



Enter the Story

No Ordinary Man

A narrative about the identity and authority of Jesus,

THE BIBLE

Matthew 8, 14, 17, Mark 4-6, 9,
Luke 8-9, John 6 & 11

Prepare for the Story

ICEBREAKER

- If you could have any superpower, what would it be and why?

Rewind the Story

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

- Jesus' Followers – The Disciples and the marginalized
- Hope & Healing – The mission of Jesus
- Miracles - Jesus' ability to perform wonders
- Kingdom Ways – The nature of the Kingdom of God

Hear the Story

Scene One: Wind and Waves

Jesus healed people with every kind of sickness and disease. Because of this, news spread quickly about Him, and huge crowds began following Him wherever he went. People traveled from miles away to be near Him and see the incredible miracles He performed.

On one occasion, when evening came, Jesus was exhausted from teaching all day. He asked His disciples to get into a boat so they could cross the lake and get away from the crowds. As they took off, Jesus went to the back of the boat, put His head on a cushion, and fell asleep.

All of a sudden, a terrible storm came up with strong winds and crashing waves. No matter how hard the disciples tried, they couldn't keep the boat from filling with water. The disciples ran to the back of the boat in a panic to wake Jesus, shouting, *"Teacher, don't you care that we're going to drown?"* Jesus awoke, stood up, and said to the wind and waves, *"Quiet! Be still."* As soon as He had said this, the wind stopped blowing, and the sea became calm. Then Jesus asked them, *"Why are you so afraid? Don't you believe in Me yet?"*

The disciples just sat there, filled with wonder. They asked each other, *"Who is this? Even the wind and the waves obey Him!"*

Scene Two: Legion

When Jesus reached the other side of the lake, a wild man filled with demons ran towards him from a nearby cemetery. This man had been chained to some of the tombs to keep him from hurting people, but he snapped the chains from his wrists and ankles. Now, he wandered around all day and night, screaming and hitting himself with stones. No one could control him because he was too strong.

As he approached, Jesus said to him, *"Come out of this man, you demons!"* The man fell down in front of Jesus and screamed, *"Why are you bothering me, Jesus, Son of God? Please, don't torture me!"* Then Jesus asked, "What is your name?" *"Legion,"* the man replied, *"because there are many of us inside this man."*

Over and over, the demons begged Jesus not to send them far away. There happened to be a herd of pigs feeding on a hillside nearby. *"Send us into those pigs!"* the demons pleaded. Jesus replied, *"All right, go!"* And the demons came out of the man and entered the pigs. The entire herd of two thousand pigs immediately rushed down the steep hillside into the lake, where they drowned!

Those who witnessed what had happened ran into town, telling everyone they could find. Soon, the entire town came out to see what had happened. They were astonished when they saw the man fully clothed and no longer insane.

Scene Three: Who Do You Say I Am?

The people realized that God was working through the miracles they were witnessing. They said, *"This is the Prophet for sure, God's prophet right here among us!"*

Later, when Jesus came to the region of Caesarea Philippi, He asked His disciples, *"Who do people say the Son of Man is?"* They replied, *"Some say John the Baptist; others say Elijah; and still others, Jeremiah or one of the prophets."*

"But what about you?" He asked, *"Who do you say I am?"* Simon Peter spoke up and answered, *"You are the Messiah, the Son of the Living God."* Jesus replied, *"God bless you, Simon, son of Jonah! You didn't get that answer out of books or from flesh and blood. My Father in heaven, God Himself, let you in on the secret of who I really am."*

Scene Four: Transfigured

A few days later, Jesus took Peter, James, and John with Him and led them up a high mountain to be alone. Jesus began to pray, and as the men watched, His appearance was transformed so that His face shone like the sun, and His clothes became white as light. They shimmered, glistening white, whiter than any bleach could make them. Then, all of a sudden, two men appeared, and they were talking with Jesus.

The men who had appeared turned out to be Moses and Elijah – and what a glorious appearance they made! They talked about Jesus' coming departure – His exodus, the one He was about to complete in Jerusalem. Overwhelmed by the moment, Peter said to Jesus, *"Master, it is wonderful to be here. If you want, we could build three shelters – one for You, one for Moses, and one for Elijah."* He blurted this out without thinking.

Then a bright cloud covered them, and a voice from the cloud said, *"This is my Son, whom I love; with Him I am well pleased. Listen to Him!"* When the disciples heard this, they fell face down on the ground, scared to death. But Jesus came over and touched them. *"Don't be afraid."* When they opened their eyes and looked around, they only saw Jesus.

As they were coming down the mountain, Jesus instructed them, *"Don't tell anyone what you have seen until the Son of Man has been raised from the dead."* So, the disciples kept the matter to themselves.

Scene Five: Lazarus

Sometime later, Jesus received word that His friend Lazarus was very sick. But when He heard about it, He said, *"Lazarus' sickness will not end in death. No, it happened for the glory of God."* Despite Jesus' love and concern for His friend, He stayed where He was for the next two days."

Finally, He said to his disciples, *"Let's go back to Judea, our friend Lazarus has fallen asleep, but now I will go and wake him up."* The disciples said, *"Lord, if he is resting, then he will soon get better!"* They thought Jesus meant Lazarus was simply sleeping, but Jesus meant Lazarus had died. So, He told them plainly, *"Lazarus is dead. And for your sake, I'm glad I wasn't there, for now you will really believe. Come, let's go see him."*

It was a long journey, and when Jesus arrived, He was told that Lazarus had been in his grave for four days. Many people had come to console Lazarus' sisters, Martha and Mary, during this difficult time.

When Martha received word that Jesus was coming, she went to meet Him. But Mary stayed in the house. Martha said to Jesus, *"Lord if you had only been here, my brother would not have died. But even now, I know that God will give you whatever you ask."*

Jesus told her, *"Your brother will rise again."* "Yes," Martha said, *"He will rise when everyone else rises on the last day."* Jesus told her, *"I am the resurrection and the life. Anyone who believes in Me will live, even after dying. Everyone who lives in Me and believes in Me will never die."*

"Do you believe this, Martha?" "Yes, Lord," she told him. *"I have always believed you are the Messiah, the Son of God, the one who has come into the world from God."* Then she returned to her sister and told her, *"The Teacher is here and wants to see you."* So Mary immediately went to Him.

Jesus had stayed outside the village, at the place where Martha met Him. When the people saw Mary leave so hastily, they assumed she was going to Lazarus' grave to weep. So they followed her there. When Mary arrived and saw Jesus, she fell at his feet and said, *"Lord, If you had only been here, my brother wouldn't have died."*

When Jesus saw her weeping and saw the other people wailing with her, a deep anger welled up within Him, and He was deeply troubled. *"Where have you put him?"* He asked. They told him, *"Lord, come and see."* Then Jesus wept.

The people who were standing nearby said, *"See how much He loved him!"* But some said, *"This man healed a blind man. Couldn't He have kept Lazarus from dying?"* Jesus was still angry as He arrived at the tomb, which was a cave with a stone rolled across the entrance.

"Roll the stone aside," Jesus told them. But Martha protested, *"Lord, he has been dead for four days. The smell will be terrible."* Jesus responded, *"Didn't I tell you that you would see God's glory if you believed?"*

So they took away the stone. Then Jesus looked up and said, *"Father, I thank you that you have heard me."* When He had said this, Jesus called in a loud voice, *"Lazarus, come out!"* And to everyone's amazement, the dead man came out! His hands and feet were wrapped with strips of linen, and there was a cloth around his face. Jesus said to them, *"Take off the grave clothes and let him go."*

Because of this, many of the Jews who had come to visit Mary and Martha believed in Jesus. But some of them went to the Pharisees and told them about what Jesus had done.

Retell the Story

- What was Jesus doing on the boat?
- What happened while they were out on the water?
- What happened when they reached shore?
- What did Jesus do with the demon?
- Who did people think Jesus was?
- What happened to Jesus on top of the mountain?
- What happened when Jesus heard the news of his friend Lazarus?
- What was the result of his traveling to see Mary and Martha?

- 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?
- What are some of the reasons Jesus performed miracles?
- From these stories, what has Jesus shown He has power over?
- Why do you think Moses & Elijah appear? What does this interaction show or teach you?
- 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 POWER OF JESUS

In today's story, we see Jesus' power over the natural elements, physical objects, and even demons. Where have you seen this kind of power displayed before (Old & New Testament)? Based on your observations, is there anything more powerful than Jesus? If He is the most powerful, why do you think we give other things in our lives more power or control? List some of the things that humans let control us.

2) EMOTIONS OF JESUS

Jesus shows His emotions in our story today because of the death of His friend. What emotions does He reveal? Where else have you seen Jesus get emotional? What do you think this tells us about who Jesus was and how we should handle our emotions?

3) WHO IS JESUS?

One of the central themes of today's story is the identity of Jesus. Think back to each event in our story. How is Jesus' identity talked about, expressed, challenged, or rewarded? Give some examples from each event. Why do you think this issue seems to be something of significant value to Jesus? What implications does it have for us and the world?

Pray

God,

Through Jesus, you demonstrated Your power as supreme. There is nothing outside of Your ability or control. Help us trust You with all our worries and our concerns. When we feel powerless, remind us of who really holds the power in this world. Remind us of Your strength and your faithfulness and lead us in Your ways. Amen.