



LC STUDY GUIDE
"Unfiltered"

The Passage: Mark 4:35-41
March 18 – 31

How to use the LC Study Guide

Hello Leaders! Thank you for your ongoing commitment to pursue Christian community and the study of Scripture—study that leads to life transformation in Christ and strives to serve “the other.”

These studies have been designed with the following aspects in mind:

1. To facilitate a discussion on the passage of Scripture that was preached that particular Sunday using the Inductive Bible Study Method (not necessarily on the themes of that particular sermon). In summary, this method stresses “Observation” (what the reader can see from the text), “Interpretation” (what we can learn when we study the text with various tools, commentaries, and resources), and “Application” (how we can apply the Scripture to our lives).
2. Groups using this study range from the new leader to the highly experienced. Groups themselves have their own context. This study attempts to hit the middle. The stronger studies require about an hour or two of leader preparation to contextualize this resource to the needs and personalities of your group.
3. In addition to prep time, please spend time in prayer during preparation and before and after the study. It’s the power of the Holy Spirit that illuminates the Word of Scripture and we are humbled that He uses our combined efforts as part of this work. (For more tips on using this study, please see the endnotes.)

As always, we are so grateful for you, your gifting, your servant leadership, and all that you do for the cause of Christ. Please let us know if we can help you in any way.

Grace and peace,
Pastor Tim, on behalf of the LC Team

Welcome to our new series, Unfiltered, where we look at the honest, straight from the heart, often raw prayers made to Jesus. We want to see that Jesus receives our direct and sometimes blunt words and feelings and meets us there.

Not to get too far ahead of ourselves, but because Jesus hears all our heart’s prayers, we can be grateful that we are loved by a God who truly listens, understands, and works in our lives. So as we dive into our time, may we open our hearts to the nearness of Jesus, and keep our hearts attentive to what the Lord is doing in our midst.

³⁵ That day when evening came, he said to his disciples, “Let us go over to the other side.” ³⁶ Leaving the crowd behind, they took him along, just as he was, in the boat. There were also other boats with him. ³⁷ A furious squall came up, and the waves broke over the boat, so that it was nearly swamped. ³⁸ Jesus was in the stern, sleeping on a cushion. The disciples woke him and said to him, “Teacher, don’t you care if we drown?”

³⁹ He got up, rebuked the wind and said to the waves, “Quiet! Be still!” Then the wind died down and it was completely calm.

⁴⁰ He said to his disciples, “Why are you so afraid? Do you still have no faith?”

⁴¹ They were terrified and asked each other, “Who is this? Even the wind and the waves obey him!”

Mark 4:35-41

O/I – The first observation we might make is that evening is an odd time to make a boat trip. Why do you think Jesus decided to leave then? All speculations are welcome, let’s just try not to get too attached to them ;)

(One possibility is that Jesus may have seen that his disciples were getting too comfortable with the attention they were all getting as they were traveling in this incredible ministry filled with signs and wonders and this would be a way to wake them up. On a related note, he wanted to teach the disciples how to respond in such a situation, both the physical danger and the spiritual danger. The fact that this scene has been recorded in the gospels would indicate its importance to them. A third possibility is that Jesus simply had a schedule in his mind for the next day and he wanted to leave earlier but the day got delayed.)

I – In the ancient world, the sea represents great danger and storms at sea signal dark forces that take life. Tragically, many people die at sea. What other Biblical stories come to mind when we think of the sea?

When you think of a few, can you recognize a pattern of deliverance? What might Jesus be trying to show his disciples in light of this context?

(The stories of Jonah, and Moses and the children of Israel crossing the sea come quickly to mind and we can also remember that God saves his people in such storms and raging waters.)

I – Mark 4 is a brilliant chapter where he records three of Jesus’ parables. Take a look through them and you will see the recurring theme of growing faith in the midst of strife, darkness and slow growth (Parable of the Sower, Lamp on a Stand, and other Seed parables). How could these parables and metaphors build to this story? *(Jesus calming the waters is a brilliant physical demonstration of these symbolic parables. The disciples needed to learn to trust Jesus not just in the midst of signs and wonders but even more so, in the midst of our most desperate moments in our severe storms and dire trouble.)*

A – The disciples’ unfiltered question in verse 38 rings true for any of us who have gone through our own type of storm. “Lord, don’t you care??” If it feels appropriate, think back to a terrible storm in your life where you wondered if the Lord was aware of your danger. Describe some of your own unfiltered thoughts that you may have felt then and how you look back at it now. How has your faith changed or grown as a result? And what can we keep in mind for the next time a dark storm comes our way?

-
- a. Please note that not all these questions are to be asked in a single meeting. Take some time to prayerfully discern what will serve your LC the best. Select and reword the questions that best fit your voice and your Life Community group.
 - b. Complement these questions with “process questions” (what else? what more? what do others think?)
 - c. When you ask questions, give people ample time to think and respond. Wait. Take your time; don’t rush people but encourage participation. Avoid answering your own questions!
 - d. Application: Pace the study to conclude with difference-making application.
 - e. Secondary texts—use other texts sparingly, even if they are relevant. Such texts will push you into “teaching” rather than facilitating, causing people to feel distracted or de-powered.