

LESSON 1

JESUS CALMS THE STORM

LESSON AT A GLANCE

WONDER TRUTH: Jesus Has Power over Creation

SCRIPTURE: Mark 4

GOD'S BIG STORY: Jesus demonstrates His power over creation when He commands the wind and the waves to be still, and they obey!

WORD OF WONDER: How great God is! We'll never completely understand him. —Job 36:26a

- Welcome Question: If you could be in charge of anything, what would you choose?
- Curiosity Questions
- God's Big Story
- Connecting the Wonder Truth
- Word of Wonder: Job 36:26a
- Discussion Questions
- LARGE GROUP
- Responding in Worship: Seaside Mural
- Closing Game: Weather Game



INVITATION

We invite you to pause, listen, and shift your gaze toward the Father ...

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I was soaked, and there was nowhere to go. It was a simple day trip, and I wasn't expecting a storm. Then almost as quickly as the first clap of thunder roared and sheets of rain commenced, the storm stopped.

Most of my friends had spent the night nearby so they had a change of clothes. They calmly went off to find dry clothing. I ended up sitting through dinner still mostly wet.

I remember that storm every time I'm packing for a day trip now. The result? I always pack an extra set of clothes.

Read Mark 4:35–41.

I wonder how the disciples' lives were changed and what they recalled after that day. Someone sleeping through a furious squall like Jesus did? That may have stayed with them.

Jesus demanding the daunting seas to be quiet and then immediate stillness happens? Never seen that before.

Every one of Jesus' responses was in stark contrast to what was happening all around them. Terror? Peace. Lack of faith? A deep knowing that everything is at His command. He is steady when we're not. He is steady when the world around us rages. Because He has power over the wind and waves.

Who is this? The One who knows you. The One who cares for you in every way with a calm and secure presence. How might knowing this change you?

—Rebecca Stone

Children's Ministry Leader and Author

Wonder Ink Development Team

DID YOU KNOW?

FOUNDATION BUILDING BLOCKS

WHO?

The book of Mark, which emphasizes Jesus' actions, begins by introducing Jesus as "the Messiah, the Son of God" (1:1). This description answers the question the disciples asked after He calmed the storm: "Who is this?" (4:41). This is the Son of God!

WHAT?

Jesus' calming of the storm is a miracle that proves His power over creation and points to His divinity as the Son of God. The sea was seen as a threat in the ancient world, and when Jesus rebuked the wind and waves, the disciples were amazed.

WHERE?

The Sea of Galilee is the lowest freshwater lake on earth. Because this lake is surrounded by mountains, this area is susceptible to sudden, violent storms.

WHEN?

Many scholars believe Mark was the first of the written Gospels, and some believe that Matthew and Luke used Mark as a source for their Gospels. It was likely written between AD 55–70.

CONNECTING TO GOD'S BIG STORY:

From creation to the flood to manna falling from the sky, God showed His power over creation throughout the Old Testament. When Jesus calmed the storm with His words, He demonstrated a power the people believed belonged to God alone, and in doing so, He demonstrated His divinity.

LESSON 1 **EARLY ELEMENTARY**

Small Group

Spark curiosity and get kids thinking about the wonder of God.

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Pre-Service Connection (15–20 min)

RESOURCES: whiteboard, poster paper, or butcher paper, writing utensils, board games or games

Games & Activities Guide

Small group leaders should be seated in place in their small groups 20 minutes prior to service time. Have activities ready to keep children occupied and engaged WITH you. This time is important to build relationships, welcome new kids, and keep structure in the room - you should be an active participant with them! Learn the kids names, and make sure they all know yours too!

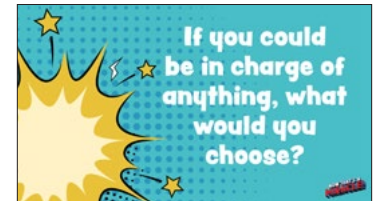
As kids arrive ...

Warmly welcome new friends, and introduce them to your group.

Use the Welcome Question and the following "I'm Curious" questions to engage kids. Say "**I'm curious..**" before each question and give kids an chance to think before answering each one. After each question, consider having kids share their ideas with a neighbor before you call on one or two of them to share with the group.

Consider having a whiteboard or poster for kids to write or draw answers to any of the questions:

- **What are some things you're in charge of at home?**
- **What are some things that are out of your control?**



Small Group Begins

After the Opening Activity or game, Large Group Leader will begin small group time by reading the Welcome Question aloud and inviting everyone to open their Bibles and begin.

Word of Wonder

SUPPLIES: Bible, ball, parachute or bedsheet

WORD OF WONDER

How great God is! We'll never completely understand Him.

—Job 36:26a

Our Word of Wonder for the Now That's a Miracle! series is Job 36:26a. Let's practice saying the Word of Wonder together.

Encourage the kids to do the motions and say the verse with you.

- **HOW GREAT**—Put one arm straight up for each word.
- **GOD IS!**—Point up.
- **WE'LL NEVER**—Cross arms back and forth in front of you.
- **COMPLETELY**—Bring both arms down from above you, to your sides.
- **UNDERSTAND** —Point to your head with both hands.
- **HIM.**—Point up.
- **JOB 36:26a**—Hold your hands together in front of you, palms open, as if opening a book.

Gather the kids sit in a circle. Practice the Word of Wonder together as a group several times. Then spread out the parachute or bedsheet and invite everyone to take a hold of the edge.

We're going to play a game to help us learn our Word of Wonder! In our story today, we learned that Jesus showed His power when He calmed a storm in the water. We're going to pretend this ball (show the ball) is a boat in the water, and we're going to use the parachute (or sheet) to make waves. Everyone will gently shake the parachute (or sheet) when I say, "storm." But when I say, "Be still," you'll freeze, and we'll all say the verse together. Invite the kids to shake the parachute (or sheet). Periodically say, "Be still," and have the kids freeze, and then say the verse together.

Gather kids to discuss these questions:

- **What are some things you know about God?** (If kids need help, offer ideas such as: God is powerful; God created everything; God can do anything; God loves us.)
- **What are some things that you don't understand about God?**

God's Big Story

SUPPLIES: Bible; Bible Story Picture (1/SG)

Bible Time Rhyme

Say the Bible time rhyme (with motions) each week before the Bible story to remind kids that what they're about to hear is part of God's big story.

I open my Bible, and what do I see? *(Hold your hands together, then open your palms, as if opening a book.)*

God's big story, waiting for me! *(Point to yourself.)*

Let's hear part of God's big story, which comes from the book of Mark in the Bible. Today we are reading a story about Jesus and His friends on a boat. A big storm came while they were on the water, and it felt very scary. Jesus showed His power in an amazing way. Listen closely to hear what Jesus did when the storm was raging.

[Read the God's Big Story Script below from Mark 4:35–41 from the Bible.](#)

Jesus and His friends got into a boat to cross the lake. Sit down and pretend to rock gently like a boat. Jesus was very tired, so He lay down and fell asleep. Rest your head on your hands like you are sleeping.

Suddenly, a strong wind blew and big waves splashed into the boat. Blow air and splash your hands like waves. The boat started to fill with water, and the disciples were afraid. Put your hands on your cheeks like you are scared.

They woke Jesus and said, "Teacher, don't you care if we drown?" Reach out your hands like you are asking for help. Jesus stood up and spoke to the wind and the waves. Stand tall and hold up your hand like you are stopping something.

Jesus said, "Quiet. Be still." Freeze your body and stop moving. Right away, the wind stopped and the lake became calm. Take a deep breath and relax your shoulders.

Jesus asked His friends why they were afraid and if they trusted Him. Point to your heart. The disciples were amazed and whispered, "Who is this? Even the wind and waves obey Him." Look around with wide eyes in wonder.

Discussion Questions

SUPPLIES: whiteboard, dry-erase marker, eraser, scissors (prep only, optional)

RESOURCES: Circle Time Pictures (1/SG)

If you plan to use the Circle Time Pictures, print a copy of this resource and cut them apart.

Gather the kids to sit in a circle in front of a whiteboard. **I'm going to draw a simple picture of something from today's story, and you'll get to guess what I'm drawing. After each picture is guessed, whoever correctly guessed the picture first can answer a question about the story.**

For older kids, you can allow them to draw pictures from the story.

You can also show the Circle Time Pictures instead of drawing the pictures yourself.

Hold up or draw the following pictures.

- A lake
- Boat
- Jesus
- Big wave
- Lightning
- Disciples/people



What did Jesus do in the story that showed His power? Allow the kids to respond. **He calmed the storm. We can remember that this shows us how amazing and powerful Jesus is. He can do anything!**

After the kids have guessed what each picture depicts, ask them a question from the list below.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- **What was the name of the sea that Jesus and His disciples were crossing?** (the Sea of Galilee)
- **What was Jesus doing in the boat before the storm came?** (sleeping)
- **What caused the waves to get really big?** (a storm)
- **What did Jesus say to the storm?** ("Quiet! Be still.")
- **How do you think the disciples felt after Jesus told the storm to stop?**
- **Share about a time when you were scared. What made you feel better?**
- **What does this story show us about Jesus?**

We can remember that Jesus has power over all creation—even storms! Let's talk to God now in prayer!

Leader Tip: If any kids in your ministry have experienced trauma from a storm (flooding, tornado, lightning, hurricanes, etc.), be sensitive to their feelings or fears. Validate their feelings without trying to explain why it happened. Remind them that God is always with us, and that someday, every bad thing will become right again.

Invite kids to share prayer requests and praises and to pray for each other. Some kids may not be comfortable praying out loud. That's OK! Encourage them to pray silently and thank God

Head to Large Group!

Return and finish the rest of this guide before parents arrive.

Responding in Worship: Peace, Be Still!

SUPPLIES: paper (1 sheet per kid), coloring utensils, parachute (or blanket or bedsheet)

Give each kid a piece of paper and coloring utensils. **Everyone spread out and find a quiet space in the room to sit and draw. Think of something in creation that is scary or powerful—a thunderstorm, an earthquake, a tornado, or anything you can think of, and draw a picture of it on your papers.**

Once the kids complete their pictures, have the kids wad their drawings into balls and place the balls in a pile in the middle of the parachute (or blanket or bedsheet). Choose some kids to sit around the parachute and have the others hold the sides and shake it. Explain to the group that the parachute represents the boat from our story. The kids sitting around the “boat” will start tossing the paper wads onto the parachute, while the other kids will shake the parachute and try to keep the balls off. Let this go on for a little while, and then say, “Be still!” When you say, “Be still,” encourage the kids to hold the parachute very still.

In our story today, a storm made big waves. The waves may have even made water go into the boat. The disciples got scared of the storm. They knew Jesus was with them and they already knew that He is powerful, but they were focused on the storm instead of Jesus. When Jesus woke up and told the storm to be still, they didn’t have to worry anymore because Jesus has power over creation! We can remember that Jesus is powerful, and He is with us too.

Who told the wind and waves to be still? Allow the kids to respond. **Jesus!**

Jesus is more powerful than all of creation and more powerful than all the things in your pictures.

Have each kid grab a wadded-up piece of paper (it doesn’t have to be their own) and stand on the parachute. **Toss your paper wad out and say, “Jesus says, ‘Be still!’ ”**

We can thank Jesus because He is powerful!

Closing Activity: Weather Game

Today we learned from God's big story that Jesus has power over creation. When a big storm came and the disciples were on a boat and were scared, Jesus told the storm to stop, and it did!

Let's play a game where we pretend to be different kinds of weather. I'm going to call out a type of weather and you can act it out. So, if I say, "thunder!" clap your hands or stomp your feet. You can keep going until I say, "Be still!" and then you can stop until I call out another type of weather. Let's play!

Play multiple rounds by calling out different kinds of weather.

- **Rain:** Pat your hands on your lap, which resembles pitter-pattering rain.
- **Thunder:** Clap your hands.
- **Wind:** Blow and move your hands in "whooosh" motions.
- **Tornado:** Spin around in circles.
- **Lightning:** Shake your whole body like a jolt.

Leader Tip: You can also show pictures of each type of weather, and let the kids act out the weather as you hold up each picture, or the kids can take turns holding up the pictures.