

Open my eyes so I can examine the wonders of your Instruction!
(Psalm 119:18)

Jesus Calms the Storm – Mark 4:35-41

Prepare to Wonder

In this story, Jesus has been teaching large crowds and decides to take some time away with the disciples. Jesus and the disciples take a boat on the Sea of Galilee. Jesus, tired from teaching and ministering, falls asleep. Soon, a storm hits, the boat shakes, and the disciples are afraid. They go to Jesus for help and are surprised to find him sleeping. How can anyone sleep when there is a chance the boat might be overtaken by water and they all might drown? But Jesus remains calm. He gets up and calms the storm. He then asks the disciples why they are scared, as if their feelings of fear are unnecessary.

This might leave us confused. It also creates a sense of awe and wonder. After Jesus awoke and addressed the storm, the disciples were amazed. The Scripture says: "Overcome with awe, they said to each other, 'Who then is this?'" We, too, might feel this way about this story. What amazing power Jesus has! We also might wonder how he could stop such a powerful storm. There is so much mystery in this story. Yet, there is calmness in the midst of the storm.

This story likely is familiar to your children. There are so many elements for children to latch onto. However, what a gift it is to know there is someone like Jesus who can be present with us in the midst of life's storms! I don't think this story truly dismisses our feelings of fear or anxiety. Rather, it reminds us there is always something bigger to rely on when we are overwhelmed. Our faith can ground us and be a guide in helping us know we are loved and safe.

Spiritual Practice for Adults

Blow bubbles. Watch the bubbles get bigger, then smaller, then disappear. Our feelings and fears can be this way. They feel big and overwhelming at first, but with time, they can lessen. When we have faith, we can give our feelings to God and know there is comfort and healing. And with time, big feelings can lead to a big faith.

Welcome to Wonder

Supplies: CEB Bible, Annual Music CD or song download, optional: Digital Class Pack

- Gather together near your Wonder Table.

SAY: Today's faith word is *guide*.

- Show the children the "Guide" poster (Digital Class Pack).

SAY: Guiding is showing the way, like the light of Christ.

WONDER: There is a boat in our Bible story today. Have you ever been on a boat? What tools do sailors use to guide boats?

SING together

- Use your Annual Music CD or download the song, "Follow As You Go" (<https://www.cokesbury.com/Celebrate-Wonder-Annual-Music>).
- Play the song, "Follow As You Go." Then sing and celebrate.

Wonder with Me

Supplies: CEB Bible, Celebrate Wonder Bible Storybook, optional: Wonder Cube (Digital Class Pack)

READ the Bible Story

- Read the Bible story, Mark 4:35-41.
- Roll the Wonder Cube. Take time to answer a few of the questions.

WATCH the Bible Story

- Visit <https://www.cokesbury.com/Celebrate-Wonder-Video> to download and watch today's Bible story, or watch on www.amplifymedia.com.

WONDER together

- Have you ever been in a storm? What happened?
- How is Jesus a guide in the story?

CONTINUE to Wonder

- What would you have done if you discovered Jesus sleeping during the storm?
- What do you imagine the disciples did right after Jesus calmed the storm?

PRAY together

- Dear God, please be our guide. Amen.

Experience Wonder—Sleep in Peace (Craft)

Supplies: plain cotton pillowcases (one per child), fabric markers, stencils, squares of cardboard (to fit inside the pillowcases to prevent marker bleed)

SAY: In today's Bible story, Jesus was sleeping during the storm. The disciples were afraid, but Jesus helped stop the storm and comforted the disciples.

- Give each child a pillowcase with a piece of cardboard inside the case.
- Let the children use the supplies to decorate their pillowcases. You might choose to have the children stencil words from the Bible verse or the faith word: *guide*.
- Allow the pillowcases to dry, then send them home with the children.

SAY: You can use your pillowcase as a reminder that God is with you.

Spiritual Practice—Exploring Guidance Through Study

- Gather the children in a circle.

SAY: We can use our bodies and sounds to make a storm.

WONDER: What does a storm sound like?

- Let the children follow the directions to create a storm:

Rub your hands together.

Snap your fingers.

Clap your hands.

Quickly pat your legs.

Stomp your feet.

(Leader) Flicker the lights.

- Then do the motions backward and end in silence.

PRAY: Dear God, thank you for Jesus, who calms the storm and helps us have faith. Amen.

- Encourage families to use the Celebration Chart (Digital Class Pack) and to read the *Winter 2020–21 Celebrate Wonder Family Activity Book* at home this week.