



LIFE & MINISTRY OF JESUS

Unit 3 • Identity - Jesus is God

UNIT DESCRIPTION

The Messiah had been foretold in the Holy Scriptures. He would be identified by the many signs and wonders He would perform - "Then the eyes of the blind will be opened, And the ears of the deaf will be unstopped. Then the lame will leap like a deer, and the tongue of the dumb will shout for joy..." (Isaiah 35:5,6 NASB).

Jesus performed miracles while on earth to attest to the fact that He is God. "A miracle, then, is an act of God, which visibly deviates from the ordinary working of His power, designed...to authenticate a divine message.

"A miracle, 'is an occurrence so marked in its departure from the usual order of things as to be to men a sign of God's special power'. It is an interposition of a power above nature and above men...

"The thirty-six miracles particularized in the Gospels were wrought in three realms: the human, the cosmic, and the spiritual, and prove Christ's sovereignty over all realms. In the human realm are all healing miracles; in the cosmic realm are all the miracles involving nature; and in the spiritual realm are the miracles which impinge on other worlds.

"The miracles were not designed to create curiosity, but to produce conviction, and in addition to being divine signs they were spiritual symbols."[1]

This unit on the Identity of Jesus as God will cover four of His miracles: Jesus calms the storm; Jesus forgives sins and heals a paralytic; Jesus casts out demons; Jesus raises Lazarus and He Himself is raised from the dead.

Each of these miracles reveals the identity and, thus, the great power and love of Jesus. It is upon this foundation of truth that faith in Christ is built. "The Divinity of Christ is not merely a theological conception, or a matter only of academic interest, but it is a fact and truth of universal, age-long, and vital importance. If Jesus was not God, Christianity is a fraud, and the Christian Church is a farce. If Jesus was not God, the Bible is a lie, and those who teach it are ignorant and deluded. If Jesus was not God, everything is lost, and nothing but eternal death confronts us. But 'In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God' (John 1:1)."[2]

As you work through this unit in the next four weeks, ask the Spirit to personally reveal the importance of the doctrine of the deity of Christ to your walk with Him.

[1] The Unfolding Drama of Redemption, Vol. 2, W. Graham Scroggie, © by W. Graham Scroggie, 1994, Kregel Publications, pp. 149.

[2] Ibid. pp. 140-141.



JESUS CALMS THE STORM

Life & Ministry of Jesus • U3#1 1st-3rd Grade • Aug.20, 2023

Concept

Jesus is God.

Goal

Students will learn that Jesus' power over nature attests to His identity as God. They will be encouraged to consider the significance of this and to take steps of faith to trust Him in all circumstances because He is all-powerful and cares for His children.

Passage

Matthew 8:23-27; Matthew 11:2-4

Key Verse: "What kind of a man is this, even the winds and the sea obey Him?" Matthew 8:27

Planning Ahead

Lesson Supplies	Craft Supplies
<p>Activity Station:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 4 clear plastic 2-liter bottles **• 2 tornado tube connectors• Gallon jug of water, 1 jug/class• 1 funnel <p>Learning Activity #1:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• "Who am I?" cards <p>Lesson:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Large laminated "Jesus In His Land" map• Large piece of poster board• Squirt guns or spray bottles	<p>Activity Station:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Half sheets (5½" x 8½") of cardstock with key verse printed on an edge, 1/child• Glue sticks• Yarn, 36"/child• 1" x 14" strips of crepe paper, 7/child• Markers• Paper hole punches• Transparent tape• Staplers

*TEACHERS PLEASE NOTE

For clarity, the italicized areas in the Planning Ahead section indicate supplies that are in—and should be returned to—your classroom SHARED SUPPLY bag.

Background Information/Teacher Helps

Life & Ministry of Jesus • U3#1 1st-3rd Grade • Aug.20, 2023

"The deity of Christ is the key doctrine of scripture. Reject it, and the Bible becomes a confused jumble of words devoid of any unifying theme. Accept it, and the Bible becomes an intelligible and ordered revelation of God in the person of Jesus Christ. Christ is the center of Christianity, and the conception we form of Christianity is therefore the conceptions we have of Him...

... The four gospels are, of course, the main source of our knowledge of the person of our Lord. The Old Testament, however, makes its contribution to the subject. References to Jehovah in the Old Testament are applied to Christ in the New. That is inexplicable and unwarranted if He was not God. Yet, as strict monotheists, the New Testament writers constantly use these ascriptions without any explanation or apparent consciousness of incongruity...

... Christ's ministry of power is another link in the already strong chain of proof of His deity. What gained for Him the unquestioning obedience and unfaltering loyalty of His followers? If He be not Son of God, how explaining the fact that after two millennia there are millions who would gladly surrender life itself rather than deny Him? The transformed lives of Christians are an eloquent and ever-present witness to the deity of the person from whom the transforming power proceeds"[1]

God gives us evidence of His existence in many ways and, likewise, Jesus provided evidence that attested to His identity as God's Son, God incarnate, the Messiah. The many signs and miracles He performed, apart from demonstrating His love and compassion for people, authenticated His claims of deity.

The disciples were eyewitnesses to the works of Jesus Christ. In Matthew 8:23-27, the disciples and Jesus departed from the crowds after a tiring day. The disciples had seen Jesus do amazing miracles that day. They got into a boat to cross the sea. Jesus fell asleep. Some of the disciples were experienced fishermen and were not afraid to navigate on the sea until a "great" storm arose. This storm was very strong and powerful, able to capsize the boat. They became very afraid and cried out to Jesus to help them. Jesus says, "Why are you timid, you men of little faith?" Then He commanded the storm to calm. The disciples were amazed at how the wind and waves obeyed Him. Who would have such great power but God Himself? Once again Jesus showed the disciples who He was by giving them clear evidence.

[1] The Incomparable Christ, J. Oswald Sanders, 1971, Moody Press, pp. 53, 56, 60.

Set Up

Incorporation Lg. Group

Keep squirt guns/spray bottles hidden.

Activity Stations:

Goal: As the students play at the stations, talk to them about weather. Ideas for questions to ask: Have you ever been out in a storm? How did you feel? What do you do when it storms? What happens when there is a storm? Is there any way you can stop the storm?

- **Experiment – Storm-in-a-bottle**

- **Instructions:** To produce the tornado effect, invert and swirl the bottles so that the water on top begins to flow down into the empty bottle creating a tornado. Have each student recreate a tornado using the 2 assembled “Storms-in-a-bottle.”
- **Assembly of storm-in-a-bottle:** Fill one 2-liter bottle $\frac{3}{4}$ full with water. Using the plastic tornado connector, attach an empty 2-liter bottle to the previously filled water bottle.

- **Craft – Windsock [1]**

- **Instructions:** Cut the windsocks apart along the solid line. Decorate the key verse side of the cardstock with markers and glue. Write child's name on it. On the backside, tape the ends of the crepe paper strips equally along the bottom of the key verse edge. Roll the paper into a tube with the decorated side out and staple together at either end or tape along the seam. Punch the 4 marked holes in the top of the tube. Thread yarn through the holes and tie all four strands together at the top. Tie one longer piece of yarn to the knotted ends and use it to hang the windsock.

[1] Adapted from Kids Create, p. 80.

Transition

Let's get ready for the puppet skit.

Introduction Lg. Group

Drama – “What’s In A Name?” presented by the Puppet Team

Debrief: In the puppet show Prudence studied the names of Jesus and we learned that the names of Jesus tell us that He is God. Over the next four weeks we will learn other ways He showed His disciples and us that He is God. As the people of Jesus’ day listened to Him teach, watched Him do miracles, asked Him questions and talked with Him, they knew more and more that He was not just an ordinary man. Many believed that He was the Messiah that God had promised. Everyone go back to your classroom.

Transition

Let's begin with a game to see how you figure out a person's identity.

Learning Activity #1 Lg. Group

Guessing Game – Who am I?

Instructions: Using the provided cards, read the clues and see if the students can guess the identity of the person described. The last card will describe some of the signs and miracles Jesus performed.

Clues were given to guess the identity of the people described. When Jesus was on earth, He gave many clues that showed who He was. His names even had a special meaning. Let's learn about a miracle Jesus performed to show that He is God.

Let's see what the disciples did. Read verse 25. Why do you think the disciples thought Jesus, a carpenter, could save them? After all they were the fisherman and knew how to sail through a storm. If they couldn't save themselves from this storm, why did they turn to Jesus? (The storm was worse than anything they had experienced. They didn't know what else to do. They had seen Jesus do miraculous things before, so maybe He could help.) At any rate, they went to Jesus, woke Him, and said "Save us!" What happened then? Let's read verse 26.

Jesus got up and told the storm to stop and it did! Can you imagine how incredible that would be? Why do you think Jesus did this? Do you think He liked showing His great power? Maybe He didn't want to die and was just saving Himself. Maybe He didn't want the disciples to die. Or could it be that He just liked doing nice things for the disciples? What do you think?

With each miracle He performed, Jesus had a specific purpose. By these miracles, He revealed that He is more than man, He is God. As God He has control over all of creation. This miracle showed His power over nature and the disciples were amazed. Look at verse 27. "What kind of a man is this, even the winds and the sea obey Him?" Through the months they had been with Jesus, the disciples had begun to consider who He was. This was one more sign that gave them evidence that He was God. As the disciples tried to figure out who Jesus was, one thing was clear—no man has power over nature.

Isn't it amazing that God would become a man and come to earth to show us what He is like and what we are like? He is perfect and we are sinners. Because of our sin we need forgiveness. He came to die on the cross to pay for the sins of all people. If we tell Him that we know we need His forgiveness for our sins and ask that His death be the punishment we deserve for our sins, He will forgive us.

Turn to Matthew 8 and let's read verse 23. The disciples and Jesus got into a boat and started across the Sea of Galilee. (Point to the Sea of Galilee on the map.) Does anyone remember what region this is? The Sea of Galilee is in a valley surrounded by mountains. When cool air drops down from the mountains, it often causes sudden storms with very forceful, strong winds and high waves. I imagine the disciples had great respect for and fear of the power of the wind and waves in these sudden storms.

Lesson Continued

Follow along as I read verse 24. (While reading, have a teacher create the thunder sound with the poster board. Pull out the squirt guns and spray the students. Ham up the storm and have fun!) That day while they were out on the Sea of Galilee a great storm blew in and the water starting filling the boat. The disciples began to panic, but Jesus was asleep! Think about it. You're in a boat, the waves are so high that they're coming over the sides and swamping the boat. The wind is so strong that the boat is being tossed around such that you have no control over where it goes. What do you think your feelings might be if you were those disciples? What do you think you would do?

Transition

Let's get into small groups to talk about why it matters that Jesus is God.

Learning Activity# 2 Sm. Groups

Who remembers our key verse which is what the disciples said when Jesus calmed the storm? "What kind of a man is this, even the winds and the sea obey Him?" (Matthew 8:27). The disciples were so amazed and believed that because of what He did, Jesus was God. So they wanted to follow Him.

1. So how about you? Who do you believe Jesus was? Do you believe he was God?
2. What does it mean to you, if anything, that Jesus is God?
3. Does knowing that Jesus is God change the way you think about things that happen in your life?
4. Do you ever think that His great power can or will be used in your life?
5. Can anyone think of a time when you were very aware of God's great power and convinced that it only made sense to follow Him? (Teachers, pray ahead of time for an appropriate example to share from your own lives.)

Mission Prayer: Talk about and pray for Oasis Giving campaign.

Let's pray. If you have asked Him to forgive you, you can tell Him that you want to learn more about Him and thank him for what you know is true.

Optional Activity

Experiment with storm and wave bottles.

Game – "Who Am I"

Instructions: Have students think of a contemporary or historical famous person. Have them write the person's name on a piece of paper and tape it to another student's back. Students with the names on their backs will try to guess the name on their back by asking other students for clues about that person.