

FOLLOW ME: A SERIES IN MATTHEW

**Jesus Sends His Chosen Out****A Note to the Parents/Teachers**

Most people attending church want some part of Jesus or religion. They may want him to make their lives better, maybe even heal their sickness, eradicate evil, calm the anxious storms raging in their souls. And while Jesus has the power to do all that, He knows that once these issues are resolved many do not continue to follow Him. This passage is calling for us to see that following Jesus doesn't always make things better BUT HE is always WITH us. Even in the sickness, pain, poverty, anxiety, Jesus is there and He is BETTER.

- **Big Idea: Following Jesus is not always easy, but it is ALWAYS best!**

Starter**Evidences of Grace**

- Ask kids to share ways they've seen God at work lately. Anything good, big or small, is from God. Take time to thank God together.
- **Imagine:** Would you rather have \$1000 now or have \$1,000,000 after having 10 years of working hard and having to live in a tent?

Sing Together

Story — from Matthew 8:18-32

Read Matthew 8:18-22 aloud together.

At this time in Jesus life, MANY people were hanging out him. They all wanted to see and experience his miracles! They wanted their sickness healed. They wanted free food in their stomachs. But Jesus knew that what they really NEEDED was a rescuer for their sin. People that just wanted to be healed on the outside, would leave after they were better. They no longer needed healing (until they got sick again). But Jesus wanted them to see that even after they were healed on the outside they needed him more on the inside. Other people wanted to follow Jesus, but when they were ready. This story shows how 2 different people wanted to follow Jesus, but they wanted to figure out their own lives first. Jesus says... NOPE, following me is not when you are ready, when you have enough money, when you are a good person or you have everything figured out. Following Jesus means sometimes you won't have enough money, sometimes you won't have a house to sleep in, sometimes life will be overwhelming!!!

At the end of verse 22 it seems like Jesus is calling followers to a really hard life. Why would someone want to follow someone that is promising life to be hard and not have a bed to sleep in at night?!?! This next passage shows why!

Read Matthew 8:23-27 aloud together.

We all have heard this story. It is an amazing picture of the POWER of Jesus. But when we read it following the last section, we can't help but see that Jesus is WITH His disciples EVEN when things get hard. The difference between life as a follower of Jesus and independent life is that while life is hard, while we will get sick, while we may not have a bed or money or things... we have JESUS with us at all times. He is BETTER!! Remember this from Hebrews??? What is He better than???

Next we see a picture of Jesus having power over evil.

Read Matthew 8:28-34 together.

Two men approach Jesus and His followers. They are a picture of what evil can do. Life without Jesus can lead to destruction. Jesus sees these men and has compassion on them. He sees the evil and knows that He alone has the power over them. He tells this evil to leave the men and enter into some pigs nearby. This is a miraculous story of God's love and power. But instead of people seeing it and responding in worship, they plead with Jesus to leave their town. We don't know why, but we can imagine that these people were scared of the power they witnessed. Or they were angry that all their pigs (which bring in money) have now been destroyed and they will not have what they need.

In our lives we will see the power of God. He will show Himself to us, through His word, through other people and through His Spirit. If we choose to follow Him, His Spirit will fill us, He will ALWAYS be with us. No matter how hard or good life is, Jesus will be there. No matter if you have lots of money or no money, Jesus will be there. Whether you are healthy or sick, Jesus will be there. Without Jesus, our actions are leading to destruction. With Jesus - we find full life. Jesus is BETTER! Will you choose to be a follower of Jesus?

Dialogue Questions: *[you may use some or all]*

- ▶ Why do you think Jesus told the teacher of the law that he had no where to lay His head?
- ▶ When the second man said let me go bury my father, he meant, let me go home and be with my dad until he dies, then I'll get my inheritance and come follow you. Why do you think Jesus didn't agree to these terms?
- ▶ Like the disciples in the boat, when have you been scared and forgot that Jesus is always with you?
- ▶ What can you do the next time you are scared to remember you have Jesus with you at all times?

Breakout Time**Pray:**

God, we thank you for your mighty power over storms and evil. We worship you for your greatness. We know that following you might not always be the easiest path, but we confess that we believe it will always be the BEST! You are BETTER Jesus and we love you!

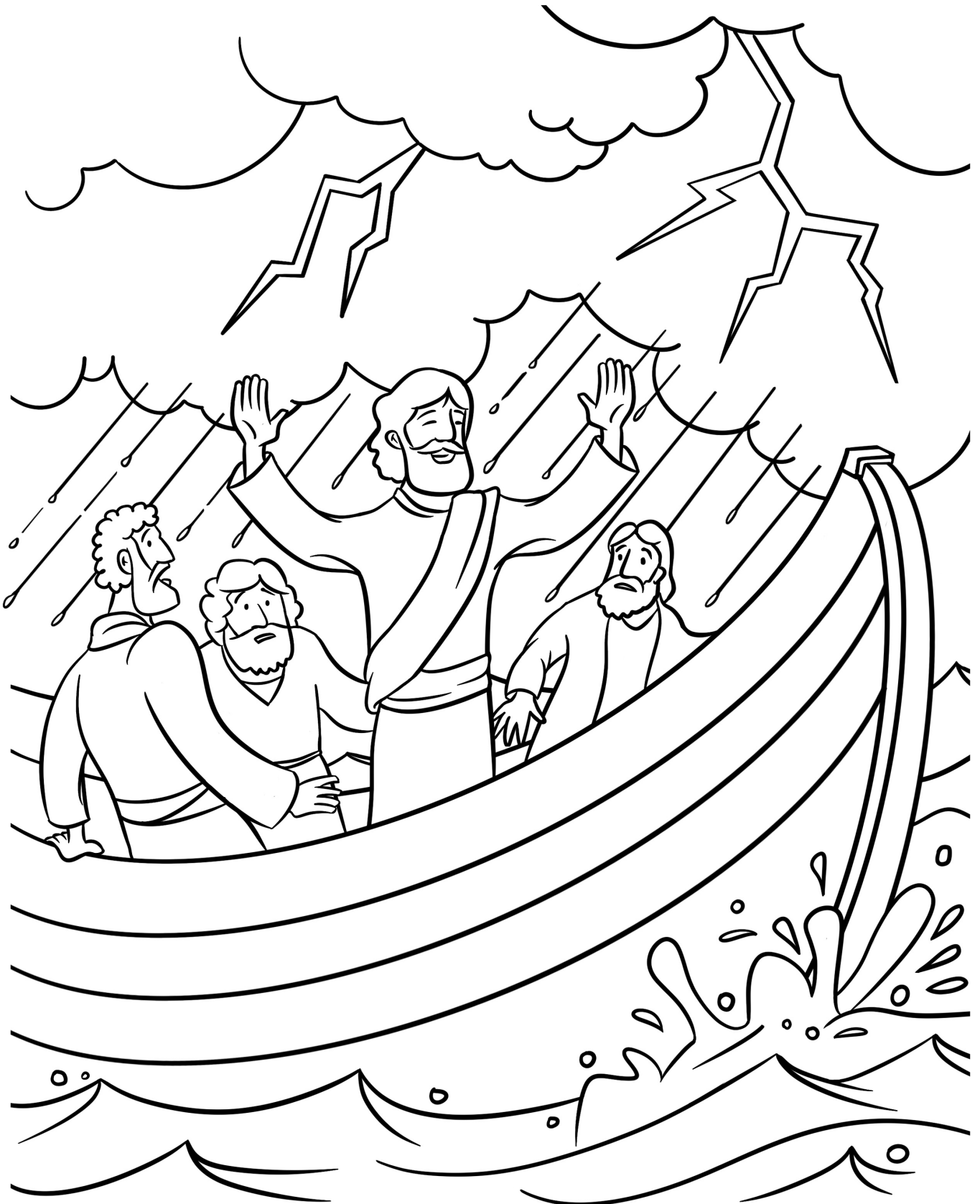
Craft:

- There are two coloring sheets attached

BLESS Activity

This week, we will use the SPEAK rhythm to SPEAK to God. Speak the truth of Jesus's power and presence back to Him. When you are scared or hurt or lonely: pray and remember Jesus is always with you.

You have been filled with Gods Spirit to SPEAK to God as your loving Father. Jesus is always with you.



Miracles of Jesus

I	F	E	A	L	E	G	I	O	N	Y	L	D	C
L	L	G	A	R	M	E	N	T	N	A	I	M	H
E	C	E	N	I	A	N	E	A	Z	S	U	C	I
E	M	M	E	R	E	E	H	A	C	L	A	L	L
R	E	O	T	T	R	T	R	I	T	T	O	A	D
T	L	T	O	C	E	U	P	I	N	J	Y	M	T
D	A	H	F	B	S	L	T	A	I	S	S	E	N
E	S	E	F	P	E	U	T	A	T	C	O	M	A
R	U	R	I	S	D	H	T	S	T	O	R	A	V
E	R	I	S	E	P	E	A	C	E	I	P	N	R
H	E	N	H	S	F	A	I	T	H	N	E	F	E
T	J	L	L	N	A	N	A	C	L	A	L	I	S
I	A	A	D	N	O	I	R	U	T	N	E	C	S
W	E	W	A	T	W	A	T	E	M	P	L	E	C

- SERVANT
- WITHERED TREE
- MULTITUDE
- COIN
- TEMPLE
- NET OF FISH
- BETHANY
- LEPROSY
- LAZARUS
- CENTURION
- CANA
- DISCIPLES
- LEGION
- FAITH
- MOTHER IN LAW
- JERUSALEM
- LAME MAN
- PEACE
- CHILD
- GARMENT

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