



Our Allegiance to Jesus

October 11th, 2026

LEAN IN — What Shapes Our Identity?

We all carry different labels and identities shaped by our experiences, relationships, roles, and beliefs.

- What are some of the identities or labels that have shaped how you see yourself (e.g., parent, professional, leader, political affiliation, success, failure, etc)?
 - How do those identities affect your identity as a follower of Jesus? How do they affect the way you treat others?

LOOK UP — Receiving and Living in God's Kingdom

Read Mark 4:1–20, 26–32, 35–41. As you study these parables and the demonstration of Jesus' authority, consider what they reveal about our identity in God's Kingdom.

Make some observations about this passage (What does the text say?)

- What do you notice and what are you curious about?
- What differences do you observe between the four types of soil and their outcomes?
- In Mark 4:26–29, what does the farmer do, and what happens that is outside his control?
- What stands out to you in the parable of the mustard seed?
- In Mark 4:35–41, how do the disciples respond to the storm, and how does Jesus respond?

Make some interpretations (What does the passage mean?)

- What do you learn about God?
- What do you learn about humanity?
- What might prevent someone from receiving God's Word deeply and bearing fruit, according to Mark 4:14–19?
- What do the parables teach us about the relationship between our faithfulness and God's power to grow His Kingdom?
- Why do you think the disciples are alarmed when Jesus calms the storm?

Now make some applications (What's my response?)

- How are you encouraged, challenged, or convicted by this chapter?
- Why do you think Mark put all these parables together for us to consider?
- What might it look like to trust Jesus as King when the world around you feels uncertain, divisive, or frightening?

REFLECT — Living Under the Reign of King Jesus

- **Read Romans 12:2.** Where might you be conforming to the patterns of the world rather than allowing Jesus to transform your thinking? How could time in Scripture, prayer, or Christian community help you respond differently?
- When you consider the identities Jesus invites you into—to receive His Word, plant seeds of the Good News, and faithfully work and wait—where do you sense God inviting you to grow?
- Who in your life might God be inviting you to love, serve, encourage, or share the Good News with? What small step of faithfulness could you take this week?

Scripture

- Mark 4:1–20
- Mark 4:26–32
- Mark 4:35–41
- Romans 12:2

Prayer

Invite each person to pray about one of the following areas. Allow time for quiet reflection before sharing prayers aloud.

- Identity: King Jesus, reveal the labels, roles, fears, or allegiances that have become more important to me than my identity in Your Kingdom. Help me find my identity in You.
- Good soil: Lord, show me where my heart has become hardened, distracted, or shallow. Give me a receptive heart that allows Your Word to take root and produce fruit in my life.
- Seed planting: Holy Spirit, open my eyes to the people around me who need Your love, encouragement, truth, or hope. Help me faithfully share what I have received from You.
- Faith and patience: Jesus, help me trust Your timing and power when growth seems slow or circumstances feel uncertain. Teach me to work faithfully and wait expectantly.
- Our world and leaders: Pray for those in authority, including those with whom you disagree. Ask God to help you respond with love, justice, mercy, and truth rather than fear or outrage.

Close by thanking Jesus that He is King, His authority is greater than the powers of this world, and He continues to work through ordinary people who faithfully follow Him.

STEP OUT

Choose one or two practices to live out this week.

1. Cultivate good soil: Set aside 10–15 minutes each day to read Scripture and pray. Ask God to show you what is shaping your identity and where He wants to transform your heart and mind.
 - Are there any habits you need to stop that are leading you to anxiety?
 - Are there any ways you are interacting with others that is contrary to how God invites us to interact?
 - How can Scripture and Prayer inform my actions this week?
2. Plant a seed: Ask the Holy Spirit to bring one person to mind whom you can intentionally love, encourage, serve, or invite into a conversation about Jesus. Take one tangible step this week, trusting God with the results.
3. Work and wait in faith. When a news story, political issue, or difficult circumstance stirs up fear or outrage, pause before reacting.
4. Pray for those involved, including leaders you disagree with, and ask: What do love, justice, mercy, and truth require of me right now? Choose one response that reflects the character of King Jesus.