**JOURNEYING TOGETHER:** FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

Session 3 of 4

# Jesus does miracles

### MEETING AIM

To explore our relationship with prayer in crises.

### BIBLE PASSAGE

Luke 8:22-25

### BACKGROUND

This session plan is intended for use either in person or online, depending on how you’re meeting. Adapt the activities to fit your particular situation.

Being caught in a storm in a fishing boat in the middle of a large lake will be outside the experience of most young people (OK, nearly all young people). However, the truths that this story reveals about Jesus, his power and how much we can depend on him in times of crisis are very real. The past year has been full of times of crises. How can Jesus, who commands the wind and waves, be relied upon today?

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

### STARTING OUT – 5 mins

As your group arrive, ask each person what was the worst nightmare / panicked situation they have ever had. Are there any situations where you have immediately resorted to crying out to Jesus? This is just a bit of fun, but do go with it if the young people open up about tough times.

### INTRO ACTIVITY – 10 mins

**You will need:** scene from a movie where characters get into difficulty at sea

Before the session, choose a scene from a movie where characters get into difficulty at sea, such as *The Perfect Storm* or *In the Heart of the Sea*. Show a clip from the film and ask the group how they might have felt in the same position. Do they have any fears of boats or water? How bad would things have to get for them to start panicking? Would they act in the same way as the people in the film?

### BIBLE EXPLORATION – 10 mins

**You will need:** chairs, boxes or anything your meeting space to create a ‘boat’; Bible

Invite the young people to create a boat out of whatever they can find in your meeting space.

Read or retell the story with the young people acting it out. When you get to the part when the storm hits, raise your voice as you read or retell. Encourage the group to rock about in their ‘boat’, shouting and screaming. Invite the young people to panic and scream as loudly as they can, while the disciples are panicking! When Jesus stands up to calm the storm, everyone should fall silent.

Chat about what the disciples must have felt like. Wonder at how and why Jesus stayed asleep for so long, even though the storm was so rough. What connections can they make between this story and the young people’s lives now?

### CHATTING TOGETHER – 5 mins

Ask the group these questions, making sure everyone has the chance to contribute:

* Were the disciples right to panic? Why?
* Were you surprised by Jesus’ reaction? Why? What would you have thought he would do?
* What would a modern equivalent be of this story?
* How important is it to feel in control?
* What does prayer achieve in those situations?
* Is there a difference between a panicky prayer and a faith-filled prayer? What makes a good prayer? What prayers does God like best?
* What can we do as well as pray?

### CREATIVE RESPONSE – 10 mins

Try this method of enacting the Bible story again, but this time, think about stressful and panicky situations that the group might find themselves in during their day-to-day lives. This could be exam stress, feeling scared at night, when we get trolled online…

Have one of the young people describe a particular situation. Everyone should panic until that person shouts: “HAVE FAITH!” At which point, everyone must fall silent. Try to get everyone to have at least one go.

What conclusions can the young people draw from this exercise? Is it easy to let Jesus take control, and calm down? Or do their thoughts and anxieties run away with them still? Share a story from your own life about a time when you had faith in Jesus during a stressful and scary time (or invite a volunteer to visit your group and share a story). Give space for the group to ask any questions they like.

### PRAYER – 5 mins

**You will need:** bottles of bubble mixture (you may need to deliver these to the young people before the session); ‘The prayers of the saints’ by Matt Redman and the means to play it

Explain that God loves to hear us speak to him – that the Bible says the prayers of the saints are like sweet-smelling incense (read Revelation 5:8) – so to illustrate that and visualise that we are going to use bubbles to symbolise prayer.

Ask the young people to blow bubbles and enjoy playing with them.

Follow on from this (you may need to ask them to calm it down a bit!), play ‘The prayers of the saints’ by Matt Redman in the background. Ask the young people to think personally of a prayer – something they need God to help them with or something they want to thank God for. Go around the circle to pray but get the person before each pray-er to blow bubbles into the middle as they are speaking.

**JOEL TOOMBS**

has an MA in Christian mentoring and wrote the Grove booklet *Mentoring and Young People.* He is a volunteer youth worker.