



The man through the roof

MEETING AIM

To explore what Jesus did for the man, and what he does for us.

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 is very familiar, but loses nothing of its power, no matter how many times we share it. Here we see the religious leaders becoming more and more concerned that Jesus was upsetting the status quo and messing with things he ought not to. In this story, we see both Jesus' unquestionable authority, over sin and disease, and his care and concern for an unnamed man, transforming his life and giving him a new start. In this session, we also explore how Jesus has authority in our lives and how he cares for us today.

STARTING OUT

5 MINS

Start your time together with some simple refreshments (if you can) and chat about your friends, what they mean to you, how you care for each other and how you show your care.

PLAY

10 MINS

You will need: toy doctor set; bandages; dressing-up clothes etc

Set out all your free-play equipment and encourage the children to play with it. Allow them to take the lead, involving you as they wish. They could bandage imaginary wounds and act as doctors or nurses, caring for those who are 'sick'. As you play, talk about what it means to care for others, who cares for us and how we show we care.

If you're meeting online, then encourage children to use whatever they have in their house to dress up and to use tea towels or similar to bandage themselves.

BIBLE STORY

10 MINS

You will need: a cardboard box; scissors to cut a hole into the top of the box; play people

Gather the children together and form a simple play scene where the children can all see (or do this so that it can be visible onscreen if you're doing this online). Explain that the box represents a house, perhaps drawing or cutting out windows and a door. Involve the children in setting up most of the play people (or asking them where the play people should go), choosing one to be Jesus, and explaining that there was a large crowd gathered to hear what Jesus had to say.

When it is all set up, tell this story, involving the children in moving the figures as appropriate:

One day, when Jesus was teaching, a large crowd gathered around him – so many that the house was full to bursting!

Some men had heard that Jesus could make sick people well again, so they brought their friend to see him. Their friend couldn't walk and they had to carry him on a blanket. When they got to the house, it was so full, that they couldn't get in!

But the friends wouldn't give up. They carried their friend up onto the roof, and cut a hole in it. Use the scissors to create a hole, and lower the figure into the scene. They lowered their friend down through the roof to get close to Jesus.

When Jesus saw the man, he said: "My friend, your sins are forgiven."

The crowds were shocked. Jesus couldn't forgive sins! They didn't understand that Jesus was the Son of God. So Jesus said: "Do you think it is harder to forgive sins, or to make this man better? Let me show you what I can do." Then he turned to the man and said: "Get up!" And the man did!

He stood up, stretch his legs and went home, running and dancing and praising God. And all the crowds praised God for the miracle they had seen.

CHATTING TOGETHER

5 MINS

Help your children to think about the story more by chatting about these questions:

- What's your favourite part of this story?
- What does this story tell us about Jesus?

- Where have you seen Jesus' power?
- What would you like to ask Jesus to do for you?

CREATIVE TIME

10 MINS

You will need: some praise music or a selection of art and craft materials

The story ends with the man and the crowd praising God for what he had done. This is an opportunity to dance and move and celebrate all that Jesus has done for us. Play some praise and worship music and sing and dance together, praising God.

Some children may be less comfortable with this, and prefer to express their praise in other ways, so you may prefer to set out some art and craft materials and invite the children to express their praise through art, perhaps. (If you're online, then encourage children to use whatever they have at home. You could deliver some resources if children don't have them.) As you spend some time praising God, you can keep the conversation flowing, talking about all the things that we can praise God for.

PRAYER

5 MINS

You will need: a teaspoon for each person

Gather the children together and talk about the way that Jesus both forgave the man for the wrong things he had done and made him well again so that he could walk. Remind the children that both the man and the crowd praised God for what he had done.

This is a good opportunity to pray 'Thank you, sorry and please' prayers, using a teaspoon as a reminder of the initials TSP. Begin with 'Thank you', asking everyone what they would like to thank God for. 'Sorry' can be done silently and privately, giving everyone a few moments to pray in their hearts to say sorry for the wrong they have done. Finally, ask everyone what they would like to ask Jesus for, and share your 'please' prayers.

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The centurion's servant

MEETING AIM

To explore what faith is.

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 is a story about an outsider – not one of Jesus' immediate party of followers, but someone on the outside who saw Jesus for who he was and put his total faith in him. In many ways, this story contrasts with others in this series where his followers were surprised by Jesus' power and authority; here it is Jesus who is surprised by the man's faith. This session explores what it means for us to put our confidence in Jesus.

STARTING OUT

5 MINS

Start your time together with some simple refreshments (if you can) and chat about it means to trust someone, to believe in someone or to have faith. These are quite abstract ideas, but it would help to introduce these terms early in the session. You can talk about simple experiences such as believing someone will do what they say, trusting that your parents or carers know what's best for you etc.

PLAY

10 MINS

You will need: a selection of simple dressing-up clothes or props

Invite the children to dress up and role play together, taking on different roles or jobs. These could include a soldier, perhaps, or characters of different status, to introduce the idea of the centurion caring for his servant. Encourage the children to interact over your video conferencing if you're online. This will be trickier than face to face, but children's imaginations should be able to overcome the strangeness!

Invite the children to take a lead in their play, and join in as the children invite you to. Talk about some of the different roles

people have taken on, and how they relate to each other; who works for who, who is 'in charge' etc. These things will all help the children to understand the story and how the characters relate to one another.

BIBLE STORY

10 MINS

You will need: simple props or costumes to identify the characters

Invite the children to take on one of the roles as you tell the story, miming as appropriate. They can wear simple costumes, if they are happy to, or hold a simple prop to represent their role. When it is all set up, tell this story, encouraging the children to mime as appropriate when they get to their parts:

There was once a Roman soldier who was in charge of many, many men in the Roman army. At his home he had many servants too, to do whatever he told them to!

One day, one of his servants became ill – very, very ill. Now, this soldier had heard about Jesus and the many miracles he had performed. The soldier knew that if he got a message to Jesus, he would be able to make his servant well again. So he sent some messengers to Jesus.

"Our master has heard that you can make people well again," said the men. "Will you come to his house?"

So Jesus went with the men, back to find the servant. As they got close to the house, some more messengers came out with another messenger who said: "Our master says he does not expect you to come to his house. You are too special to come! But he knows that you are very powerful. If you say his servant could be well again, then he will be!"

Jesus was amazed: "This man has more faith than anyone else in the whole of this country!"

When the messengers returned home, they found the servant well again! Jesus had healed him, just as the soldier believed!

CHATTING TOGETHER

5 MINS

Help your children to think about the story more by chatting about these questions:

- What's your favourite part of this story?
- What does this story tell us about Jesus?

- Why do you think the soldier had so much faith in Jesus?
- What does it mean for us to have faith in Jesus?

CREATIVE TIME

10 MINS

You will need: large sheet or roll of paper; pens; paint or a selection of collage materials

Spread out the large sheet or roll of paper in the centre of the group and write the word 'JESUS' in large outlined letters. (If you are meeting online, children can do this individually on a smaller scale.) Talk about how special Jesus is and how the soldier recognised that in Jesus. Invite the children to decorate the letters together to make them look really 'special'. They could draw pictures or symbols of some of the things they know or have discovered about Jesus, or simply make them look special.

As you work together, continue the discussion about who Jesus is and why he is special to us.

PRAYER

5 MINS

You will need: BSL sign for trust

Teach the children the BSL sign for trust, following the link above. Remind the children that just as the centurion in the story had trust in Jesus, we can put our trust in him too, knowing that he is always there for us.

Invite the children to pray, or lead them in a prayer, thanking God that we can put our trust in him, and asking him to help us to do this, perhaps when we find it hard. Encourage the children to use the sign for trust whenever you say the word.

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The storm at sea

MEETING AIM

To be surprised and amazed at Jesus' power.

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.

Our children may never have been on a boat, but they are likely to have experienced a storm. Many children are frightened by thunder and lightning, and will know something of the disciples' distress on the boat. Jesus here demonstrates his command over nature, and leaves his disciples wondering just who he is. We can help the children begin to glimpse that although some situations may be scary, Jesus has power over those situations and we can rely on him.

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 if the children have ever experienced a storm. What was it like?

PLAY

10 MINS

You will need: water-play equipment; toy boats; clean-up and cover-up equipment

Set out your water-play equipment. Provide overalls or aprons for the children and make sure you have towels so that they can dry themselves afterwards. Enjoy playing with the water together. In large tubs, create a 'storm', by stirring the water and using a spray bottle. Float a toy boat on the water and see what happens when a 'storm' comes!

If you're meeting online, then ask parents or carers to set up a bowl of water, toy (or paper) boat and a cup or jug on a towel, so that they can still be seen on camera. (Make sure that no water can get on any tech!)

BIBLE STORY

10 MINS

You will need: lay parachute and sponge football (or tea towels and ping-pong balls, if you're working online)

Stand the children around the parachute and encourage them to hold the edge. Position leaders at regular intervals so that they can keep the parachute going, even in the children lose hold. Gently lift the parachute up and down, then show the children how to ripple the chute so that it looks like waves on the sea. For children at home, they can hold a tea towel stretched out in front of them.

Throw the ball onto the chute (or get the children to put a small ball on their tea towel) and see how the ball jumps around as you ripple it. Take the ball off again and tell this story:

One day, Jesus and his friends were next to a big lake, called Lake Galilee. They decided to get in a boat and cross to the other side.

Put the ball onto the chute / tea towel.

The sea was calm and the boat sailed across the water. *Roll the ball around the chute / tea towel by gently lifting and lowering it.* Jesus even went to sleep!

But suddenly a storm came and the waters of the lake got rougher and rougher. *Ripple the chute / tea towel so that the ball bobs around. If it flies off, then simply replace it.* Jesus' friends got frightened but Jesus was still asleep!

The storm got worse! *Shake the chute / tea towel, trying not to ping the ball completely over the edge.* Jesus' friends were really scared. They looked at Jesus, but he was still asleep! They shook him and shouted: "Jesus! Help us! We're going to be thrown into the sea!"

Jesus stood up and told the wind and the waves to stop. *Hold the chute / tea towel completely still.* Then he asked his friends: "Didn't you think we'd be OK? I'm here!"

Jesus' friends were amazed and a bit scared. They asked each other: "Who is this? Even storms obey him!"

Retell the story as many times as the children wish (or you have time for).

CHATTING TOGETHER

5 MINS

Chat about the story using these questions, encouraging everyone to join in if they want to:

- What is your favourite part of this story?
- What was a surprise about the story?

- Have you ever been scared, like Jesus' friends? What happened?
- What do you want to say to Jesus?

CREATIVE TIME

10 MINS

You will need: watered-down poster paint (particularly blue, purple and green); brushes; A3 paper; clean-up and cover-up equipment

Give each child a sheet of paper and show them the different coloured paints. Encourage them to produce a 'watery' piece of art. They can paint the boat on Lake Galilee, or just use lot of watery colours to create some nice patterns. As you work, chat with the children about the story and what they think about Jesus. What does this story tell us about him? If appropriate, share a time when you were scared and you asked Jesus to help you. What happened? How did you feel after you'd talked to Jesus?

Once everyone has finished, give space for any children to tell you about their picture, if they would like to. Affirm the children in their responses and put the pictures somewhere safe to dry.

PRAYER

5 MINS

You will need: large tub or tray of water; simple flower shapes cut out of paper; felt-tip pens

Give each child a paper flower shape and ask them to draw (or help them to write) something that they are worried about. Once everyone has drawn or written on their flower, show the group how to fold the petals over into the centre.

Gather around the tray or tub of water and float the folded flowers on the surface. The petals should open up again as the flower floats. As you watch the flowers open up, say a prayer thanking Jesus for being powerful and being in charge of everything. Invite the children to say what they have drawn or written on their flower, if they would like to. Then finish the session by asking Jesus to be with us during these situations and to help us.

If you're online, children can use the bowl of water from 'Play'.

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The large crowd

MEETING AIM

To explore what the story of the feeding a huge crowd tells us about Jesus.

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.

In this story we see the generosity of Jesus who, in spite of his own tiredness, gave his time to teach the crowds before lavishly sharing a God-given feast with all those who came to hear him speak. In this session, we explore what this story tells us about Jesus – his power and authority, his generosity and care. What will the children we work with discover about Jesus as they hear this story?

STARTING OUT

5 MINS

Start your time together with some simple refreshments and chat about it means to share what we have. How do we feel when our friends share what they have with us? Can they share a story of a time when they have shared or been generous this last week?

PLAY

10 MINS

You will need: blanket, basket or cool bag; play food (or snacks if you prefer); teddy bears or dolls (optional)

Invite the children to set up a play picnic, laying out the blanket and using the play food. If the weather is suitable, you may like to take the children outside for this. You can also set this play activity up as a teddy bear's picnic, with additional soft toy guests to share the meal. If you're online, then encourage the children to use whatever toys they have in their house and play with them in front of their camera.

Let the children take a lead in playing out the picnic, and thank them each time they share the food, as they play.

BIBLE STORY

10 MINS

You will need: a large sheet of paper; marker pens

Gather the children together and spread out the large sheet or roll of paper in the middle of the group. Give each person a marker pen and say that as you tell the story, we can all join in with drawing it, together. Keep the focus on the evolving story scene, rather than a finished picture. If you are meeting online, you could invite each child to draw along at home, as you share the story.

When it is all set up, tell this story:

One day, when Jesus was teaching his disciples, a large crowd gathered around him. Now, Jesus and the disciples needed a rest, but Jesus could see that the crowds needed to hear what he had to say, so he took the time to speak to them instead.

There were many, many people – 5,000 men and even more women and children too! *Encourage the children to draw the crowds.*

It was getting late, and the disciples told Jesus that he should send the crowds home so they could get something to eat, but Jesus told them to give the crowd something to eat. They were very surprised – what could they give the people? All they had was five small loaves of bread and two fish. That was enough for one person, not a huge crowd!

But Jesus took the food, held it up in the air, and prayed, giving thanks to God for the food. The disciples started to give out the bread and fish and they found that it just kept going. It didn't stop! *Encourage the children to draw food in each of the people's hands.* There was enough food for everyone; more than enough! In fact, when everyone had eaten enough, there were still twelve full baskets worth left over!

CHATTING TOGETHER

5 MINS

Help your children to think about the story more by chatting about these questions:

- What's your favourite part of this story?
- What does this story tell us about Jesus?
- How do you think the people in the crowd would have felt?
- What would you like to ask Jesus to do for you?

CREATIVE RESPONSE

10 MINS

You will need: paper plates and a selection of art and craft materials

Give each child a blank paper plate, and access to the art and craft materials. Invite the children to take some time to be creative, perhaps drawing, painting or collaging a favourite part of the story, or perhaps something they want to say to God after listening to the story. This is an opportunity to be creative, and to create space where you can continue to discuss some of the things that have caught the interest or attention of the children from the story.

If you're online, you might want to deliver an art pack to your children, containing paper plates, if you know your group doesn't have any at home.

PRAYER

5 MINS

You will need: a basket; small pieces of paper; pens

Remind the children that in the story, the disciples gave what food they had to be shared by Jesus with everyone. Because of God's generosity, there was more than enough to go round, with twelve baskets left over!

Invite the children to draw or write on a small piece of paper something they want to give to God, before putting them into a basket. Hold up the basket, as you pray for each of the children, thanking God for his generous giving, and committing these things back to God. (If you are meeting online, you could hold up a basket, while the children hold up their prayers.)

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