



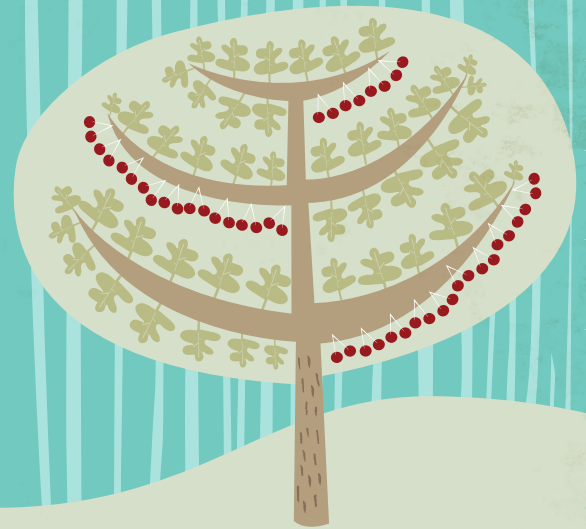
tru blessings™
inspire. equip. support.

**SAMPLE
LESSON**

LESSON OVERVIEW

Jesus Calms the Storm
Matthew 8:23-27; Mark 4:35-41

Explore:: 15-20 min.	Respond:: 5 minutes
Discover:: 10-15 min.	Bless:: 5 minutes
	Connect:: 15-30 minutes



Separating from Parents

Separating from Mom and Dad can be tough for a little one. To help lessen the stress a child may feel, invite parents to stay long enough to lead their child to engage at a station. Small Group Leaders will also be involved, engaging in the activity alongside the child and parent. As parents say good-bye, acknowledge their departure while remaining focused on the activity with the child for the smoothest transition possible.

Ponder Point:

**Jesus Is God
and That's Amazing**

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he storm was raging. The waves swept over the boat. The men feared that they would drown. Then with just three words, "Quiet! Be still!" the storm stopped. "What kind of man is this?" the disciples asked. Jesus was more than just a rabbi. More than just a teacher. Jesus can control nature. Jesus can save the world. Jesus is God.

Inspire

Faith. Healing. Miracles. In words, He revealed the Truth of God the Father. He spoke of the kingdom of God and what was to come. In His actions, He was worship. Dynamic. Tender. Forgiver of sins. The multitudes would gather as close as they could to hear Him speak. As they gathered, He would speak the Word to them in parables. But when He was alone with His disciples, He explained everything (Mark 4:33–34). And yet, who did the disciples say He was?

Now wait a second. Let this question linger. For just a moment try to separate from what you have been told and taught about Jesus. I am not suggesting that you discard your knowledge and understanding of Him, by any means. Rather, I am encouraging you to take a step back for just a moment from all that surrounds your knowledge and opinions of the Christ. Try and see Him as if you were meeting for the first time. As you read the words that follow, read each line and pause briefly before moving on to the next.

Who is He, who's the mightiest of all
Who is He, creation trembles at His call
Who is He, the lowly sacrifice, who paid a victim's price
His name is Jesus.

Who is He, with the eyes that burn like fire
Who is He, oh the wonder He inspires
Who is He, who bore the guilt and shame
for those who'd gone astray
His name is Jesus

(lyrics to "The Lion and The Lamb," written by Anne Barbour and Bill Batstone)

What did you see? What picture of Jesus did your mind paint? As I read this response, in each stanza I see intense strength contrasted with loving tenderness. Each phrase requires my response. "Creation trembles." Trembles! "With eyes that burn like fire." How can my words accurately articulate the awe and wonder of this man, this God? My response is simple: I am shaken, I am humbled, I worship. Again I will ask, Who is He? Jesus has shown us He is God, and that's amazing!

Cristi Thomas
TruBlessings Team

Equip

Who is He? Scripture tells us He was seen as a rabbi, a man well trained in Jewish law, ritual, and tradition. The rabbi was an interpreter, a master of the Jewish law. Jesus truly was a master of the interpretation of the law, tradition, and rituals. But “rabbi” is not a name that could encompass all that He is.

Authority, power, and mastery—Jesus was rightfully referred to as Lord. It seems so clear in hindsight. It was not until a stormy night that the disciples began to see an even clearer picture of who He is.

Leaving the crowd behind, the men climbed into the boat and headed to open waters. Jesus was asleep in the stern when the storm broke. Panic and complete fear struck as waves broke over the sides. The disciples woke Jesus. “Teacher, don’t you care if we drown?” Accusation filled their tone. Their lack of understanding of His identity was exposed. In that moment, He was merely seen as a man susceptible to death.

A perfect storm. That critical situation was created by a powerful concurrence of factors. There was such beautiful harmony between the rage of the storm and the power in His rebuke. Jesus pushed back and quieted the storm with three words: “Quiet! Be still!” He commanded nature with authority—His creation knew His voice.

Being eyewitnesses to incredible wonders, who did the disciples say He is? Did they have an answer? We don’t know if in this moment they completely understood that Jesus was revealing Himself as God. However, He did leave them asking a question that was sure to be answered: “Who is this? Even the wind and the waves obey Him!”

Jesus used the elements to help us understand His deity. Jesus is God, and that’s amazing.

Support

As you enter into a time of preparation for this lesson, find a quiet place, grab your journal and Bible, and plan at least 20 minutes of time alone with your thoughts and God. Pray and ask the Lord to remove any distractions so you may hear His voice when He speaks. Then ask yourself these questions: Who is He? Who do I say He is? Finally, who am I because of Him? Ponder and wait. Pray before answering. After a time, respond as God's Spirit directs you. As you close your time with these questions, pray that God will use you and your team to be His instruments in helping the children know who He is and who they are because Jesus is God.

It is not until we have begun to ask ourselves these questions that we can introduce a child to who Jesus is. May God go before you to prepare a time and a place to meet together. May you hear God's voice, feel His presence, and respond freely to His prompting in your heart.

TruBlessings Team

Lesson Overview

Experience	Time	Summary	Supplies/Prepare
Explore:: Welcome & Engage	15-20 min.	Exploration stations create space for children to engage in hands-on activities as they begin their time of worship.	<p>Option 1: Stormy Waters</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • shallow metal pan or plastic container • water • plastic table covering • toy boat • straws (1 per child) <p>Option 2: Watch It Rain</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • large plastic bowl or shallow container • plastic table covering • pitcher • blue liquid watercolor (available at www.discountschoolsupply.com) • small cups (1 per child) • sand strainer or small colander • paper towels
Discover:: Large Group	10-15 min.	Facilitate interactive games, songs, and storytelling, allowing children to participate in discovering God's Word.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transition Song [Note to our churches: This song will be available for download on November 1, 2011]. • Opening Theme Song from TruBlessings worship [Note to our churches: This song will be available for download on November 1, 2011] • blue towel, sheet, or blanket • toy boat or picture of a boat
Respond:: Large Group	5 min.	Create space for children to celebrate God together in worship through music.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Song of Celebration (Suggestion: "Rain or Pour" from Jana Alayra's <i>Dig Down Deep</i> album)
Bless:: Large Group	5 min.	Bless the children that they may experience God fully.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bible (for the blessing) • Snack

Lesson Overview

Experience	Time	Summary	Supplies/Prepare
<p>Connect:: Large Group</p>	<p>15-30 min.</p>	<p>Games, songs, manipulatives, sensory and art activities are used to help children reinforce what they experienced in large group.</p>	<p>Option 1: It's Raining, It's Pouring</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • heavy white cardstock (1 per child) • spray bottles (1 per child or small group) • various colors of liquid watercolor (available at www.discountsschoolsupply.com) • tape • tarps <p>Option 2: Ocean Bags</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • snack-sized plastic bags (1 per child) • blue toothpaste • fish stickers (5–10 stickers per child depending on size of fish) <p>Option 3: Are You Sleeping?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • music <p>Hamilton's Box of Fun*</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • box or basket to hold objects • musical instruments (mini orchestra can be found at www.gymboree.com) • small balls (not bouncy balls or other small objects children could choke on; consider Feel & Roll Bumpy Balls from www.lakeshore.com) • silk scarves or other items for dress up • wooden blocks • chunky cars and/or trucks

*Hamilton's Box of Fun is a permanent option for Connect



Explore::

15-20 min.

Host and Small Group Leaders:



Exploration stations create space for children to engage in hands-on activities as they begin their time of worship.

Each week two activities are provided for your Explore stations. This time is designed for children to rotate around the tables as they explore. You can decide how many different options you want to have each week depending upon the number of children in your program. Be sure to have enough activities set up to allow all children to participate.

If you would like to add additional activities to your Explore stations, a full list of ideas can be found in the Explore supplement (see the Resource Folder).

Option 1: Stormy Waters

SUPPLIES

- shallow metal pan or plastic container
- water
- plastic table covering
- toy boat
- straws (1 per child)

PREPARE

None

SET UP

Cover area with plastic table covering. Set pan or container on it and fill with water. Place the boats inside the container. Set straws next to area.

ENGAGE

Invite one to three children over to the Stormy Waters activity.

Have you ever seen it rain? Have you ever touched rain? It's very wet, isn't it?

Today in The Big God Story there is going to be a big storm. When there is a storm over water, the water gets a lot of waves in it. Can you help me make waves in our water? Model to the children how to blow into the straw to make the water ripple and the boat rock. When a child is done blowing in the straw either throw it away or set it aside noting whose straw it is.

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Option 2: Watch It Rain

SUPPLIES

- large plastic bowl or shallow container
- plastic table covering
- pitcher
- blue liquid watercolor (available at www.discountschoolsupply.com)
- small cups (1 per child)
- sand strainer or small colander
- paper towels

PREPARE

Fill pitcher with water and blue liquid watercolor.

SET UP

Cover area with plastic table covering. Fill small cups with water. Set bowl/container near strainer/colander.

ENGAGE

Invite children to participate. **Do you know who made the rain? That's right. God did. Isn't He amazing? Let's see if we can pour some water into our strainer and make it look like rain. You take your cup of water and I'll hold the strainer over our bowl. Can you pour your water into the strainer? Wow, isn't that cool? It looks like it's raining in our class.**

Transition Song: [Note to our churches: This song will be available for download on November 1, 2011].

Children move into a large group setting and participate in discovering God's Word through storytelling, worship, and interactive experiences.



Discover:: 10-15 min.

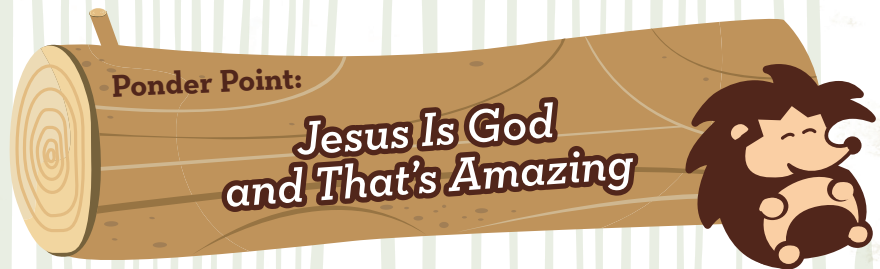
Host, Worship Leader, & Storyteller



Children move into a large group setting and participate in discovering God's Word through storytelling, worship, and interactive experiences.

Welcome

Hi, kids! Welcome! I am so excited to be here with you today. Let's all celebrate God by singing and dancing together! (Play the Opening Theme Song from TruBlessings worship and lead kids in dance and celebration.)



That was great! Now everyone, take a seat—it's time to hear part of the Big God Story! Hey, boys and girls, do you know who else loves God's big story? That's right! Hamilton the Hedgehog! Let's call him to come out and join us. Let's see if we can get him to come out of his log house. Call with me: Hamilton, where are you? Hmmmm ... maybe he's sleeping and can't hear us. Let's try again. Hamilton, where are you? (Hamilton appears.)

Hi, Hamilton! We were just about to hear The Big God Story! Do you know what book we hear from each week? Of course you do. That's right—the Bible! God gave us the Bible so we can learn about Him! It's full of things that help us get to know God! We read the Bible to learn about God and about His Son, Jesus! And I know that you love to dig, dig, dig right into God's Word to find out what He has to say to us. Is that right, Hamilton? (Hamilton nods his head.) We do too, right kids? (Allow kids to respond). Now, will you sing our Bible Song with me?


Bible Song: (sung to the tune of "Mary Had a Little Lamb")

Now it's time to hear God's Word
Hear God's Word
Hear God's Word
Now it's time to hear God's Word
So let's look in the Bible

As the song ends, have children return to their story spots. Hamilton can model this for children by sitting quietly as he listens to The Big God Story. Volunteer can return him to his log with his little face peeking out, or she may choose to sit quietly with him throughout the storytelling section.

AS YOU BEGIN STORYTELLING

As you begin the storytelling section of Discover, have a volunteer available to be Hamilton the Hedgehog using the puppet you provide. Or, you may choose to act as the storyteller and the puppeteer. Encourage Hamilton to come out of his log. **Have a toy boat near you that Hamilton can use as his toy.** Consider having a façade as part of your stage/teaching area. This façade can act as a puppet stage to conceal puppeteers. However, if this is not an option, if the children see the volunteer with the puppet on her hand, encourage the volunteer to interact with Hamilton and the children. Her participation will help kids to see the puppeteer and puppet as separate characters.



The BGS is written for a 2-3 year old audience and can be told in its entirety for an older audience, but may need to be shortened if the class is on the younger side.

The Big God Story

Jesus Calms the Storm

Matthew 8:23-27; Mark 4:35-41

SUPPLIES

- blue towel, sheet, or blanket
- toy boat or picture of a boat

SET UP

Lay the blue blanket on the floor with the boat on top of it.

Okay, friends, before we get started, let's all pray together and ask God to teach us about Himself and His Son, Jesus. (Lead the kids in prayer as you prepare to hear from God's Word.)

I'm so excited that we are going to hear part of The Big God Story today. I am going to need all of your help though. Do you think you can help me? Oh good, I'm so glad. Have you ever been to the beach before? What kinds of things did you see there? (Let children respond.) **Yes, there is sand, shells, and water. Have you ever seen the waves in the water? Some waves are so big and some are very small. Let's find out what happened with big waves in The Big God Story.**

Today in The Big God Story, we are going to hear about God's Son, Jesus, and how He helped His friends when they were afraid of a big storm.

One day, Jesus got in a boat and His friends followed Him. (Show the children your pretend lake and boat.) **Let's pretend this is the boat Jesus was in with His friends on the lake. I need two friends to come up and help me make our boat rock on the water.** (Choose two children.) **Don't be sad if you didn't get picked. Everyone will get a turn making the boat rock.**

Jesus fell asleep on the boat. Can we all pretend like we are sleeping? Close your eyes and make snoring sounds. Very good. Okay, open your eyes and let's listen to what happens next. All of a sudden a huge storm came! The waves came onto the boat, and it rocked back and forth. Can my helpers make the boat rock? (Have one child on each side of the blanket and have them shake it.) **Can you all help me make noises that sound like a storm? Let's pat our legs to sound like rain and howl like the wind. Make sure you are patting your legs and howling too. Great job, you sound just like a big storm. Let's put our hands back in our laps and listen to the rest of The Big God Story. Jesus' friends were scared. They went and woke up Jesus. They**

PRAYER TIP

Encourage kids to shake the wiggles and giggles out, and turn on listening ears before you start The Big God Story. Then, pray together asking God to teach you and the children.

NOTES:

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• said, "Lord, save us! We're going to drown!" Jesus asked them, "Why are you so
 • afraid?" Jesus stood up and told the winds and waves to stop. And guess what,
 • the winds stopped howling and the waves stopped rocking. Isn't that amazing!
 • His friends wondered: Who is this man? Do you know who He is? He is God.

• Jesus can make the winds stop. Can you help me say, "That's amazing"? Let's
 • say, "That's amazing!" all together. Good job! Jesus can make the waves stop.
 • That's amazing too! Help me say, "That's amazing!" Let's say, "That's amazing!"
 • all together. Good job!

• I'm so excited that we got to learn this part of The Big God Story again. It is so
 • important for us to remember that Jesus is God's Son and that's amazing!

• (Invite the children up in pairs to help rock the boat in the water.) **I know more of my**
 • **friends wanted to help make the boat rock. Let's try and remember what Jesus**
 • **did. First, He was sleeping, then the big storm came and the boat rocked.** (Have
 • the children rock the boat.) **Then Jesus' friends were afraid and woke Jesus up.**
 • **Jesus told the wind and waves to stop.** (Have the children stop moving the blanket.)
 • **Let's all say, "Jesus is God's Son and that's amazing!"**

• Have the children say good-bye to Hamilton as he goes back into his log home and
 • thank him for coming to be a part of The Big God Story.



Respond::

10-15 min.

Worship Leader



Children have the opportunity to respond to God as they celebrate Him within the faith community.

Song of Celebration

We have just learned about how Jesus chooses us to follow Him and to tell all of our friends and family about Him. One way we can celebrate all the exciting things about God is to worship Him. Let's all stand up and tell Jesus how much we love Him.

Lead kids in a celebratory worship song. Suggested song: "Rain or Pour" on the *Dig Down Deep* worship album by Jana Alayra. www.janaalayra.com.



Bless:::

5 min.

Small Group Leaders



This time is set aside for leaders to spend a few moments blessing the children in their small groups.

- A blessing can be a prayer of commission, a portion of Scripture, or words of encouragement and guidance. A blessing can be offered in order to ask God's Spirit to overflow from the child's life in such a way that blesses others, while it can also be prayed over a child for the purpose of declaring God's protection, joy, or wisdom.

Gather the children around you to bless them. Pray this prayer of blessing over them:

Children, may you know that Jesus chooses you to follow Him today, because He loves you so much.

But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God.

John 20:31a

- **Snack:** If you can, provide a snack that incorporates a boat and/or water. For example: blue jello in a clear cup with an orange wedge to look like a sail. As the kids eat, sit down with them and engage them in conversation. Make sure to consider any food allergies or check with parents ahead of time.


 Small
 Group
 SECTION

Connect:

15-30 min.

Small Group Leaders



Games, songs, manipulatives, sensory and art activities are used to help children reinforce what they experience in large group.

Option 1: It's Raining, It's Pouring

SUPPLIES

- heavy white cardstock (1 per child)
- spray bottles (1 per child or you can call a couple of children up at a time to participate)
- various colors of liquid watercolor (available at www.discountsschoolsupply.com)
- tape
- tarps

PREPARE

Fill water bottles with liquid watercolor. Lay down tarp under where the children will be spraying. Tape card stock up on an outside wall or inside if you don't mind the mess. You may want to tape a tarp up behind the card stock to protect the wall.

ENGAGE

What happened today in The Big God Story? Was there a big storm? Yes, there was. It rained and there was thunder and lightning. We are going to have fun squirting water onto our paper. We can pretend it is raining on our papers.

Option 2: Ocean Bags

SUPPLIES

- snack-sized plastic bags (1 per child)
- blue toothpaste
- fish stickers (5-10 stickers per child depending on size of fish)

PREPARE

Cut stickers into groups so you can give each child his own set.

ENGAGE

Have children join you at the table. Pass out one bag to each child. **Jesus and His friends were in the ocean on a boat when the storm started. We are going to make our own ocean in a bag.** Squirt a small amount of blue toothpaste in each bag, seal it, and let kids spread out the paste by rubbing over the bag. **Here is our water. Can you help spread the water by squishing it with your fingers? What does it feel like? What lives in the ocean? That's right, fish do! We are going to put fish in our ocean. Can you stick the fish stickers on your bag?** Give the kids a set of stickers to stick on the outside of the bag. Little ones will probably need help sticking the stickers on. **Who made the fish in the ocean? God did! Isn't He amazing?**

NOTES:

Option 3: Catch the Fish

This activity will help get the wiggles out of the kids. It is perfect at the end of your time together when everyone is a little restless.

SUPPLIES

- music

PREPARE

None

ENGAGE

Have all the children lie down around the circle time area. **Jesus was sleeping on the boat when the storm started. Were His friends afraid when the storm started? Yes! But we know that Jesus is God and that's amazing. Let's play a game where we pretend we are sleeping. Everyone lie down and close your eyes. When you hear the music, jump up and dance around. When the music stops lie back down and pretend you are asleep again.** Repeat activity as much as the kids are enjoying themselves.

Ongoing Connect Option

Hamilton's Box of Fun

Invite the kids to your circle time area and sing together:

Hamilton's Box (sung to the tune of "Oh Where, Oh Where Has My Little Dog Gone?")

**Oh where, oh where is Hamilton's Box?
Oh where, oh where can it be?
It's full of fun toys that we sure like a lot
Oh where, oh where can it be?**

Pick one or two children to help find the box or basket. Once it's found, you can place it in the middle of your circle time area and invite the kids to come and explore what's inside. **ASK: Come on over everyone! What fun things can we explore today? Let's take turns playing with things and even play together.**

When it's time to put the toys away, cue the kids with a "clean up song." (Choose a fun song that your children will recognize as the "clean up song" each week, possibly with a circus theme or other recognizable sound that is different from other music.)

Hamilton's Box of Fun



HAMILTON'S BOX OF FUN

is a recurring activity that can be used each week. Some options have been provided to help you create your own "box of fun."

NOTES:

- This is a fun resource to encourage the kids to interact with each other by sharing toys and using their imagination with different objects. This activity can be utilized at the beginning or end of the service, if time permits.

SUPPLIES

- box or basket to hold objects
- musical instruments (mini orchestra can be found at www.gymboree.com)
- small balls (not bouncy balls or other small objects children could choke on; consider Feel & Roll Bumpy Balls from www.lakeshore.com)
- silk scarves or other items for dress up
- wooden blocks
- chunky cars and/or trucks

SET UP

- Put a variety of fun objects/toys in box. Hide box or basket somewhere in the room.
- Clean objects each week after use.

home|front

- **HomeFront Weekly:** Be sure to send home the HomeFront Weekly for next week's lesson! This preteaching tool for parents encourages families to spend time in God's Word together before children arrive at church.

- **HomeFront Monthly:** Every four weeks we highlight one of the 10 environments. For each new environment, parents should receive HomeFront Monthly. This resource gives families ideas for how to create fun, spiritually forming times in their homes—setting aside a sacred space for family in the midst of their active, everyday lives!

