

Jesus Calms A Storm

Matthew 8:23-27

MEMORY VERSE

PSALM 107:28-30

Then they cry out to the LORD in their trouble, And He brings them out of their distresses. He calms the storm, So that its waves are still. Then they are glad because they are quiet; So He guides them to their desired haven.

WHAT YOU WILL NEED:

As many 8 1/2" x 11" sheets of white paper as the number of children in your class, pencils or crayons.

ATTENTION GRABBER!

Peace

Pass out 8 1/2x11" pieces of white paper and pencils or crayons to your class.

Direct your students to draw pictures based on the theme "peace."

Have the students write their names on their pictures and then collect them. Set aside the ones that depict peace in the midst of difficulty. Note – depending on your class you may need to give them some more information for them to draw something related to peace in the midst of difficulty.

LESSON TIME!

Have you ever been afraid? Afraid of something you could not control? Perhaps you have been afraid of a big dog that was barking at you? Maybe it had no leash and there was a hole in the fence it was behind big enough for it to run out at you. Maybe you have been afraid when the electricity went off in the elevator and everything stopped and went pitch black and you didn't know when it would come back on. Perhaps you've been afraid of a bully

who is bigger than you, that tried to chase you or take your lunch or throw a punch at you.

There are a lot of circumstances in life we have no control over. We can't change them or fix them. They come upon us suddenly and we have no real power over them. We feel helpless. One time Jesus' disciples had a situation like that.

Today we'll read about a terrible storm that suddenly came upon Jesus and His disciples. It is a story that will help us to learn about being afraid and what to do when we are afraid of something. Let's take a look at what the disciples did.

MATTHEW 8:23

Now when He got into a boat, His disciples followed Him.

Jesus had just left the crowd of people who had been following Him because of the great miracles He was doing. He then stepped into a boat to go across the Sea of Galilee, and His disciples followed Him into the boat. As we begin our story we need to remember that some of His disciples were seasoned fishermen. These fishermen had made their living off the sea before following Jesus and had probably encountered many storms during their time on the water. Jesus, on the other hand, was used to being on land.

They settled into the boat, and Jesus took a nap. He was tired from all the ministry that He had been doing. We need to remember that even though Jesus was fully God, He was also fully man, with a physical body that got tired like us. Jesus worked very hard and got tired like anyone else. So He lied down in the boat to get some rest.

MATTHEW 8:24

And suddenly a great tempest arose on the sea, so that the boat was covered with the waves. But He was asleep.

“And suddenly”, (that means without warning), a storm was upon them. Not just any storm. Our verse says, "a great tempest arose on the sea so that the boat was covered with waves." Like a huge monster, this storm rose up out of the sea before they knew what was happening. It was huge, and out-of-control. Their little boat was actually being covered in waves.

In a storm waves will rise up like huge walls of water and then crash powerfully onto whatever is in their path. It is a very dangerous and frightening situation. In minutes a boat can fill up and sink. No matter how fast you bail out the water, more water comes in than goes out. Water has great weight and strength to sweep everything in its path completely away, including human beings. These men, who had seen hundreds of storms, knew right away that this storm was very dangerous. It had the potential to be a killer storm.

We have some very interesting words at the end of our verse. What was Jesus doing while this huge monster of a storm beat away at the tiny boat? It says, "But He (Jesus) was asleep." Asleep!? How could He sleep? Didn't He realize the immense danger? Was He that tired that He didn't know the reality of the situation? Waves were crashing on every side and Jesus was asleep!! The men who knew all about the sea were afraid, but Jesus was fast asleep through it all. There was no peace in their circumstances but Jesus had peace enough to be sleeping.

Have you ever had a situation in your life that seemed to be completely out of control? It seems like no matter what you do that it doesn't help. That is how the disciples were feeling. Sometimes we might have problems in our lives that seem like

huge storms to us. We might even panic, but Jesus isn't in a panic over the situation. Do you think that we can be peaceful like Jesus in our situations? **We should never be afraid when Jesus is with us.**

Art Contest

Take the drawings done for the attention grabber and show your students the pictures that depict peace in the midst of difficulty.

Tell them the story of the art contest that was held with the theme "peace." Here's an example: "There were lots of beautiful entries; gentle mountains, quiet streams, still meadows. But the one that won the prize was of little bird nesting in the crevice of a huge, rocky cliff in the midst of a terrible storm. This picture won because the truest peace is the peace that exists in the midst, not in the absence of a storm."

You can give a small toy prize to all of the contestants if you like.

MATTHEW 8:25-26

Then His disciples came to Him and awoke Him, saying, "Lord, save us! We are perishing!"

But He said to them, "Why are you fearful, O you of little faith?" Then He arose and rebuked the winds and the sea, and there was a great calm.

Would you have woken Jesus up if you were them? (Yes or no? Encourage a discussion) Who did they cry out to? (Jesus) Jesus should always be the first One we go to in the middle of a storm, in the face of fear, and in the difficulties of life. We go to Jesus because He is Lord, Lord of heaven and earth, Lord of the wind and the waves, Lord of our lives.

What's the first thing Jesus does when He wakes up? He doesn't go right to work stopping the storm. He first rebukes His disciples. He asks them a question while the storm is still raging about them. "Why are you afraid?"

Perhaps the disciples were thinking, "Why?! Doesn't Jesus see the storm, the water pouring in, the potential of death all around?" They are afraid of perishing, of dying. Not only would their lives be lost, but they may have been thinking the whole kingdom would be lost; all that Jesus was doing would be lost if the storm destroyed them all. That's why they're afraid.

Jesus told them that they were afraid because they had little faith. Faith in what? In Him. How quickly they forgot and how quickly we forget who we have in the boat with us, when the storms of life come. He had turned water to wine, healed blind and crippled people, raised the dead, and fed the multitudes. They had faith when there was no storm, but now they lost sight of who Jesus really was. Their faith shrunk as the storm grew. They woke Him up. They didn't realize that **We should never be afraid when Jesus is with us.**

Next, we see a glorious picture. The Lord got up and looked at those huge and violent waves and rebuked them just as you would a big dog who is threatening you. And like a dog held back by a leash, the waves cowered before Jesus and the sea calmed. He spoke and the storm obeyed. God has things absolutely in control. The wind and waves are under His command. Jesus is showing His disciples, and us, that He is Master of all creation. They saw His composure, His authority, and His supremacy that day. Jesus revealed to them that **We should never be afraid when Jesus is with us.**

The storm stopped and the sea became calm, smooth, and peaceful. Jesus can rule over the storm on the sea and He can rule over the storms of our lives. He is supreme over all the

circumstances we will ever face. Sometimes, like the disciples, we believe only what we see instead of believing His word. He is showing us here that we can trust Him for peace under all circumstances. **We should never be afraid when Jesus is with us.**

He is with us. If He is here it is all right. The waves may roll over us; the water may beat down on us. But He will deliver us out of the storms. Those with the deepest faith would know they did not even need to wake Jesus. We should never be afraid when Jesus is with us. He loves us. He wants the storms to build into us the kind of faith that will be willing to brave the storm, and even be content to abide in it knowing that He offers peace during the storms of life.

Free-fall of Faith

Ask for a couple of volunteers to put their faith in you. Have them close their eyes and fall back into your arms. It is important that they not step back or fold their body or limbs.

Explain that just like a little child jumps off a step into his mother or father's waiting arms, the Lord is there for us. He will not let us fall.

MATTHEW 8:27

And the men marveled, saying, "Who can this be, that even the winds and the sea obey Him?"

When they saw His power they said, "What sort of man is this? Even nature obeys Him." This was a way for Jesus to show His disciples that He was God. He is the Creator and the controller of all things. A storm was nothing to Jesus. He just spoke and it obeyed. The storms of our lives are nothing to Jesus. His power, His authority, His supremacy over all things proves that He is Lord of all. We can trust Him to be present in every storm we encounter in life. We

can have peace in the middle of it because He is with us. **We should never be afraid when Jesus is with us.**

The greatest faith of all doesn't even need the storm calmed. It abides through the storm knowing that if Jesus is present then everything is all right. The greatest faith trusts so completely in Him that it rests even in the midst of a storm. **We should never be afraid when Jesus is with us.**

He is with all of us who have asked Him to forgive our sin and come and indwell us as Lord of our lives. He is always with us; so we need never be afraid. We just relax and rejoice in the presence and supreme power of Jesus. What a glorious way to live! Nothing can upset us or scare us or depress us when we truly live secure in the presence of Jesus. No storm can shake us. No waves can break us. Our Lord is there, and so we are confidently at peace even in the midst of the storm.

Hiding Place

Lead your class in the chorus of "You Are My Hiding Place":

You are my hiding place,
You always fill my life
With songs of deliverance
Whenever I am afraid,
I will trust in you.
I will trust in you.
Let the weak say, "I am strong
In the strength of the Lord."
I will trust in you.

PRAYER

Lead the children in a prayer of trust that Jesus is in control of our lives and situations despite the seeming circumstances.