

Lesson 7: The Storm on the Lake - Godly Play. Mark 4.35-41

You will need: A blue rectangular cloth/ felt (the lake), a green felt strip to place along one side of the blue (the land), a toy boat, some wooden figures to represent Jesus, the disciples and the crowd. This is not a parable, it a story about an event in the life of Jesus, therefore it doesn't need a gold box. It can be presented in an open basket, much like the Old Testament stories.

The Script (*actions are shown in italics*):

Let's see if there are things in the basket to help us with this story. I wonder what this could be? (*take out the blue cloth and play with it, inviting the children to make suggestions about what it might be. Accept all answers. Finally, once the wondering dies down, smooth the rectangle out so that it lies in front of you with the narrow edges to your left and right.*)

Is there anything else? Yes, perhaps this can help us. I wonder what it could be? (*take out the green felt piece. Allow the children time to wonder before you lay it to your right hand side on the top of the blue cloth to form a shore line.*)

We will need this boat to tell the story too. (*Then place the boat against the shore line on the blue cloth.*)

There is nothing else that can help us, so all we can do is begin.

At this point, once the wondering about the felt pieces is finished and you have placed the boat, you keep your eyes on the story and must remain engaged in it, without giving any more eye contact to the children, until the storytelling is complete.

There was once a man who did such amazing things and said such wonderful things - that great crowds of people followed him everywhere. When he was around, amazing things happened.

Here he is (*place the Jesus figure on the shore line*) His name is Jesus.

Here are some of his friends (*place a couple more figures close to Jesus 2 or 3 disciples - more will not fit in the boat!*)

A crowd is gathering. (*start to place a group of figures close enough to the shore that when you place Jesus and the disciples into the boat, the crowd aren't too far away from the action! Take your time with this.*) eventually there are so many people that Jesus is worried. Not everyone can see him, not everyone can hear him speak.

Jesus stands in the little boat so everyone can see and hear him (*move Jesus to stand in the boat*)... Jesus is telling stories ... stories about farmers and fields ... seeds ... and things that grow ... Stories that help the crowd to understand what God is like. But now it is getting late. It is time to go home, his friends get in the little boat too, they will sail home together. (*Put the figures in the boat and begin to slowly move it across the blue cloth into the middle. Now lay Jesus down in the boat*). Jesus is so tired, he lays down to sleep. (*Pause for a moment*). Now it is dark, and the night is still as the little boat sails home. (*Pause again*).

Whoosh! A big wind blows. Crash! Big waves hit the little boat. Oh no! There is a big storm! (*Crease the cloth to make bigger and bigger waves*). Jesus' friends are worried. The storm is getting fiercer and fiercer (*lift the boat up from the surface of the cloth and concentrate on moving it, try to show some emotion in your facial expressions, but keep your focus on the story*)..

Whoosh! Splash! Big waves are splashing into the boat. Everyone is wet! Now the friends are frightened. (*keep the boat up off the cloth*).

Jesus is still sleeping. His friends wake him up. (*move Jesus to a standing position*) Jesus stands up. He says to the wind and the waves, "Peace! ... Be still!"

And (slowly *smooth the cloth and then place the boat back down*) ... the wind stops ... the sea is calm ... and still ...

Jesus says. "I am here ... I am always here ... You do not need to be frightened ... ever."

His friends are amazed. Who is he? Only God can do things like that!

For Christians, this story tells them that Jesus is always with them to help them whatever happens.

Now it's time to look up from the story and engage in the verbal wondering. Be patient, sometimes it takes the children a while to feel happy to speak. Sometimes the quietest children are doing the deepest wondering!

I wonder which part of the story you like the best?

I wonder which part of the story is the most important?

I wonder if we could take a part of the story away and still have everything we need?

I wonder which part of the story is about you?

I wonder if you've ever felt afraid like Jesus' friends?

I wonder if there is someone who can rescue you?

Once the verbal wondering is over, begin to return all the objects carefully into the box. Don't hurry, naming each piece as you return it.

I wonder what work you would like to do now to continue your wondering?

Don't feel obliged to ask all the wondering questions and feel free to be lead to make more, depending upon where the wondering goes. Each time you deliver the story new questions and answers will emerge. Ensure you try not to close down the wondering with a prescriptive answer.

Try to allow as much choice as possible during the individual response time. If possible this work should be evidenced with photographs or small group discussion. The children's work during the individual response time is personal and should not be shared unless the child requests it. Children will gain the most from individual response time if they are fully relaxed and the pace is slow.