

SMALL GROUP

TODAY'S WONDER TRUTH: JESUS SHOWS COMPASSION



WORD OF WONDER:

How great 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 at the beginning of today's story?** *(His friend and relative, John the Baptist, had died.)*
- **What is compassion?** *(If needed, remind kids of the definition introduced earlier in the lesson: Compassion is a feeling of 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.)*
- **Do you think it's hard to show compassion for others when you are hurting and sad? Why or why not?**
- **How has God shown you compassion?**
- **Think quietly about someone in your life who is sad or hurting. What can you do to show this person compassion?**

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: Match and Dash!

- Help kids form two equal teams and invite them to line up at the end of the room opposite of the large boxes or bins.
- Set a basket or bowl of Match and Dash! Slips in front of each team. **Let's play a relay game to get us thinking more about how we can help other people. Each team has a bin.** Point to the large bins or boxes on the other side of the room. **In your bin are 10 items that you could use to help a friend. Each team also has a basket of slips.** Point to the basket or bowl of slips in front of each team.
- **On the slips are 10 different situations that a friend might be in. Each person on your team will take turns pulling a slip, reading the situation, running to your bin, finding the item that could help your friend in that situation, and running it back to your team. Then the next person in line will go. Once your team has matched all the slips and objects, I will check them to make sure the matches are correct. Whoever successfully matches all the slips and objects first wins!**
- Once kids are ready, say, "Go!" and cheer for them as they match and dash! Once each team finishes, check that the teams correctly matched their slips and objects.
- Congratulate the winning team, collect all the objects back into the bins, and gather the kids.
- **Great job finding items you could use to help a friend in each situation! 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!

Responding in Worship: Compassion in Action

- 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 had planned to do to care for their needs. We see Jesus showing compassion to people throughout the Gospel books of the Bible (Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John). Let's work together to remember other times in the Bible when Jesus showed compassion to others.
- Encourage kids to form small groups of 2–4 kids. Give a Compassion Book to each kid and make sure everyone has a Bible.
- Set out writing and coloring utensils. Ask kids to write their name on the front cover of their Compassion Book. Then have them turn in their books to page two. Invite small groups to brainstorm stories in the Bible in which Jesus shows compassion.
- If they aren't sure where to start, encourage them to turn to the first four books in the New Testament (Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John). Give them a few ideas from the Hanging Out with Jesus series to get started, such as Jesus visiting Zacchaeus and healing the 10 men with leprosy. They can list the stories or draw quick stick figure drawings of each one. After a few minutes, invite groups to share their examples.
- **Jesus showed compassion to people in the Bible, but He also shows compassion to us! 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! On the same page in your Compassion Books, I invite you to write or draw about one way Jesus has shown compassion to you.**
- **Now take a look at page three in your books. As followers of Jesus, we can show God's compassion to other people. Spend some time thinking about someone you know who is sad or going through a hard time. What is something you can do to show compassion to them this week? Write or draw your ideas in the box on page three.**
- Allow time for kids to write and draw quietly.
- **Let's turn now to page four in your books. On it, you'll see a breath prayer. A breath prayer is a simple prayer we can repeat anytime and anywhere as we breathe in and out. We say the first part as we breathe in, and we say the second part as we breathe out. We can pray breath prayers silently or out loud. Let's say this one together now.**
 - Repeat this breath prayer several times with the kids:
 - Breathe In: **Jesus, fill me ...**
 - Breathe Out: **with Your compassion.**
- Invite kids to share what they wrote or drew in their books. Then encourage them to look for opportunities to show the compassion of Jesus to people around them this week, assuring them that God gives us, His followers, His Holy Spirit to help!

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!