Kenyon, RUF & USM*
- ◆ *Pray for our unreached people group of the week: Sila of Laos*