

Parent Background:

The account of Jesus calming the storm provides a starting place for many people who need assurance of God's control over forces that seem out of their own control. The disciples in the sinking boat faced overwhelming fears. But when Jesus so quickly calmed the storm, their fears were quickly replaced with awe and worship.

Many of us—especially children—carry the burden of fear, perhaps not realizing that we can run to Jesus for safety. But Psalm 91 tells us that a person “who dwells in the shelter of the Most High...will not fear the terror of night, nor the arrow that flies by day.” As we present our fears to our heavenly Father in prayer, we, too, can be assured of the comfort that comes from trusting the one who loves us and who has the power to protect us in all circumstances. Let us thank and praise Jesus, who has the power to calm our fears!

We have the benefit of knowing how the story of Jesus' calming the storm ends. But imagine the disciples' amazement when the raging waves instantly became calm. Even today, with our advanced technology, we don't have any control over the weather and can't always forecast it very accurately. In Jesus' day, controlling the weather was known strictly as the domain of God. In the instant the storm ceased, the disciples began to realize more fully who Jesus was. He had demonstrated his power in healing people, but never before had he done anything of this magnitude.

Jesus then asked some pointed questions. He seemed surprised that the disciples' faith was so weak. After all they had seen, they hadn't fully grasped who Jesus was or what he was capable of. But now they had seen something so powerful, so awesome, that they were terrified to think about who Jesus really was.

The disciples' terrified response is understandable when we consider God's power and purity in light of our own weakness and imperfection. But the disciples came to learn that no matter how bad a situation seemed, the first thing they needed to do was turn to Jesus.

Lesson to share with child:

- Say: **Think for a moment about some of the great things God can do. Share as many as you can think and write them down on a piece of paper.** Point out how many things you came up with.
- Say: **Jesus is Lord of the entire universe. That means he's God and he's in control of everything. Jesus cares about each one of us. We can go to Jesus anytime we're afraid, no matter what causes the fear. And we can know that Jesus will take care of us and comfort us. Jesus truly is our Lord and our King. Jesus has proven himself to be faithful and true, someone we can always trust for every need. That's because he loves us so much. Let us praise God with all your heart because there is nothing too big for Jesus to handle.**
- Say: **Have you ever been afraid? Right now it's normal to be afraid. The Bible tells us that God wants to protect us and keep us safe even when we're scared and anxious, which is another way of saying worried or afraid. Let's see what scared, worried, and anxious look like. Try and put a scared look on your face, show me your scared face. Now show me your anxious or worried face. God wants to take away those**

scared and worried looks and give you calm and peaceful faces. Now put on a calm, peaceful face. You look great—just the way God wants you to look all the time. And you can look that way by believing that God will never leave you—even when things are scary. Promises in God’s Word tell us that God will never leave us. Here are two promises, which we are going to say together. Listen to my lead, and repeat each line back.

- Leader: **“Do not be afraid,” God says.** Echo: **“Do not be afraid,” God says.** Leader: **“For I am with you always.”** Echo: **“For I am with you always.”** Leader: **“Cast all your anxiety”** Echo: **“Cast all your anxiety”** Leader: **“On me, for I care for you.”** Echo: **“On me, for I care for you.”** Leader: **God’s Word** Echo: **God’s Word** Leader: **Says this.** Echo: **Says this.** Leader and Echo: **God’s Word says this! Says this!** Say the chant together at least twice.
- Say: **The Bible is a great place to go when we’re afraid. The Bible includes many promises from God that tell of his love and protection. There are stories that show Jesus calming the fears of his friends. The Bible has something for everyone, but it’s important to take the time to sit down, read it, and think about what we’ve read. Reading the Bible is like sitting down to a delicious, nutritious meal. The food makes our bodies healthy and strong. God’s Word does the same thing for our spiritual selves. God never wants us to go spiritually hungry. That’s why he gives us the Bible. God’s love for you and me goes deeper than any ocean or lake. It goes higher than any planet or star. That’s why we can count on God’s love night and day.**
- Pray: **Dear God, thank you for being a safe place to go when our fears and worries seem so much bigger than we are. Help us to remember that you are creator of the universe and that nothing is too big or too hard for you. In Jesus’ name, amen.** (write this prayer down so you can read it regularly)
- Say: **Today’s Bible story comes from the book of Mark and tells us about a time Jesus was on a boat with his disciples. As I tell you this story, one group will help by making the sounds of the sea as a giant storm comes through. The other group will pretend to be the frightened disciples.**
- Say: **One night after a long day of preaching to the people, Jesus decided to get into a fishing boat with his disciples and go across a sea to the other side. Leaving the crowd behind, Jesus and his friends got into the boat. When they had sailed to the middle of the sea, a storm began to kick up waves. The boat rocked back and forth and up and down over the waves. The storm grew stronger and more furious. Jesus had fallen asleep almost as soon as the boat left the shore. Even though the sea was tossing the boat around, he was still asleep. But his disciples were beginning to get really afraid. They tried lowering the sail and throwing out the anchor, but nothing worked. They bailed out the water, but still the storm raged. The boat was close to sinking. Finally, they couldn’t stand it any longer. Jesus was still sound asleep, so they woke him up. They said, “Teacher, don’t you care if we drown?” With that, Jesus stood up in the boat and shouted out, “Quiet! Be still!” The storm died down, the waves grew calm, and the boat Jesus was on stopped sinking. Jesus looked at his disciples, who were now soaking wet and shaking with fear. He said to them, “Why are you so afraid? Didn’t you believe that I would take care of you?” The disciples were no longer afraid, but they were amazed. They turned to each other and asked, “Who is this? Even the wind and the waves obey him!”**

- Say: **What an exciting day that must have been for the disciples—first to be caught in that terrible storm and then to see Jesus take control of the weather and change it with only his words.**
- Ask:
 - **What do you think the disciples were most afraid of?**
 - **How did Jesus calm the storm?**
 - **How did Jesus calm the fears of the disciples during the storm?**
 - **What fears do you have?**
 - **Can Jesus calm your fears? How do you think he does that?**
- Say: **Jesus is the Son of God, creator of the universe. We can count on him to calm the storms in our lives. When a fear seems to take hold of us, we can call out to Jesus in prayer and know that he hears us just as he heard the disciples' cries for help**
- Ask:
 - **Why do you think people get scared?**
 - **Is it wrong to be scared? Why or why not?**
 - **How was this science experiment like the way Jesus calms our fears?**
 - **What happens when we let Jesus deal with our fears?**
 - **Why do you think Jesus doesn't want us to be afraid?**
- Say: **Jesus loves us more than we can imagine. He wants us to feel safe and secure. Jesus calms our fears because of his love. Whenever we're afraid, we can ask Jesus to be with us, to comfort us, and to calm us. Jesus will be with us just as he was with the disciples when they were scared.**
- Say: **Jesus' power and love are not limited by the size of our fears. He created us and everything else in the universe. There is nothing too great or too small for him to handle.**
- Say: **We have an opportunity right here to hear the Lord. We can imagine that we are in Jesus' boat on the rough and stormy Sea of Galilee. Like the disciples, we have fears of our own which Jesus can calm. Let's call out a fear; you can use one word or a whole sentence if you want. Then we'll whisper the words Jesus used to calm the storm: *Quiet! Be still!***
- Pray: **Almighty God, you have calmed our hearts and given us peace. For this we thank you. As you remind us each day of your love and care, help us to listen. Amen.**