



A Storm at Sea

Day 3

TODAY'S BIBLE EXPERIENCE

Mark 4:35-41

Jesus and the disciples encountered a storm as they crossed a sea. The disciples were scared, but Jesus commanded the storm to end. The disciples wondered who Jesus was that the storm obeyed him.

BIBLE MEMORY

When you pass through the waters, I will be with you.
—Isaiah 43:2a

Faith focus

God is with us.

Biblical background

Jesus and some of his disciples were caught in an unexpected storm as they crossed the Sea of Galilee. They had spent the day talking with crowds of people and were tired. In crossing the sea, Jesus anticipated going to a quiet place to rest.

Jesus slept in the boat as the storm brewed. The disciples who were fishermen no doubt knew the power and dangers of the sea and were afraid of what would happen. They understood that when the wind blows, the waves get higher and fill the boats with water. A boat filled with water is a dangerous place to be.

Most likely, the disciples didn't understand how Jesus could sleep despite the rocking boat and the crashing waves. They woke him to share in their terror.

Jesus spoke only a few brief and powerful words: "Peace! Be still!" The storm calmed, and the waters grew quiet. The disciples' reactions showed that perhaps they didn't yet fully understand who Jesus was. "Who then is this," they asked, "that even the wind and the sea obey him?" As in other situations in his life, Jesus was presented with a problem, performed a miracle, and left those around him wondering who he was and what had happened.

This familiar story reminds us that storms are part of life, but that God is with us and helps us to face them. We can be assured, too, that God is present with the church over the centuries, regardless of what it faces. There have been storms of persecution and divisions and distrust in the church; yet, God continues to be with us.

Whether during times of calm waters or times of storms and rough waters, we recognize the power of God to change situations. We can trust in God, no matter what.

About the session

Children will share a snack and participate in creative activities reminding them of God's presence with us at all times.

Session materials

- Goldfish crackers, celery, raisins
- Cheese spread or peanut butter (check for allergies if using peanut butter)
- Blue punch
- Cups, napkins
- Materials for chosen projects

Advance preparation

- Decide which activities you will do (*see pp. 14–15*). Prepare materials in advance.
- Create celery “boats” for snack, using cheese spread or peanut butter and topping with raisin “people.”

Creative Session Plan

1. **Greet the children.** Find out which session the children have just experienced and ask about it: What activities did you do? What did you learn? What did you like best?
2. **Snack time.** Lead children in a thank-you prayer. Distribute the celery boats, goldfish, and punch. Briefly review the story of Jesus calming the storm.
3. **Activity time.** Help children begin the first project as they finish their snacks. Explain the activities planned for this session.
4. **Clean up.** Make sure that names are on all projects and work with the children to clean up the area.
5. **Closing prayer:**
God, thank you for going with us wherever we go. Help us to remember that you are always there with us. Amen.

STORM IN A BOTTLE

Materials:

- Small plastic soda pop or water bottles
- Clear cooking oil or mineral oil
- Water, blue food coloring
- Glitter, sand, shells, plastic fish (optional)
- Small plastic boats (or plastic milk lids)
- Super glue or hot glue gun

Note: Leave the gluing to adults to avoid burns or fingers sticking together!

Instructions:

1. **Give each child** a plastic bottle.
2. **Using a funnel**, pour water into the bottles until they are half full.
3. **Children may add a few drops of food coloring** to the water. (You may also color all the water ahead of time.)
4. **Add glitter, sand, fish, and shells** to the water in the bottles. Make sure each bottle gets a boat.
5. **Add the oil** and glue the bottle lid closed.
6. **The oil and water** will not mix, creating an ocean effect. The boat should float on the water just under the oil. The glitter, sand, and other items should sink to the bottom when the bottle is standing still.
7. **Follow up.** Lead the children as you create storms in the bottles by laying them on their sides and gently shaking them. When you say, "Peace, be still," have the children stop shaking their bottles and calm the storm. Remind them that God is with us when we are going through storms and when things are peaceful.

"GOD IS THERE!" COLLAGES

Materials:

- Magazines, newspapers, old calendars
- Scissors (1 pair per child)
- Glue
- Paper
- Paper cutout people shapes (1 per child) from pattern on page 24
- Fine-tip markers

Instructions:

1. **Give each child a sheet of paper**, a pair of scissors, and pictures to look through.
2. **Instruct the children to cut out pictures** of storms or other scary things. They should also look for pictures that are peaceful and make them feel happy.
3. **Fold the papers in half.** Children should glue the scary pictures on one side of the paper, and the peaceful pictures on the other side.
4. **When the "scary" and "peaceful" collages** are finished, open up the papers. Give each child a cutout person to glue at center of the paper. One half of the person should be on the scary side and one half should be on the peaceful side.
5. **Write "God is there!"** on the cutout person.
6. **Follow up.** Invite the children to talk about things that scare them and things that help them feel peaceful. Create a safe space for children to share honestly, without teasing from others.

"GOD IS WITH US" REMINDERS

Materials:

- Beads of various colors, shapes, and/or sizes
- String or thread
- Blunt needles for threading beads (optional)

Setup:

- Pre-cut string to 24 in. / 60 cm for a necklace and 10 in. / 25 cm for a bracelet. Make sure the string will fit through the bead openings.
- Place beads on trays in the center of the table.

Note: You may want to provide beads in the colors of water—shades of blue, purple, and green. You may also be able to find fish- and shell-shaped beads.

Instructions:

1. **Distribute pre-cut strings** and blunt needles (if using). Help the children to thread the needles. Place a large knot at the bottom of each string, leaving a couple of inches for tying.
2. **Allow plenty of time** for children to choose beads and create their necklaces/bracelets. Make sure they leave enough string at the end for tying.
3. **When a necklace/bracelet is completed**, tie the string ends together, making sure the jewelry will fit over the child's head or hand. Clip off excess string.
4. **Follow up.** Encourage the children to show and talk about what they made. Remind them that whenever they wear their necklaces or bracelets they can remember that God is always with them.

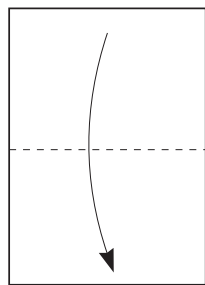
PAPER BOATS

Materials:

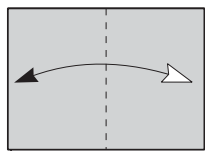
- Paper (Use colored/patterned papers, or children may decorate their own plain white paper.)
- Markers/crayons (optional)
- Tub or sink of water

Instructions:

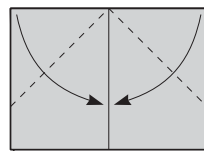
1. **Give a sheet of paper** to each child.
2. **Using the template provided**, help the children fold their paper boats.
3. **Follow up.** Allow children to float their boats on the water. They may want to create a storm in the water to see if their boats will sink. Ask: Have you ever been in a boat? Was it fun or scary? Did you remember that God was with you in the boat? Remind the children that God is with us everywhere.



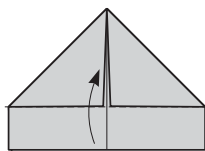
1. Fold sheet of paper in half.



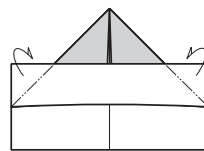
2. Fold in half again.



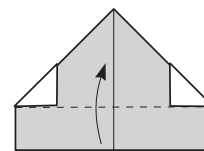
3. Fold top corners inward to center.



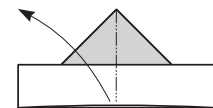
4. Fold bottom section upward, over triangular flaps.



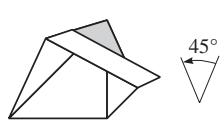
5. Fold corners backward. Turn paper over.



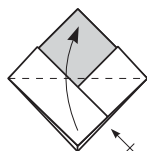
6. Fold bottom section upward.



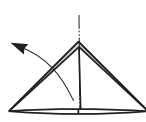
7. Open.



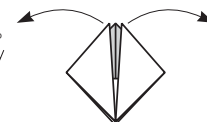
8. Opening in progress



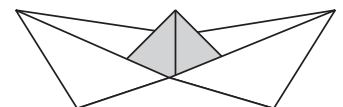
9. Fold triangle upward. Repeat on other side.



10. Open as in steps 7 and 8.



11. Grasp upper corners and stretch out.



12. Finished boat