

3. Just the Facts, Ma'am!

Introduction

Continuing our scenario of you as a Criminal Investigator, after getting the *Big Picture* of the crime scene, you must resist the temptation to draw any conclusions until your investigation is complete and *all* the facts are in. In Bible Study, it is tempting to jump to conclusions and begin interpreting and applying the passage before we really observe all the parts. But until a careful and thorough investigation of all the details has been done, there is a good chance that our interpretation will be inaccurate and our applications erroneous!

Make no mistake about it, the thoroughness of our Observation will determine the accuracy of our Interpretation and the correctness of our Applications!

How and What to Observe

1. Read, Read, Read! *Each time you read the passage, try to see something you missed the last time.* Notice every word! In your *Structural Diagram*, take out your **Pencil** and **circle, underline, frame and draw arrows** to clarify your Observations. Noted Bible teacher, **Kay Arthur**, suggests using **Colored Highlighters** to identify key details in the passage. **No matter how you choose to do it - do it!**

2. Look for:

- Key Words** ▶ Words that are especially important to the meaning of the passage. (*Words that answer the Questions: Who? What? When? Where? How?*).
- Connectives** ▶ Words that connect ideas and phrases (*but, and, or, because, therefore, with, in order that, if*). *These indicate reasons, conditions, comparisons, contrasts and conclusions.*
- Grammatical Construction**
 - Verbs* ▶ note tense and number (*plural or singular*)
 - Nouns and Pronouns* ▶ note names, places, relationships
 - Adverbs and Adjectives* ▶ note how and what they describe
- Repetition or Progression of Words, Ideas or Phrases**
- Advice, Warnings or Promises**
- Cause and Effect Relationships** ▶ *“If ... then.”*
- Reasons** ▶ an **explanation** or **justification** of a decision, command, action, etc.
- Questions** ▶ note what is being asked, and whether the question is *rhetorical*.
- Contrasts** ▶ the association of *opposite* things to **emphasize** or **compare** differences. Note the presence of the word **“but”** which usually signifies a contrast.
- Comparisons** ▶ the association of things *similar*. Note **Similes** indicated by the word **“like”**, and **Metaphors** which provide a more direct and stronger association (*ie. “I am the bread of Life”*).
- Emphatic Statements** ▶ statements that reveal **emotions** and **significance**.

Important! All of your Observations must come *directly* and *only* from Scripture. Be careful to see everything that is there, but beware of seeing something that isn't there!

Observations of Mark 4:35-41.

Mark 4:35-41

- 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!"

Notice how circles, frames, underlines and arrows are used.

Return to your Structural Diagram of Mark 8:22-30.

Observe *what the author is saying* in that passage. *Don't hesitate to use a pencil/pen to identify key words, phrases or ideas expressed in the passage.*

Don't forget to use your Mind as well as your eyes. Think of yourself as a *Sherlock Holmes* or a *Lt. Columbo!* Nothing must escape your notice! *Every detail* must be noted and thought through *for your ability to accurately Interpret the passage depends on it!*

Observations

"evening" = Key Word describing When!
"he" & "disciples" = Who!
Key Statement of Christ to disciples

"They took Him along" = Interesting description of relationship between disciples and Christ.

"in the boat" = Where!

"other boats" = description of surroundings

"furious squall" = adjective describing the intensity of what happened

Descriptions of the gravity of the situation.

Description of what Jesus was doing through all this.

Description of what the Disciples did.
Disciples' emphatic statement to Christ.

Jesus' response to Disciples and the situation.

"rebuked the wind and ...waves" = What! & How!

Result of Jesus' actions.

Question by Christ to Disciples.

Disciples' response to what transpired.