

Mark 4:35-41

Aim of Lesson

To show Jesus' power over nature, and the need for his followers to have confidence in him.

Background study

Mark 4:1; Mark 5:1. Use a Bible atlas and dictionary to study the main geographical features of the Sea of Galilee.

Suggested outline of lesson

With the aid of a map and, if possible, a picture or model of a fishing boat, set the scene. It was evening, and Jesus had been teaching from the boat all day. It must have been very exhausting. Think of the power of his voice to be able to reach such a crowd, and the effort required to sustain it. When evening came the crowd had to be sent away, for they would have lingered on, such was the appeal of Jesus' words and personality. He was tired, and his disciples gladly responded to his instruction that they cross to the quieter side of the lake, where he liked to go for rest and prayer. They would have felt protective towards him.

Convey to the children the difference between any park lakes they may have seen and, the size and characteristics of the Sea of Galilee. Galilee was subject to sudden squalls because of its position. On the eastern side there are mountains; on the west, hills intersected by narrow gorges through which violent winds sweep across the water.

When the storm first arose the disciples were probably unperturbed, having coped with similar situations many times before. It must have been a very bad storm for experienced sailors, who had worked all their lives on the Sea of Galilee, to become afraid. Build up the drama of the storm as it intensified, stressing the increasing fear of the disciples, and the increasing roar of the sea and the howling wind, as the fishing boat was battered and swamped. Only when the situation became so serious that there was danger of the boat sinking and their being drowned, did they abandon their own efforts and turn in desperation to their sleeping master. In a state of panic, they shook him awake, feeling indignant at his apparent unconcern. They did not know what Jesus could do about the situation, but at last they felt the need to turn to him for help. Recall the deafening noise of the storm in order that Jesus' words (spoken slowly and quietly) might provide a striking contrast.

After a short pause, describe the sudden calm, the gentle movement of the boat, and the alleviation of the disciples' fears. Relief, at danger passed, is a feeling that perhaps the children themselves have experienced in some way. Show that, although Jesus had responded initially to his disciples' immediate needs and removed the cause of their fear, he nevertheless, when the storm had ceased, confronted them with their lack of faith. They could now see that their own skill and strength, of which they were undoubtedly proud, were as nothing compared with the power over the elements which was at Jesus' command. They stood in wonder before this unique man.

Relevance to the children's lives

Life is like a boat trip. We sail along through life. Is the voyage always smooth and calm? Are there days when there are storms, when we panic and think that something dreadful is going to happen? Who is in the boat with us? We can always ask Jesus for help, at any time. How can we do this? (By trying to remember his teaching; by prayer).

Worksheets

The hidden words are:

D	I	S	C	I	P	L	E	S
					E	V	E	N
	A	F	R	A	I	D		
					C	U	S	H
T	E	A	C	H	E	R		
					B	O	A	T
		S	T	E	R	N		
W	A	V	E	S				
	F	A	I	T	H			
			W	I	N	D		
		A	S	L	E	E	P	
		C	A	L	M			

Prayer

Dear Lord God, we are not strong enough to be able to deal with all life's problems by ourselves. Please be near us, and help us all the time. Amen.

Memory verse

"Lo, I am with you always" (Matthew 28:20).