

Use Week of:

## Unit 21 • Session 1

# Jesus' Early Miracles

### BIBLE PASSAGE:

Mark 1

### STORY POINT:

Jesus' miracles helped people.

### KEY PASSAGE:

John 3:16

### BIG PICTURE QUESTION:

What makes people special? People are special because God made us in His own image.

**INTRODUCE THE STORY**  
(15–20 MINUTES)  
PAGE 126



**TEACH THE STORY**  
(10–15 MINUTES)  
PAGE 128



**EXPERIENCE THE STORY**  
(20–25 MINUTES)  
PAGE 130



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For free training and session-by-session help, visit [MinistryGrid.com/gospelproject](http://MinistryGrid.com/gospelproject).

## LEADER Bible Study

Early in His ministry, Jesus and His disciples traveled to Capernaum, a town on the northwestern shore of the Sea of Galilee. Capernaum became Jesus' home and headquarters. (See Matt. 4:13.) He entered the synagogue on the Sabbath, when people would gather to hear and learn from the Scriptures.

Jesus quickly set Himself apart from the scribes and other religious teachers. Unlike the scribes, who relied completely on traditional interpretations of the Torah from other teachers, Jesus spoke with authority. His teaching came from His own authority as the Author of truth, and it had a profound effect on His listeners—they were astonished!

The early miracles recorded in Mark 1 demonstrate Jesus' power and authority as the Son of God. Jesus drove an unclean spirit from a man in the synagogue; even the demons obey His commands. Then Jesus healed Peter's mother-in-law, and that evening the people in the town brought to Jesus all those who were sick or afflicted with unclean spirits. What did Jesus do? He healed them! (Mark 1:34)

Jesus' miracles continued, and He healed a man with leprosy. Leprosy is a skin disease that would have marked a person as "unclean," requiring him to be separated from the community. Jesus had compassion on the man and healed him immediately.

Jesus' miracles brought many people to faith in Him. They also proved that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God. These miracles strengthened people's faith and met their needs. Isaiah prophesied that the promised Messiah would bear our sickness and carry our pain. (Isa. 53:4) Jesus fulfilled this prophecy as He healed people.

Help preschoolers make the connection that through Jesus, God did what is impossible for us to do on our own. He provided forgiveness, salvation, and eternal life for all who would trust in Him.

# The BIBLE Story

## Jesus' Early Miracles

*Mark 1*

Jesus and His disciples traveled to a town called Capernaum (kuh PUHR nay uhm). **Jesus went into a synagogue and started teaching.** The people there were very surprised. Jesus was not like other teachers. He spoke with power, like someone in charge.

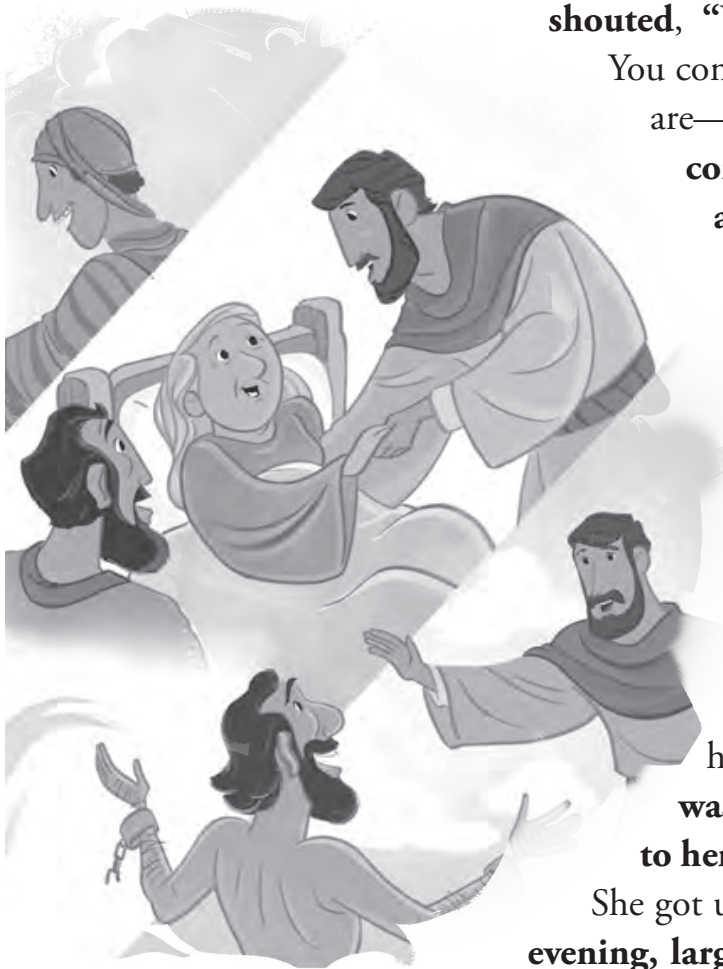
**Suddenly, a man with an unclean spirit shouted, “Why are You here, Jesus? Have You come to destroy us? I know who You are—the Holy One of God!” Jesus commanded the spirit to be quiet and come out of the man. The spirit came out.**

**Everyone was amazed! “Who is this Jesus?” they asked. “He teaches with power, and the unclean spirits obey Him!”** People all across the land were talking about Jesus.

**Next, Jesus and His disciples went to Simon and Andrew’s house. Simon’s mother-in-law was in bed with a fever. Jesus went to her, took her hand, and healed her.**

She got up and began to serve them. **That evening, large crowds of people came to the house with others who were sick or bothered by evil spirits, and Jesus healed them too.**

**Early the next morning, Jesus went out by Himself to pray. Simon and the other disciples found Him and said, “Everyone is looking**



for You.”

Jesus said, “Let’s go on to the nearby villages so I can preach there too. This is why I have come.”

Jesus traveled throughout the land. He preached and drove out demons. **One day, a man with a skin disease came to Jesus. He got on his knees and begged Him: “If You are willing, You can make me clean.” Jesus was willing, and He healed the man.**

*Christ Connection: Jesus cares about people. Jesus’ miracles helped people and showed that He is the Son of God. Through Jesus, God does for us what we cannot do for ourselves. He provides forgiveness and life with God forever.*

### Bible Storytelling Tips

- **Teaching and healing:** Cut out lips and a hand from construction paper. As you tell the Bible story, hold up the lips when Jesus speaks with authority. When Jesus heals someone, hold up the hand.
- **Be dramatic:** Use different voices and shift your body in different positions to represent the various people in the Bible story. Move around the room and emphasize expressions of surprise and amazement.

# INTRODUCE the Story



**SESSION TITLE:** Jesus' Early Miracles

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**KEY PASSAGE:** John 3:16

**BIG PICTURE QUESTION:** What makes people special? People are special because God made us in His own image.

## Welcome time

- "Take It to the Lord" song
- offering basket
- Allergy Alert
- favorite toys related to the Bible story theme

Play a theme song in the background as you greet preschoolers and follow your church's security procedures. Set an offering basket near the door to collect at an appropriate time. Post an allergy alert, if necessary. Set out a few favorite theme-related toys, such as puzzles and blocks.

## Activity page

- "Help, Please!" activity page, 1 per child
- crayons or markers

Lead preschoolers to draw a line from each sick or injured person to the item he or she needs to help him or her.

**SAY** • Good job connecting each person to the thing that would help him or her get better! In our Bible story today, we will learn how Jesus helped people with all kinds of problems. But Jesus helped them more than any of these things could. Jesus cares about people!

## LOW PREP

- Suggested jobs:
- teacher
  - doctor
  - police officer
  - cashier
  - cook
  - lifeguard

## Guess who

Describe a job in simple terms and invite children to guess whom you are talking about. You may describe a teacher by saying "someone who helps a class of children learn things," or describe a doctor by saying "this person helps you stay healthy." End the activity by describing Jesus as "the Son of God who came to save us."

**SAY** • You knew exactly whom I was talking about! The

people in our Bible story today knew that Jesus was the Son of God by the things He said and did. Let's listen to find out how exactly they knew who Jesus was!

## Can you, will you?

Ask children if they can do something challenging. They may answer, but advise them not to do it until you ask "will you?" Use the challenges in the margin or create your own, switching up when you add "will you" to keep the children's attention.

**SAY** • Being both willing and able to do something is important. You might want to drive a car, but you cannot. Or you might be able to clean your room, but not want to. A man in our Bible story today knew that only Jesus could heal him, but he did not know if Jesus would be willing. Do you think Jesus helped the man? Listen to the Bible story to find out.

## Transition to teach the story

To gain the attention of all the preschoolers to move them to Bible study, show the countdown video, turn the lights off and on, or clap a simple rhythm for the children to copy. Invite preschoolers to pretend to be sick by holding their stomachs as they move to Bible study.

## LOW PREP

Suggested  
challenging  
activities:

- touch nose with tongue
- sit on the floor, legs extended and touch toes
- touch a high mark on a wall
- stand on one foot for a given length of time

- countdown video (optional)

# TEACH the Story



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## Introduce the Bible story

- Bible
- bookmark
- Giant Timeline

Place a bookmark at Mark 1 in your Bible. Invite a preschooler to open it. Reverently display the open Bible.

**SAY** • Over the next few weeks, we will learn about some amazing things Jesus did on earth. There are four Bible books about Jesus' life on earth called the Gospels.

Today's Bible story comes from the Gospel of Mark.

Point to the Bible story picture on the giant timeline.

Remind children that all the stories in the Bible fit together to tell an even bigger story. The Bible tells us the big story of how God rescues sinners through His Son, Jesus.

## Watch or tell the Bible story

- Story Point Poster
- "Jesus' Early Miracles" video (optional)
- Bible Story Picture Poster

Show the video or tell the Bible story using the provided storytelling tips. Use the bolded version of the Bible story for young preschoolers.

**SAY** • Jesus healed people who were sick or bothered by evil spirits because Jesus cares about people. **Jesus' miracles helped people** and showed that He is the Son of God. Miracles are amazing things that people can't normally do. These miracles pointed ahead to Jesus' greater miracle. Through Jesus, God does for us what we cannot do for ourselves. He provides forgiveness and life with God forever.

## Practice the key passage

Place the key passage marker at John 3:16. Invite a child to open your Bible to the key passage. Read the key passage aloud. Create motions for preschoolers to use as they say the key passage. Use the key passage song video for inspiration.

**SAY** • Jesus healed people because He cares about them.

But He didn't just help the people we heard about in our Bible story today. He gave His life to provide forgiveness and life with God forever to everyone who trusts in Him as the Son of God!

Sing the key passage song, "For God Loved the World," and the theme song, "Take It to the Lord."

- Bible
- Key Passage Marker
- Key Passage Poster
- "For God Loved the World (John 3:16)" song
- "Take It to the Lord" song

## Learn the big picture question

**SAY** • Jesus cares about all people because God made every person in His own image. That's our new big picture question: *What makes people special? People are special because God made us in His own image.*

Being made in God's image means that God made us to be like Him in certain ways.

- Big Picture Question Poster



## Missions moment

Hold a basketball and ask preschoolers to tell you what they know about the game of basketball.

**SAY** • Did you know that missionaries can be basketball players? One missionary named Heiden Ratner uses basketball to share the story of Jesus. God showed him that he can be more than a basketball player, and now he helps people like Jesus helped people.

Play the "Better Than Basketball" missions video.

- basketball
- "Better Than Basketball" video

## Pray and transition to experience the story



# EXPERIENCE The Story



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## LOW PREP

• timer (optional)

### Play healing tag

Ask children to spread around the room and freeze in any position. Explain that they can only unfreeze when you tag them, and then they may crowd around you and try to prevent you from tagging other children. Tag as many children as you can until everyone is unfrozen or you cannot move forward. Play again, timing how quickly you can tag everyone or allowing another child to tag, if desired.

**SAY** • Jesus healed many people just by a touch or a word.

**Jesus' miracles helped people** and showed that He is the Son of God. But large crowds gathered around Him and made it hard for Him to keep teaching. So Jesus often snuck away by Himself so He could pray and travel on. He wanted to tell more people about God's love!

### Listen to a guest reader

• guest  
• Bible or other book  
• camera (optional)

Invite a gifted storyteller, such as an author, audio book reader, literature teacher, or library storyteller, to read to your class. Encourage the guest to read the Bible story or an age-appropriate story he or she created with enthusiasm. Emphasize the guest's powerful reading to the preschoolers. Allow time for each child to take his or her picture with the guest, if desired. Follow your church's security procedures

regarding photographing children.

**SAY** • That was so special to hear [guest] read! He [She] speaks so clearly. God made [guest] specially able to tell us the Bible story like that! *What makes people special? People are special because God made us in His own image.* Tell him “thank you” for making time for us!

In our Bible story today, the people at the synagogue were very surprised when they heard Jesus teach. He was not like other teachers. He spoke with power, like someone in charge, because He is the Son of God!

## Clean people figures

Provide dirty people figures. Explain that people who were sick or bothered by evil spirits were called unclean by the Jews. Invite children to shout “be clean!” at the toys and pause to observe. Then invite children to lightly touch a figure and pause to observe. Finally, encourage preschoolers to wash and dry the people figures while you review the Bible story.

**SAY** • Did anything happen when we spoke to the people figures? How about when we simply touched them? No. But that is how Jesus healed people in our Bible story from all kinds of problems that made them unclean! That is a miracle: something we cannot do ourselves. **Jesus’ miracles helped people** and showed that He is the Son of God. Through Jesus, God does for us what we cannot do for ourselves. He provides forgiveness and life with God forever. That is the greatest miracle for anyone!

- dirty people figures
- washable markers (optional)
- cleaning cloths or sponges
- bin of water
- towels

- paper bags
- crayons or markers
- individually-wrapped first-aid supplies, such as bandages, gauze, child-proof ointments, sealed wipes, and so forth
- labels (optional)
- stickers (optional)

## Make a first aid kit

Give each child a paper bag and encourage him to decorate it with something that reminds him of the Bible story. Then help him add an assortment of first-aid supplies to his bag. Explain what each item is used for and remind children to ask a grown-up for help anytime someone is hurt. Encourage children to tell others about Jesus' love whenever they use the first-aid kit. Write the key passage on each child's bag or add a pre-printed label. Help children practice repeating the key passage after you.

**SAY** • Jesus cares about people. *What makes people special? People are special because God made us in His own image.* Sick and evil mess up God's image in people, so Jesus came to heal us! We might still get hurt, but we can have forgiveness and life with God forever through Jesus. Whenever you use your first-aid kit to help people who are hurt, you can pray and tell them this good news while a grown-up takes care of the hurt. Let's practice by reviewing our key passage right now!



## Basketball toss

- small inflatable or foam balls
- baskets or boxes

Set out baskets or boxes. Invite preschoolers take turns trying to make a "goal" by tossing a ball into a basket. Encourage children to shoot from different places in the room. As they play, ask preschoolers to tell you about sports they like to play or watch.

**SAY** • Did you know God can even use the games you play to share the story of Jesus? Missionaries like Heiden Ratner use things like basketball to tell people that Jesus provides forgiveness and life with God forever.

## Snack and review

Play the countdown video to signal the end of activities. Wash hands and gather preschoolers for snack time. Pray, thanking God for the snack.

Invite children to serve a favorite snack to one another. Talk about how serving others is kind, but especially when you have guests in your home. Remind preschoolers when Jesus and His disciples went to Simon's house, Simon's mother-in-law was sick in bed. Jesus healed her, and she got up and immediately served them. **Jesus' miracles helped people** and showed that He is the Son of God.

Show the Bible story picture as you ask the following questions. Retell parts of the Bible story as needed.

1. What did Jesus do for people who were sick? (*He healed them.*)
2. When did Jesus go out by Himself to pray? (*early in the morning*)
3. Where did Jesus want to go so He could preach more? (*nearby villages; throughout the land*)
4. Does Jesus care about people? (*Yes!*)
5. ***What makes people special? People are special because God made us in His own image.***

## Transition

When preschoolers finish their snack, they may color the Bible story coloring page, play a simple game to practice the key passage or big picture question, or sing along to the key passage or theme song.

If parents are picking up their children at this time, tell them something that their child enjoyed doing or did well during the session. Distribute the preschool big picture cards for families.

- countdown video (optional)
- Allergy Alert
- paper cups and napkins
- snack food
- Bible Story Picture Poster
- Big Picture Question Poster

- Bible Story Coloring Page
- crayons
- Key Passage Poster
- Big Picture Question Poster
- "For God Loved the World (John 3:16)" song
- "Take It to the Lord" song
- *Big Picture Cards for Families: Babies, Toddlers, and Preschoolers*