

Use Week of:

Unit 21 • Session 1

Jesus' Early Miracles

BIBLE PASSAGE:

Mark 1

STORY POINT:

People came to Jesus, and
He healed them.

KEY PASSAGE:

John 3:16

BIG PICTURE QUESTION:

What makes people special?
People are special because we are
made in God's image, as male and
female, to know Him.

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Additional resources are available at gospelproject.com. For free training and session-by-session help, visit ministrygrid.com/gospelproject.

LEADER Bible Study

Early in His ministry, Jesus and His disciples traveled to Capernaum, a town on the northwestern shore of the Sea of Galilee. Capernaum became Jesus' home and headquarters. (See Matt. 4:13.) He entered the synagogue on the Sabbath, when people would gather to hear and learn from the Scriptures.

Jesus quickly set Himself apart from the scribes and other religious teachers. Unlike the scribes, who relied completely on traditional interpretations of the Torah from other teachers, Jesus spoke with authority. His teaching came from His own authority as the Author of truth, and it had a profound effect on His listeners—they were astonished!

The early miracles recorded in Mark 1 demonstrate Jesus' power and authority as the Son of God. Jesus drove an unclean spirit from a man in the synagogue; even the demons obey His commands. Then Jesus healed Peter's mother-in-law, and that evening the people in the town brought to Jesus all those who were sick or afflicted with unclean spirits. What did Jesus do? He healed them! (Mark 1:34)

Jesus' miracles continued, and He healed a man with leprosy. *Leprosy* is a skin disease that would have marked a person as "unclean," requiring him to be separated from the community. Jesus had compassion on the man and healed him immediately.

Jesus' miracles brought many people to faith in Him. They also proved that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God. These miracles strengthened people's faith and met their needs. Isaiah prophesied that the promised Messiah would bear our sickness and carry our pain. (Isa. 53:4) Jesus fulfilled this prophecy as He healed people.

Help kids make the connection that through Jesus, God did what is impossible for us to do on our own. He provided forgiveness, salvation, and eternal life for all who would trust in Him.

The BIBLE Story

Jesus' Early Miracles

Mark 1

Jesus traveled to Capernaum (kuh PUHR nay uhm) with His disciples Simon, Andrew, James, and John. He **went into the synagogue on the Sabbath and began to teach. The people there were very surprised. Jesus' teaching was not like the scribes' teaching. He spoke with authority.**

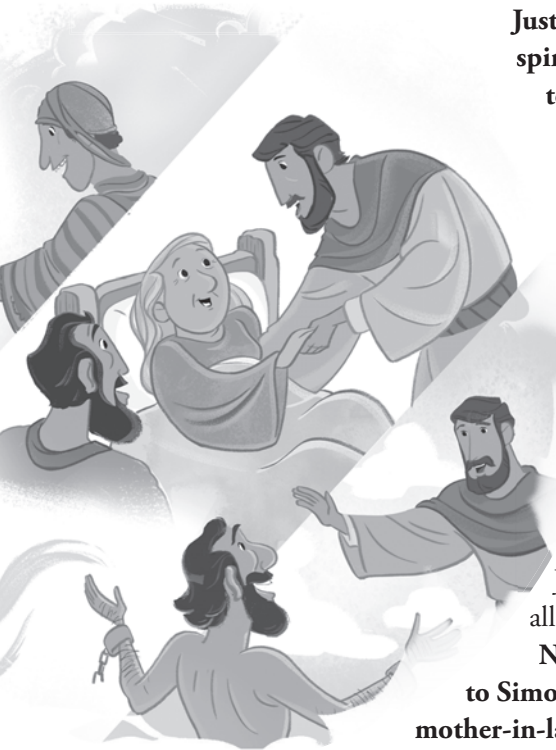
Just then, a man with an unclean spirit shouted, "What do You have to do with us, Jesus of Nazareth?

Have You come to destroy us?

I know who You are—the Holy One of God!" Jesus commanded the spirit to be quiet and come out of the man. The spirit yelled again and then came out.

Everyone was amazed! "Who is this Jesus?" they asked. "He teaches with authority, and the unclean spirits obey Him!" News about Jesus spread quickly throughout all of Galilee.

Next, Jesus and His disciples went to Simon and Andrew's house. Simon's mother-in-law was in bed with a fever. Jesus went to her, took her hand, and healed her. She got up and began to serve them. That evening, large crowds of people came to the house with others who were sick or bothered by evil spirits, and Jesus healed them.



Early the next morning, Jesus went out by Himself to pray. Simon and the other disciples found Him and said, “Everyone is looking for You.”

Jesus said, “Let’s go on to the nearby villages so I can preach there too. This is why I have come.”

Jesus traveled throughout Galilee. He preached and drove out demons. A man with a skin disease came to Jesus. He got on his knees and begged: “If You are willing, You can make me clean.” Jesus was willing, and He healed the man.

Christ Connection: Jesus’ miracles proved that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God. They strengthened people’s faith and met their needs. Through Jesus, God did what is impossible for us to do on our own. He provided forgiveness, salvation, and eternal life.

Bible Storytelling Tips

- **Change pace:**
Draw attention to dialogue by slowing your pace slightly when speaking dialogue.
- **Pause for effect:**
Use pauses and silence between paragraphs to capture kids’ attention.

INTRODUCE the Story



SESSION TITLE: Jesus' Early Miracles

BIBLE PASSAGE: Mark 1

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KEY PASSAGE: John 3:16

BIG PICTURE QUESTION: What makes people special? People are special because we are made in God's image, as male and female, to know Him.

Welcome time

Greet each kid as he or she arrives. Use this time to collect the offering, fill out attendance sheets, and help new kids connect to your group. Prompt kids to share about a time someone helped them do something this week. Kids may also share about ways they have helped others. Lead them to consider why people help one another.

Activity page (5 minutes)

- "Story Tangle" activity page, 1 per kid
- pencils or markers

Invite kids to complete "Story Tangle" on the activity page. Kids should follow the lines to put the letters in the blanks.
SAY • What word did you discover? (*healed*) **People came to Jesus, and He healed them.** That is amazing. The Bible tells us about many miracles Jesus performed while He was on earth. Today we will hear about some of the miracles Jesus did early in His ministry, and—more importantly—why He did them.

**LOW
PREP**

Session starter (10 minutes)

OPTION 1: Are you willing?

Tell kids that you need a volunteer. Call a kid with his hand raised to stand at the front of the class. Explain his

task and then ask, “Are you willing to do that?” If he is not, let him sit back down. If he is, give him the opportunity to complete the task. Repeat with new volunteers for each additional task. Sample tasks:

- Sing the happy birthday song.
- Give everyone a high-five.
- Pretend you are a cat for the rest of the game.
- Do 10 jumping jacks.
- Show us your best dance moves.
- Pretend that you are underwater for 30 seconds.

SAY • In today’s Bible story, a man believed Jesus could help him if Jesus was willing. Do you think He was? Let’s find out.

OPTION 2: Miracle matches

Print three sets of the “Miracles of Jesus Game” printable on colored paper. Wad the statements into small balls and scatter them over the floor.

- watch or timer
- “Miracles of Jesus Game” printable
- colored paper

Form two teams. Explain that the paper wads describe eight miracles Jesus performed. The kids’ task is to match the miracles. Each miracle has three statements. One team will play at a time. Give a team’s players 30 seconds to open the papers. If a team finds all three of the matches, the team earns one point. When time is up, instruct players to wad up the statements and return them all to the floor.

Play multiple rounds until kids find the sets for eight miracles.

SAY • The Bible records dozens of miracles Jesus performed. Today we will hear about some of the miracles Jesus performed early in His ministry.

Transition to teach the story

TEACH the Story



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- room decorations
- Theme Background Slide (optional)

Suggested Theme Decorating Ideas: Simulate an ambulance bay. Attach a large square of foam board to a focal wall. Decorate the square to look like the rear doors of an ambulance. Include windows, lights, and a bumper. Position a small shelf or open cabinet to one side and fill it with first aid supplies. Display a stretcher or backboard, if available, or drape a sheet over a table to act as a stretcher. You may also choose to project the theme background slide.

Countdown

- countdown video

Show the countdown video as you transition to teach the story. Set it to end as the session begins.

Introduce the session (3 minutes)

- leader attire
- disposable gloves
- stethoscope
- Bible

[Leader enters wearing dark pants, a solid-color shirt, disposable gloves, and a stethoscope.]

LEADER • Hello! Thank you for coming today. I'm [*your name*], a paramedic. Does anyone know what a paramedic does? [*Allow kids to respond.*] Paramedics are healthcare professionals who are trained to respond to emergency medical calls outside the hospital. If you're in a life-threatening situation and call 911, paramedics can come straight to you

Tip: If you prefer not to use themed content or characters, adapt or omit this introduction.

with some of the same services you can find in an emergency room.

Encountering so many people in order to help them is really rewarding, but this can be a tough job. It makes me look forward even more to the day when there will be no more pain and suffering.

When Jesus encountered people on earth, He changed their lives in extraordinary ways. Let me tell you about it.

Big picture question (1 minute)

LEADER • As you hear today's Bible story and the stories for the next few weeks, think about our big picture question. This question helps us remember that God is doing something bigger beyond the specific events of the story.

The question is, *What makes people special?* This is a great question. Jesus spent a lot of His time on earth with people. Here is the answer: *People are special because we are made in God's image, as male and female, to know Him.*

Giant timeline (1 minute)

Show the giant timeline. Point to individual Bible stories as you review.

• Giant Timeline

LEADER • Jesus came to earth as *Immanuel*, which means "God is with us." Jesus began His ministry when He was about thirty years old (Luke 3:23). He called disciples to follow Him and spent much of His time with people. We'll find out today how Jesus changed the lives of many people through His early miracles.

- Bibles
- “Jesus’ Early Miracles” video
- Big Picture Question Poster
- Bible Story Picture Poster
- Story Point Poster

Tell the Bible story (10 minutes)

Open your Bible to Mark 1. Use the Bible storytelling tips on the Bible story page to help you tell the story, or show the Bible story video “Jesus’ Early Miracles.”

LEADER • Jesus was at the synagogue in Capernaum. Who else was there? (*Jesus’ disciples and other Jews*)

A man with an unclean spirit shouted out. What did the unclean spirit know about Jesus? Look at Mark 1:23-24. [*Allow kids to read the verse and respond.*] Jesus is the Holy One of God. Unclean spirits were quick to recognize Jesus as the Son of God. Jesus commanded the unclean spirit to come out of the man, and the spirit obeyed Him.

Why was the crowd amazed at Jesus? Look at Mark 1:27. [*Allow kids to read the verse and respond.*] Jesus wasn’t like other teachers, who taught things they had learned from others. Jesus taught with authority. He even had authority over unclean spirits.

News about Jesus spread throughout the area. **People came to Jesus, and He healed them.** They brought their friends and family members who were sick, and Jesus healed them all.

Jesus’ early miracles showed His power and authority as the Son of God.

Christ connection

LEADER • Jesus’ miracles proved that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God. They strengthened people’s faith and met their needs. ***What makes people special? People are special because we are made in God’s image, as male and female, to know Him.***

Through Jesus, God did what is impossible for

Tip: Use Scripture and the guide provided on page 173 to explain how to become a Christian. Make sure kids know when and where they can ask questions.

us to do on our own. He provided forgiveness, salvation, and eternal life.

Questions from kids video (3 minutes)

Show the “Unit 21, Session 1” questions from kids video. Prompt kids to think about God’s ability to perform miracles. Guide them to discuss evidence they can recognize as proof that God is still at work in the world today.

• “Unit 21, Session 1” questions from kids video



Missions moment (3 minutes)

Ask kids if they know how sports can be used in missions. Some will remember previous mission stories involving sports evangelism.

• “Better Than Basketball” missions video

LEADER • Every sport you play and every hobby you enjoy can be used to share the love of Jesus. In the Bible, we read that **people came to Jesus, and He healed them.** Jesus heals people today, too, by forgiving their sins and offering eternal life. Let’s watch how a basketball player is sharing that message with people in Nevada.

Play the “Better Than Basketball” missions video. Then pray for Heiden Ratner, who is sharing the gospel.

Key passage (5 minutes)

Show the key passage poster. Lead the boys and girls to read together John 3:16.

• Key Passage Poster
• “In This Way” song

LEADER • God is love. He loves the world he created. *What makes people special? People are special because we are made in God’s image, as male and female, to know Him.* Yet the unbelieving world does not love God. The world is an enemy of God and fights against His rule and reign. Since sin entered the

world, the world has believed the lie that God is not good and loving. This is a lie from Satan.

God is so good that He loves His enemies. His love compelled Him to send Jesus into the world. Let's sing our key passage song to help us remember these words.

Lead boys and girls in singing "In This Way (John 3:16)."

Sing (4 minutes)

• "Take It to the Lord"
song
• Bible

Open your Bible and read aloud Psalm 95:1-2.

LEADER • We can show we are thankful to God by singing to Him. Let's sing a song of praise together. Sing together "Take It to the Lord."

Pray (2 minutes)

Invite kids to pray before dismissing to apply the story.

LEADER • Lord God, as we learn more about You, we are amazed at all You are. No one is like You. The unclean spirits obey You. You have power over sickness and You want to help us! Give us faith to trust that You will give us everything we need. Thank You for forgiveness, salvation, and eternal life. We love You. Amen.

Dismiss to apply the story

The Gospel: God's Plan for Me

Ask kids if they have ever heard the word *gospel*. Clarify that the word *gospel* means “good news.” It is the message about Christ, the kingdom of God, and salvation. Use the following guide to share the gospel with kids.



God rules. Explain to kids that the Bible tells us God created everything, and He is in charge of everything. Invite a volunteer to read Genesis 1:1 from the Bible. Read Revelation 4:11 or Colossians 1:16-17 aloud and explain what these verses mean.



We sinned. Tell kids that since the time of Adam and Eve, everyone has chosen to disobey God. (Romans 3:23) The Bible calls this sin. Because God is holy, God cannot be around sin. Sin separates us from God and deserves God's punishment of death. (Romans 6:23)



God provided. Choose a child to read John 3:16 aloud. Say that God sent His Son, Jesus, the perfect solution to our sin problem, to rescue us from the punishment we deserve. It's something we, as sinners, could never earn on our own. Jesus alone saves us. Read and explain Ephesians 2:8-9.



Jesus gives. Share with kids that Jesus lived a perfect life, died on the cross for our sins, and rose again. Because Jesus gave up His life for us, we can be welcomed into God's family for eternity. This is the best gift ever! Read Romans 5:8; 2 Corinthians 5:21; or 1 Peter 3:18.



We respond. Tell kids that they can respond to Jesus. Read Romans 10:9-10,13. Review these aspects of our response: Believe in your heart that Jesus alone saves you through what He's already done on the cross. Repent, turning from self and sin to Jesus. Tell God and others that your faith is in Jesus.

Offer to talk with any child who is interested in responding to Jesus. Provide *I'm a Christian Now!* for new Christians to take home and complete with their families.

APPLY the Story



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Key passage activity (5 minutes)

- Key Passage Poster
- paper
- crayons or markers

Display the key passage poster. Lead kids in reading aloud John 3:16 together. Give each kid a piece of paper and some crayons. Assign key words or phrases from the passage for kids to illustrate. (Examples: *God, loved, world, gave, Son, everyone, eternal life*) Multiple kids may illustrate the same word. Then lead kids in saying the key passage again, holding up their pictures for the key words.

SAY • John 3:16 tells us the good news of the gospel in one sentence! Work on memorizing our key passage this week. Memorizing God's Word helps us remember what is true. Next week we will see if you can say it from memory.

Discussion & Bible skills (10 minutes)

- Bibles, 1 per kid
- Story Point Poster
- Small Group Timeline and Map Set (005802970)

Distribute Bibles. Guide boys and girls to open their Bibles to Mark 1. Explain that the Gospel of Mark tells stories about things Jesus did—healing people, casting out demons, commanding the wind and the waves—to show that Jesus is the Son of God. Choose a volunteer to read aloud Mark 1:40-42.

SAY • Jesus traveled all over Galilee. He taught in

synagogues and told people the good news about God's kingdom. **People came to Jesus, and He healed them.** Large crowds of people followed Jesus around—from Capernaum in Galilee [*point to Capernaum (C6) on the New Testament Israel Map*] to Jerusalem (H4) to Judea (J3) and across the Jordan River (G6).

Ask the following questions. Lead the group to discuss:

1. How did Jesus' miracles show His care for creation? *Guide kids to discuss how Jesus' miracles restored parts of creation that were affected by sin coming into the world. Jesus cast out unclean spirits, made sick people well, and healed skin diseases. Explain that later in His ministry, Jesus also raised people from the dead, gave sight to people who were blind, and ultimately brought the greatest healing—forgiveness of sins—through His death and resurrection.*

(Option: Choose a volunteer to read Ps. 77:14.)

2. Do we need to see miracles to believe in Jesus? Why or why not? *Point out that many people saw Jesus' miracles and believed, but Jesus said those who do not see and still believe are blessed. The Bible tells us everything we need to believe in Jesus.*

(Option: Choose a volunteer to read John 20:29-31.)

3. In what ways does God reveal Himself today? *Lead kids to recognize that God shows us what He is like through the Word—the Bible. The Bible says we can also understand what God is like by looking at His creation. Invite kids to share observations of creation that tell them something about what God is like.*

(Option: Choose a volunteer to read Rom. 1:19-20.)

Option: Retell or review the Bible story using the bolded text of the Bible story script.

- "On Mission Statements" printable
- basketball or inflatable beach ball
- whistle (optional)

Tip: Use this activity option to reinforce the missions moment from Teach the Story.

Activity choice (10 minutes)



OPTION 1: On mission

Cut out each statement and tape it to a ball. Invite kids to stand in a circle and toss the ball to one another. When you blow the whistle or yell "stop" ask the person holding the ball to complete the statement facing him. If you prefer, let the player choose the statement he wants to answer. Continue play as time allows.

SAY • Each of us can be part of God's mission to reach the world with the message of Jesus. Some missionaries, like Heiden Ratner in Nevada, use basketball or other sports to bring people to Jesus.

God wants to use us, no matter our gifts or skills, to share the good news with the world. *What makes people special? People are special because we are made in God's image, as male and female, to know Him.*

LOW PREP

- construction paper
- envelopes
- crayons, markers, or colored pencils
- adhesive bandages
- googly eyes
- glue
- permanent marker

OPTION 2: Make get-well-soon cards

Provide supplies for kids to make get-well-soon cards. Suggest kids use the adhesive bandages like stickers. They can turn the bandages into people by gluing on googly eyes and adding arms, legs, and a smile with a permanent marker. Encourage them to write a message such as *Get well soon!* or *Praying for you!*

If someone from your class or church is ill or injured, consider making cards for that person. Otherwise, kids can leave the cards blank and give them to friends who get sick in the future. You may collect the cards to deliver to specific people or provide envelopes and allow kids to take the cards home for later use.

SAY • Being sick or hurt is no fun! When our bodies

don't work like they should, we might feel sad or frustrated. **People came to Jesus, and He healed them.** Jesus is the Son of God! One day, Jesus will take away all sickness and pain. When we trust in Him, we have forgiveness, salvation, and life with Him forever.

Option: Review the gospel with boys and girls. Explain that kids are welcome to speak with you or another teacher if they have questions.

Journal and prayer (5 minutes)

Distribute journal pages and pencils. Guide kids to think about and answer the questions listed on the page:

- What does this story teach me about God or the gospel?
- What does the story teach me about myself?
- Are there any commands in this story to obey? How are they for God's glory and my good?
- Are there any promises in this story to remember? How do they help me trust and love God?
- How does this story help me to live on mission better?

As kids journal, invite them to share their ideas. Then pray, praising God for His power to perform miracles. Ask Him to meet kids' needs. Thank Him for sending His Son, Jesus, to meet their greatest need of all—to be rescued from sin and death.

As time allows, lead kids to complete "Scripture Survey" on the activity page. Kids should look up each Bible reference to answer the questions.

- pencils
- Journal Page
- "Scripture Survey" activity page, 1 per kid

Tip: Give parents this week's *Big Picture Cards for Families* to allow families to interact with the biblical content at home.