



Enter the Story

Miracles

A narrative about the miraculous things that people witnessed Jesus do.

THE BIBLE

Mark 2, 4, 6, John 5

Prepare for the Story

ICEBREAKER

- If you only had 24 hours left to live, what would you do?

Rewind the Story

Can someone highlight what has happened in the story so far ...

- Birth of Jesus – The birth of the promised King.
- Baptism & Temptation – Jesus in the Wilderness
- Jesus' Followers – The Disciples and the marginalized
- Hope & Healing – The mission of Jesus

Hear the Story

Scene One: Through the Roof

Crowds continued to surround Jesus everywhere He went. One time, when people found out which house Jesus was staying in, they packed into every room. There wasn't space for one more person – even outside of the door!

As Jesus was teaching about God's kingdom, four men brought their paralyzed friend on a mat to see Jesus, believing He would heal him.

But the only way they could get their friend inside the house was to climb on the roof, dig a hole through the clay tiles, and lower him down!

When Jesus saw the hole in the roof, He was impressed with the effort and faith of these men. Jesus looked at the paralyzed man lying in front of Him and said, *"Everything you've done wrong is now forgiven."*

Some religious leaders were watching and listening to Jesus. They were offended by what Jesus said and asked each other, *"Who does this man think he is? Only God can forgive people's sins!"*

But Jesus knew what they were thinking and asked them, *"Why are you so offended? Would you rather I had just healed him and not offered forgiveness? I'll prove to you that I have power beyond healing – power to forgive every kind of evil."*

Then Jesus told the paralyzed man, *"Stand up! Pick up your mat and walk home. You are healed!"*

The man jumped up. He was no longer paralyzed! He pushed his way through the crowded house and out the door, and then he ran home. People were filled with wonder and amazement. They thanked God, saying, *"We've never seen anything like this before!"*

Scene Two: Calming a Storm

Another time, after a long day of teaching, Jesus asked His disciples to take him in a boat across the lake to get away from the crowds for a while. As they set off, Jesus was exhausted, so He went to the back of the boat, put His head on a cushion, and fell asleep.

All of a sudden, a violent storm blew in with hard rain and strong winds. Waves crashed inside of the boat. Even though some of the disciples were experienced fishermen, they couldn't keep the boat from filling with water.

The disciples ran to the back of the boat in a panic, waking up Jesus as they shouted, *"Don't you care that we're going to drown?"*

Jesus awoke, stood up, turned toward the water, and said, *"Quiet! Be still."*

Instantly, the wind stopped blowing, and the lake became calm.

Then Jesus asked His disciples, *"Why are you so afraid? Don't you believe in Me yet?"*

The disciples were filled with wonder. They asked each other, *"Who is this man? Even the wind and the waves listen to him!"*

Scene Three: Feeding the Multitudes

During His travels, Jesus sent the disciples out in pairs to nearby villages, giving them the power to heal and teach others about the Kingdom of God.

When they returned, the disciples told Jesus about all of the great things that God had done through them. Then Jesus said, *"Let's go to a quiet place where we can rest for a while."*

People had surrounded them all day, so much so that they hadn't had time to eat. So Jesus and his disciples set off by boat to reach a secluded field where they could rest. But the crowds spotted them and ran along the shore ahead of them.

When Jesus stepped out of the boat, a huge crowd had already gathered in the field. Jesus felt compassion for them and began teaching them about God's ways.

It was getting late in the day, so Jesus' disciples pleaded with Him, *"We're in a remote place here,"* they said. *"Send the crowds away to nearby farms so they can get something to eat."*

But Jesus said, *"You feed them."*

"With what?" the disciples asked. *"We'd have to work for months to buy enough food for this crowd. We only have five loaves of bread and two fish!"*

Then Jesus told the disciples to divide the crowd into groups of fifty or a hundred and have them sit down in the grass.

Jesus took the five loaves and the two fish, looked up into the sky, and asked God to bless the food. Then Jesus broke the bread into pieces and passed it to the disciples to give to the crowd. Jesus also divided the fish for everyone to share.

He continued to give food to the disciples until, finally, everyone in the crowd had eaten as much as they wanted. And there were twelve baskets of leftover bread and fish!

Thousands were fed that day – some said 5,000 families!

Wherever Jesus went – to villages, cities, and across the countryside – people pressed in to be close to Him. They carried the sick and the crippled and begged Jesus to touch them. And He felt great compassion for the people and healed them.

One time, Jesus explained where His power to perform these miracles came from. Jesus said, *"I don't do any of this on my own. God gives me the power to heal, raise the dead, and give life. Those who believe in Me will find new life with God that's never-ending."*

Retell the Story

- What did the friends do when they couldn't get to Jesus?
- What was impressive about this encounter with Jesus?
- What happened while the disciples were on the water?
- How did Jesus react to this danger?
- How did the disciples react after the wind and waves died down?
- How did Jesus feed thousands of hungry people?
- What was Jesus' following like due to these miracles?

Discuss the Story

- What is your first reaction to this story? How did this story make you feel?

- What stood out to you from this story? What did you notice for the first time?
- What from this story made you wonder?
- Why do you think people were amazed by Jesus' teaching?
- If you were in that jam-packed house, how do you think you would have reacted to what Jesus said and did?
- Why do you think Jesus first said, 'Let go of your worries. I will forgive everything you've ever done wrong,' before healing the man on the mat?
- If you were in the boat, how do you think you would have felt? What do you think you would have done?
- How would you have reacted to Jesus calming the storm?
- Why do you think Jesus performed miracles?
- Did you hear anything that reminded you of *other* stories?
- From this story, what did you notice about humans?
- From this story, what do you notice about God's character or His qualities?

1) THE FAITH OF FRIENDS

Take a moment to read Mark 2:1-12. Notice how we are told that when Jesus saw the hole in the roof, he was impressed with the effort and faith of these men. Then He says to the paralyzed man, "Your sins are forgiven. This is shocking. The paralyzed man hasn't confessed or repented, and yet he is declared forgiven. How can the faith of his friends give him this opportunity? In what ways can your faithfulness extend grace and forgiveness to your friends?

2) THE LAKE EFFECT

When the disciples are overwhelmed by the storm, they are surprised to find Jesus asleep. When they wake Him, Jesus asks, "Why are you so afraid?" We might assume that Jesus is telling them they shouldn't be afraid, but what if Jesus is actually trying to help them see something? Some of the disciples had spent their whole lives on this lake. They had weathered all kinds of storms before on their own. The truth is that's why they were so rattled by this storm. They had already tried to handle it on their own. They had already done everything in their power, and it wasn't enough. What are some ways that you try to handle your "storms" on your own before you turn to ask Jesus for help?

3) BREAD AND BASKETS

When Jesus feeds the 5,000 with only five loaves and two fish, we are told there are 12 baskets left over. What do you think this might signify? Discuss ideas as a group; if you get stumped, turn to Google and see what you can come up with.

God,

For many of us, the thought of miracles happening right before our eyes seems fantastic. But when You walked the Earth, You made them seem like a part of everyday life. Help us see the everyday miracles that are happening all around us. Give us eyes to see where You are working and the courage to step up and join You wherever You are at. May part of the miracle that others see is the work that You do in us and through us every day. Amen.