



The man through the roof

MEETING AIM

To explore how Jesus can forgive our sins and set us free!

BIBLE PASSAGE

Luke 5:17-26

BACKGROUND

This session plan is designed to be used in a home setting or online using video-calling software. You could also run it in person, if restrictions allow.

This story seems like it is another example of Jesus' healing power, and it is, but there's something more going on. The man is brought to Jesus by his friends so that he can be healed. They go to great lengths to get him in front of Jesus. But Jesus doesn't heal him initially, he forgives the man's sins. If the story were to finish there, what would we think of Jesus' actions?

Jesus doesn't stop there though. He heals the man in response to the challenge from the scribes and the Pharisees. Which is harder, he asks them: to forgive sins or heal someone? By doing one he proves he is able to do both.

STARTING OUT

5 MINS

Start your time together at home with some simple refreshments and chat about what your children have found exciting today (or yesterday, if you're doing this in the morning). If you're doing this online, ask the children about their week. Have they had to say sorry this week? Why? What happened after they said sorry?

INTRO ACTIVITY

5 MINS

Ask your group of family what they would do in each of these situations. Would they be able to forgive the person? How easy or difficult would they find it?

- Your sister decides to borrow your favourite outfit without asking and spills chocolate milkshake down the front.
- Your dad is refereeing your football match and he sends you off for no reason.

- You tell your friend a secret and they spread it all around school.
- You're out shopping and someone steals the bag containing your new trainers.
- You accidentally tell your nan what your mum said about her, and your nan gets upset.

Try to order these situations from the most easy to forgive, to the least. Why are some situations easier to forgive than others?

BIBLE STORY

10 MINS

You will need: animated retelling of Luke 5:17-26; snacks (optional)

Show the children the animation from YouTube. If you are at home, then prepare some cinema snacks and settle down to watch the story. If you're meeting online, then share your screen so that everyone can watch the story at the same time.

Once you have finished, read the story in the Bible, then challenge everyone to come up with their own dialogue for the story. Start the video at 00:37 and decide how you are going to retell the story. What voices might all the characters have? If you have just a few children, do this together. If you have a larger online group, assign each child a character in the story and ask them to think about what that character might say, when they appear onscreen.

Have a few practices and then 'perform' your version of the story, as you watch the video again with the sound off.

Ask your family or group about their initial reaction to what Jesus says and does. Does he do what they might have expected him to do?

CHATTING TOGETHER

5 MINS

Ask the children these questions, encouraging everyone to take turns to contribute:

- What do you think of Jesus' power? Can you compare him to anyone else you have read about or heard of? Who? Why? Why not?
- If you were in the crowd, what would you have thought when Jesus said the servant was healed?
- What do you think the servant did next?
- What does this story tell you about Jesus?

- What do you want to say to Jesus because of this story?

CREATIVE TIME

10 MINS

You will need: coloured paper; scissors; sticky tape

Make sure all the children (or family members) have paper, scissors and sticky tape. Encourage them to cut out strips of two different colours, each strip about 2cm wide (they can be as long as they like!).

Lay the strips of one colour vertically next to each other on a table, and then weave the strips of the other colour horizontally through them. This should create a woven mat. When everyone has finished, they can secure the strips with sticky tape on the back of the mat.

As you work, continue chatting about the story. Focus on the idea that Jesus forgave the man's sins first, before he healed him. What do the children make of that?

PRAYER

5 MINS

You will need: woven mats from 'Creative time'; marker pens

Make sure everyone has their mat in front of them. Ask them to think about what they would like to say to Jesus because of what they have discovered about him in this story. Encourage them to write their thoughts and prayers down on their mat.

When everyone has finished, ask them to hold their mats and chat with Jesus about what they have written. After a few moments of quiet, finish with a prayer thanking Jesus for loving them and wanting to forgive them for what they have done wrong.

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The centurion's servant

MEETING AIM

To discover more about the power of Jesus.

BIBLE PASSAGE

Luke 7:1-10

BACKGROUND

This session plan is designed to be used in a home setting or online using video-calling software. You could also run it in person, if restrictions allow.

This second session in a series about Jesus' miracles focuses on the story of Jesus healing the servant of a centurion. As in Session 1, Jesus is impressed by the faith of people who ask him for help, but here the person asking for that help is not Jewish, but a Roman army officer – one of the hated occupying forces. Also, as in Session 1, Jesus shows power far beyond the expectation of those asking for helping (and those in the crowd watching). Jesus doesn't even have to be present to make a difference!

Explore the story with children and wonder together about the power that Jesus shows. What does that tell you about Jesus? And what might it mean for the children you're working with?

STARTING OUT

5 MINS

Start your time together at home with some simple refreshments and chat about what your children have found exciting today (or yesterday, if you're doing this in the morning). If you're doing this online, ask the children about their week. Ask the children who the most powerful person they can think of is.

INTRO ACTIVITY AND BIBLE STORY

10 MINS

You will need: tablet or smartphone; *Guardians of Ancora* app)

If you're doing this at home, download the Guardians of Ancora Bible game app on a tablet or smartphone. If you're doing this online, then email the carers or parents of the children in your group and ask them to do this with a device that their children can use. If families don't have access to a suitable device, then explore how you might loan them one.

Encourage the children to register on the game and then tap on the Spire (the building at the top of the map). Choose the story 'Jesus and the Roman Officer' and spend some time playing through the story. The children have to run and jump through Capernaum to find the centurion's house. They can then keep tapping the screen to see the first part of the story.

After the first chapter, stop playing and chat about the story so far. If you have lots of time, continue playing through the whole story. If not, read the story from a child-friendly translation of the Bible (such as the Contemporary English Version).

Once you have explored the whole story, discuss what happened and ask the children about their reactions to what Jesus does and says.

CHATTING TOGETHER

5 MINS

Ask the children these questions, encouraging everyone to take turns to contribute:

- What do you think of Jesus' power? Can you compare him to anyone else you have read about or heard of? Who? Why? Why not?
- If you were in the crowd, what would you have thought when Jesus said the servant was healed?
- What do you think the servant did next?
- What does this story tell you about Jesus?
- What do you want to say to Jesus because of this story?

CREATIVE TIME

10 MINS

You will need: corrugated cardboard (such as from a sturdy box); coloured paper; kitchen foil; scissors; sticky tape or glue sticks; felt-tip pens

Make sure all the children (or family members) have everything they need. Encourage them to cut out a sword shape from the cardboard. If you're working online, you might need to ask parents or carers to help out at this point. Alternatively, you could cut them out yourself before the session and deliver them to the children.

Decorate the sword shape with coloured paper and kitchen foil, or by colouring it in with felt-tip pens. Once everyone has finished, admire each other's handiwork. If the children have included any special features, ask them to explain them!

As you work, continue chatting about the story. Focus on how and why Jesus healed the centurion's servant. What do the children think that tells them about Jesus and our relationship with him?

PRAYER

5 MINS

You will need: swords from 'Creative time'; marker pens

Make sure everyone has their sword in front of them. Ask them to think about what they would like to say to Jesus because of what they have discovered about him in this story. Encourage them to write their thoughts and prayers down somewhere on their sword.

When everyone has finished, ask them to hold their swords and chat with Jesus about what they have written. After a few moments of quiet, finish with a prayer thanking Jesus for loving them and being able to heal people.

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The storm at sea

MEETING AIM

To teach the children that Jesus is all powerful, despite difficulties that we might be facing in our lives.

BIBLE PASSAGE

Luke 8:22-25

BACKGROUND

This session plan is designed to be used in a home setting or online using video-calling software. You could also run it in person, if restrictions allow.

This was a real storm and the disciples were really scared. We might not be fishermen, but we still face storms and we still need the miraculous power of Jesus to either walk through the storm with us or calm it for us. Today's session is to build a foundation into the lives of the children so that when they do face trouble, they will know who has the ultimate power.

STARTING OUT

5 MINS

Start your time together at home with some simple refreshments and chat about what your children have found exciting today (or yesterday, if you're doing this in the morning). If you're doing this online, ask the children about their week. Chat about who the strongest person is that you know. What makes them strong?

INTRO ACTIVITY

10 MINS

You will need: whatever you have to hand to create a boat, such as blankets or chairs
Together, create a 'boat' from whatever you have in your house – use things like chairs, sofas, cushions, bedding, clothes horses. If you're online, then ask parent and carers to help their child(ren) build their own boat (make sure everyone is in front of their cameras so you can all see each others boats). Have some fun pretending to sail around the world in your own living room. If you're online, you can be a flotilla of small boats!

BIBLE STORY

10 MINS

You will need: paddling pool and water or blue material; toy boat

If you are feeling adventurous, use a large paddling pool full of water and sit all the children around it (or place it in front of your camera). You may need to cover the floor. Float a toy boat on top of the water. As the story unravels, the children can splash and create the effects of the wind and waves. Some of them can blow the boat along the water too (if you're telling this at home; do this yourself if you're telling it online). If you are feeling less inclined to get wet, use blue material instead. Shake the material around to create a similar effect. Tell this story, using your chosen props as you do so:

It was evening and Jesus had spent the day teaching his followers. He was tired. He needed a rest because everywhere he went, people just followed him. So, they decided to go out on their boat onto the enormous lake. Jesus sat down and very quickly, he nodded off!

Soon, his friends noticed that the waves were beginning to get bigger, and the wind was beginning to howl. The fierce storm picked up and came fast and furiously around the boat.

The waves were swooshing so high that water was flooding the boat. The wind was tearing around their faces and their sail, knocking them off their feet. It was terrifying!

"Where is Jesus?" shouted one of the men.

They searched all over the boat for him, and finally found him snoring at the back of the boat! How could he still be sleeping with this violent storm threatening them? They prodded him and shook him to wake him up.

"Jesus!" they shouted. "Look at this storm! How can you be asleep? Don't you care about us at all? Look! The water is pouring into the boat! We're going to drown!"

Jesus rubbed his eyes, stretched his arms and legs and stood up carefully in the boat.

"Stop!" he commanded. "Be quiet! Be still!"

Suddenly the waves grew calm. The wind stopped howling. Everything was calm again.

Jesus' friends were scared. They'd never seen anything like this before.

"How can the wind and the waves obey Jesus? How could that be possible?" they murmured to each other. Surely, he must be God's Son.

If the children enjoyed it, they could take turns in telling the story.

CHATTING TOGETHER

5 MINS

Ask the children these questions, encouraging everyone to take turns to contribute:

- How do you think the men felt when they found Jesus fast asleep in the storm?
- What does this story show us about Jesus?
- Is there anything in your life that is like a storm at the moment?
- What would you like Jesus to say to your storm?

CREATIVE TIME

10 MINS

You will need: various drums; saucepans and wooden spoons; cymbals; saucepan lids

Create a rhythm together – starting with one instrument and adding more as you go along. Ask the children to make up a simple chant to accompany their rhythm. Put it all together, starting quietly and building up to a loud crescendo and shout. Appoint someone to calm the noise by shouting out over everyone's chanting and drumming.

As you play and chant, encourage the group to think about areas in their lives that are noisy, turbulent and stressful. How can Jesus calm that situation?

PRAYER

5 MINS

You will need: a large sheet of paper with pre-drawn waves, lightning and clouds (lining paper is ideal); felt-tip pens

Spread the lining paper across the room. Ask the children to take off their shoes and find an empty space on the paper. Once they have found a space, they can draw around their foot and then write in the middle their particular storm or the name of someone else who is facing a difficulty. Choose one or two children to pray for all these situations. Pray for Jesus to give courage as we face troubles and for peace within the storm.

If you're doing this online, ask the children to create their own storm scene on a sheet of paper.

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The large crowd

MEETING AIM

To discover the drama of Jesus feeding a huge crowd of people.

BIBLE PASSAGE

Luke 9:10-17

BACKGROUND

This session plan is designed to be used in a home setting or online using video-calling software. You could also run it in person, if restrictions allow.

The story of Jesus feeding a large crowd is a staple of children's work. However, there are fewer details in Luke's account than the others – no disciples are named and there is no boy with a picnic to share. Nevertheless, children can still engage with the surprise of Jesus turning five loaves and two fish into enough to feed maybe as many as 20,000 people (the familiar number of 5,000 only refers to men). Perhaps we ourselves need to come to this story in the same mindset as our children, ready to be surprised!

STARTING OUT

5 MINS

Start your time together at home with some simple refreshments and chat about what your children have found exciting today (or yesterday, if you're doing this in the morning). If you're doing this online, ask the children about their week.

INTRO ACTIVITY

10 MINS

You will need: two large sheets of paper; marker pens

Ask the children what their favourite meal would be. You can either do this just chatting, or ask the children to draw their meal on a plate. Ask about main courses and puddings, whether people prefer savoury or sweet and what drinks people might like.

When everyone has finished, conduct a survey to see which dishes are most popular. If possible, ask others outside your family or group about what they would like.

BIBLE STORY

10 MINS

You will need: volunteers to play the parts

of the two disciples

Ask two members of your family or, if you're doing this online, ask two leaders (or children who are confident readers) to play the parts of the two disciples. Encourage everyone else to act out the story as it happens.

Disciple one: You won't believe what happened!

Two: Yeah! Jesus sent us out to do great things in the surrounding towns and villages.

One: We healed people who were ill, in Jesus' name!

Two: We told everyone about the kingdom of God!

One: And now we're back. All the other pairs Jesus sent out have the same stories as us.

Two: So many great stories!

One: But look at all these crowds.

Where did they come from?

Two: Shh! Jesus has started teaching everyone. I want to listen!

They pause. Then One looks at the sky.

One: It's getting dark. We need to send everyone away so they can find a place to stay.

Two: I think someone's just told Jesus that. They look confused. I wonder what Jesus said. *Shouting to someone off screen or outside your room.* Hey! Thaddeus! What's going on?

One: What? Jesus told them to find food for everyone? There must be 20,000 people here. All we've got is five loaves of bread and two fish.

Two: That'll never be enough.

One: Hang on, Jesus wants our food.

Two: Give it to him!

They mime giving Jesus their food.

One: What's he doing now?

Two: As if watching Jesus. He's telling everyone to sit down in groups of 50. To the family or others on the call. Come on everyone, sit down!

One: Jesus has given thanks to God and is giving out pieces to the disciples. Will there be enough? For 20,000 people?

CHATTING TOGETHER

5 MINS

Ask the children these questions, encouraging everyone to take turns to contribute:

- Why you think Jesus tells the disciples to find food for the people?
- If you were one of the followers of

Jesus in the story, what would you have thought?

- What does this story show us about Jesus?
- What do you want to say to Jesus, having heard this story?

CREATIVE TIME

10 MINS

You will need: bread rolls; tinned tuna; mayonnaise; table knives; bowls; spoons

Set out your bread rolls, tuna and mayonnaise. Invite the children to mix the tuna and mayonnaise together to create a filling for a sandwich. Split apart the bread rolls and spread the tuna mayo on one half. Put the other half of the roll on top to make your sandwich!

If you're doing this online, then you could create activity packs to deliver on the day you do this session. If you give children tuna in a tin, then make sure there is an adult on hand to help them open and drain the fish.

As you work, continue the chat about the story. Wonder how Jesus managed to use such a small amount of food. As you eat your tuna rolls, wonder together if the people in the crowd enjoyed their meal and what they thought about what Jesus had done. Do you think the people at the back of the crowd knew what had happened?

If you have allergies in your family or group, then make sure you provide suitable alternatives.

PRAYER

5 MINS

You will need: rolls from 'Creative time'

Before you finish your tuna rolls, pause and thank God for providing you with food today. Then leave space for the children to think about (or say out loud) anything they would like to say to Jesus. You could refer back to the question in 'Chatting together' if you asked it earlier.

Finally, thank Jesus for turning a little into a lot and for giving you everything we need. Ask him to help you give others what they need too.

(If you played *Guardians of Ancora* in Session 2, then you can play through this story on the game too, if you have time.)

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