God’s Big Story: Jesus Calms the Storm

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| scripture focus |
| Mark 4:35-41; Matthew 8:23-27; Luke 8:22-25 |

big picture

In this story, Jesus reveals who he really is by doing something that only God can do: he speaks to the wind and the waves and they listen to his voice and obey. The story begins with Jesus sleeping in a boat while a storm rages – in fact, the only time that Jesus is seen to sleep in the Gospels is during a storm, showing his complete trust in his Father in the face of chaos. The disciples wake Jesus with a terrified rebuke: “Don’t you care that we’re going to drown?!” Jesus’ response to the storm is not to pray for safety, but to speak directly to the wind and the waves themselves, with the same authority he used to drive out demons. The storm is immediately vanquished, all is still, and the disciples are terrified anew – not by nature’s fury and power, but by the revealing of One even stronger and mightier. “Who is this?” they ask – could this man in the boat with them be the mighty Creator God in flesh? The story leaves the disciples – and us as the readers – with one final question. Will we trust this man, or hold on to our fear?

|  | storybooks | bible readings |
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| read aloud | *Jesus Storybook Bible:* “Captain of the Storm”, p.236-243 | Mark 4:35-41; Matthew 8:23-27; Luke 8:22-25  Psalms 29 & 107:23-32 |
| discuss/ ask | What is the scariest weather you’ve ever experienced?  Have you ever been outside during a storm? What was it like? Do you think you would have been able to sleep through it?  Why do you think the disciples woke Jesus up and then asked him if he cared about them? Have you ever felt that Jesus might not care about you? Why?  Why were the disciples afraid *after* Jesus calmed the storm?  We have no control over the weather, but Jesus did – because he was God. Can you remember some other stories (from the Old Testament) in which God controlled the weather or the forces of nature?  What are other things, besides the weather, that we have no control over, and that make us worried or afraid? Can you ask Jesus to take care of you in those situations? | |
| do together | This is another great story to act out! If your kids are small, you can “be” the boat and jostle them around on a stormy sea. You can also act this out in the bathtub, with a play boat in trouble (and some towels on hand!).  Look at the weather forecast for the next week, write down the predictions for each day in one column, then fill in the actual weather day-by-day in another column. Do the two columns match? Even with all our knowledge and forecasting technology, we can’t even predict the weather with precision. But Jesus could control it – no wonder the disciples were afraid and filled with awe. | |