

# SMALL GROUP

## TODAY'S WONDER TRUTH: JESUS SHOWS COMPASSION



### WORD OF WONDER:

How great is God- beyond our understanding! The number of his years is past finding out!  
- Job 36:26a

### GOD'S BIG STORY:

Jesus Feeds the 5  
Thousand  
(Matthew 14)

### GOD'S BIG STORY QUESTIONS:

- Why was Jesus sad in today's story? *(His friend and relative, John the Baptist, had died.)*
- What did Jesus try to do when He was sad? *(He went on a boat to a quiet place to try to be alone.)*
- What happened when Jesus tried to be alone? How did He respond? *(A large crowd gathered around Him. He showed compassion to them.)*
- **Compassion** is feeling deep sadness or understanding for someone else and doing something to help them. How did Jesus show compassion to the people in today's story? *(Jesus healed people who were sick and fed over 5,000 people with five small loaves of bread and two fish.)*
- How has God shown you compassion and helped you?
- Who can you show compassion to? What can you do this week to help this person?

### Welcome Question

- When has someone helped you because you were sad or hurting? Consider sharing a story from your own life of a time when someone extended kindness to you.
- We've all experienced difficult things. We've been sad, hurt, scared, or sick. Maybe we've even been really, really hungry. Today we're going to hear about a time when Jesus saw people who were sick and hungry and did something to help them. But first, it's time to be curious!

### Curiosity Questions

- Which do you think is more powerful: the things you say or the things you do? Why?
- When have you shown kindness through your words? When have you shown kindness through your actions?

## Curiosity Activity: Saying and Doing

- Help kids form two equal teams and invite them to gather at one end of the room. Give each team a bucket of balls and ask kids not to touch them yet. The two empty buckets should be at the opposite end of the room.
- **Let's play a game to get us started today! For this game, one person from your team will carry all the balls in your team's bucket from one side of the room to the other. Your team's carrier can carry as many balls as possible and place them in the empty bucket on the other side of the room. She will go back and forth until all the balls are in the bucket on the other side. She may not carry the bucket itself, put balls in her pockets, kick the balls, or carry them in her clothing. The first team whose carrier gets all the balls from one side of the room to the other wins. The rest of you can cheer on your carrier with your words only. Your team's carrier will be the kid whose birthday is closest to today.**
- Give teams time to figure out whose birthday is closest to today. Then start the game by saying, "Go!"
- Encourage the kids not carrying balls to cheer for their teammates! The first team whose carrier gets all her team's balls into the opposite bucket wins. Have kids gather with their teams again.
- Address the ball carriers directly: **That looked like a hard task! I bet you're tired! Can you think of anything that would have made your job easier?**
- Allow the carriers to share their ideas. **Those are great ideas! Let's play the game again. Only this time, everyone gets to help carry the balls.**
- Challenge the two teams to carry all the balls in their buckets to the other side of the room. When you say, "Go," everyone can help carry, and they don't have to take turns. Again, they can't put balls in their pockets or clothes, kick the balls, or move the buckets themselves. Whichever team gets all its balls into its bucket on the opposite side of the room first wins!
- When the game is finished, gather everyone together and ask:
- **What was the biggest difference between the two rounds? Which round of the game went faster? Why?**
- **Yes! The game was a lot easier and faster when everyone was able to help. Cheering others on and encouraging them with our words is important, but helping with our actions is often the most powerful thing we can do for others. We're going to hear today about a time when Jesus helped others not just through the words He said but through what He did. When Jesus saw people who were sick and hungry, He felt deep sadness and understanding for them and did something to help them. We call this compassion.**
- Our Wonder Truth today is **JESUS SHOWS COMPASSION.**

## Word of Wonder Activity

- Today in God's big story, Jesus showed compassion on the people who were sick and hungry and cared for them in a miraculous way! Our Word of Wonder for the Now That's a Miracle! series reminds us of God's power and greatness! Let's say the verse together. Open your Bible to [Job 36:26a](#).
- Now let's practice our Word of Wonder with a cup-stacking game!
- Invite kids to take turns seeing how quickly they can stack their cups in the correct order of the memory verse. Encourage kids stacking the cups to say the verse out loud while they are stacking. For groups with younger kids and for larger groups, invite kids to work in pairs. Those watching the cup-stackers can say the verse along with them! Continue until all kids have had a chance to stack the cups.

# Responding in Worship: The Way of Compassion

- Today we heard about a time when Jesus was very sad but still had compassion on those around Him. He loved the people who crowded around Him that day. And when they were sick and hungry, He stopped what He was doing to care for their needs. We see Jesus showing compassion to people throughout the Gospel books of the Bible (Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John). **When are some other examples in the Bible of Jesus showing compassion to others?**
- Invite kids to brainstorm Bible stories. If they aren't sure where to start, remind them of passages from the Hanging Out with Jesus series, like Jesus seeking out Zacchaeus and Jesus healing the men who had leprosy.
- **Just like Jesus cared for the people in today's story, Jesus loves and sees you. When you're hurting or sad or scared, He feels deep sadness and understanding for you. He is with you and wants to help you. Jesus shows us compassion!**
- Set out writing and coloring utensils and give each kid a copy of The Way of Compassion Sheet. **Find the place on your sheet that says, "Jesus Shows Compassion."** Pause for kids to find this on their sheets. Help younger kids if needed.
- **I invite you to spend some time thinking about ways Jesus has shown compassion to others, including you! Maybe He has answered your prayer, healed you from sickness, or helped you feel joy again after a sad time. The most amazing act of compassion took place when Jesus died so that our sins—the wrong things we say and do—could be forgiven and we can be with God forever! In the frame on the left side of your sheet, write your ideas or draw a picture of Jesus showing compassion.**
- Give kids several minutes to write and draw quietly.
- **Now look at the right side of your sheet.** Show kids the words, "I Can Show Compassion" on The Way of Compassion Sheet.
- **Now let's spend time thinking about how we can walk with Jesus in the way of compassion by showing care to someone this week. Who do you know who is sad or going through a difficult time? Pause for kids to think quietly. What can you do to help or encourage them? Write or draw a picture of your idea in the frame on the right side of your sheet. If you can't think of an idea right away, that's OK! Ask the Holy Spirit to give you creative ideas! Then when you have an idea, write about it or draw a picture of it on your sheet.**
- Again, allow several minutes for kids to write or draw quietly while music plays quietly in the background. Be available to help kids think of ways they can show compassion to someone in their life. When they're finished, invite kids to share their ideas with the group.

# SMALL GROUP PRAYER

Jesus is a real person. He is both God and man, and He has feelings and emotions just as we do. Yet even when Jesus was sad, He showed compassion to others. Our God is compassionate, and our God loves us so much! Let's thank Him in prayer now.

Invite kids to join you in a circle to spend time talking to Jesus. Ask whether anyone has a question, something they would like to share with Jesus, or a prayer request. Give each kid a chance to participate, then close in prayer, remembering to thank Jesus for loving us!