Jesus is with us when we’re afraid.

Bible Verse
“I am with you always” (Matthew 28:20b).

Growing Closer to Jesus
Children will
- hear about Jesus calming a storm,
- learn that Jesus is with them when they’re afraid,
- teach Pockets that Jesus is watching over her, and
- throw away their fears.

Teacher Enrichment

Bible Basis
- Jesus calms the storm.

Matthew 8:23-27
The event in this passage, which is also covered in Mark and Luke, reveals Jesus’ power over nature. What happens is actually very interesting. A sudden storm on the Sea of Galilee wasn’t unusual, but apparently this one was a big one because the seasoned fisherman in the boat feared for their lives.

Knowing Jesus as they did, the disciples turned to him for help. They must have expected that he could do something about their situation, but we don’t know what they expected. What we do know is that they were amazed when he calmed the storm.

Even 5- and 6-year-olds experience storms in their lives. Some face conflict between parents at home. Others face struggles with learning at school. Still others struggle with friendships and sibling relationships. Use this lesson to help your children see how Jesus can calm the storms in their lives or keep them calm through the storms they still face.

Prayer
- Read Mark 4:36-41. What does this passage say about the disciples’ faith?
- What storms would you like to have God still in your life?
- Pray: Lord, thank you that you care about the storms we face. Help me to demonstrate to my class the peace that you give even when…

Before the Lesson
- Collect the necessary items for the activities you plan to use. Refer to the Classroom Supplies and Learning Lab Supplies columns to determine what you’ll need.
- Make photocopies of the “Today I Learned…” handout (at the end of this lesson) to send home with your children.
- Pray for the children in your class and for God’s direction in teaching the lesson.
### This Lesson at a Glance

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<th>Learning Lab Supplies</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Welcome!</strong>—Receive name tags, and be greeted by the teacher.</td>
<td>“Heart Name Tags” (p. 158), markers, pins or tape</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Let’s Get Started</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Direct children to one or more of the optional activities until everyone arrives.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Option 1: Windy Paintings</strong>—Blow paint across strips of poster board.</td>
<td>Blue and green tempera paint, drinking straws, plastic spoons, poster board, scissors, paint shirts, newspapers</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Option 2: Life-Ring Toss</strong>—Toss a ring over paper wads, and pull them in.</td>
<td>Newspapers, yarn or string, masking tape</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Option 3: Wonderful Waves</strong>—Create a swirly snack to enjoy later.</td>
<td>Graham crackers, frosting or whipped cream topping, bowl, blue food coloring, plastic knives, plate</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Pick Up Our Toys</strong>—Sing a song as they pick up toys, and gather for Bible Story Time.</td>
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<td><strong>Bible Story Time</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Setting the Stage</strong>—Listen to fears, and be pulled to “safety.”</td>
<td>Table; yarn or string</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Bible Song and Prayer Time</strong>—Sing a song, bring out the Bible, and pray together.</td>
<td>Bible, basket of surprise cards from Lesson 10, CD player</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Hear and Tell the Bible Story</strong>—Act out Matthew 8:23-27, and hear how Jesus calmed a storm.</td>
<td>Bible, table, Windy Paintings from Option 1</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Do the Bible Story</strong>—Create a “storm” and tell what they’re afraid of, and then sing about how Jesus is always with us.</td>
<td>CD player</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Closing</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Fear Not, Pockets!</strong>—Teach Pockets that Jesus is with her when she’s afraid.</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Goodbye, Fears!</strong>—Throw their fears away, and pray.</td>
<td>Wastebasket, scrap paper, crayons, snack from Option 3</td>
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*See the end of this lesson for extra-time ideas and supplies.*
Welcome Time

Welcome!

SUPPLIES: “Heart Name Tags” (p. 158), markers, pins or tape
- Kneel down and make eye contact with children as they arrive.
- Greet each child individually with an enthusiastic smile.
- Thank each child for coming to class today.
- As children arrive, ask them about last week’s “Today I Learned…” discussion. Use questions such as “How was Jesus with you this week?” and “How did you help others who were lonely?”
- Say: Today we’re going to learn that Jesus is with us when we’re afraid.
- Hand out the heart name tags children made during Lesson 10, and help them attach the name tags to their clothing. If some of the name tags were damaged or if children weren’t in class that week, have them make new name tags using the photocopiable handout.
- Direct children to the Let’s Get Started activities you’ve set up.

Let’s Get Started

Set up one or more of the following activities for children to do as they arrive. After you greet each child, invite him or her to choose an activity.

Circulate among children to offer help as needed and direct children’s conversation toward today’s lesson. Ask questions such as “When are you afraid?” or “How do you think Jesus can help you when you’re afraid?”

Option 1: Windy Paintings

SUPPLIES: blue and green tempera paint, drinking straws, plastic spoons, poster board, scissors, paint shirts, newspapers

Before this activity, cut several wide strips of white or blue poster board. Cover an area with newspapers, and set out the poster board strips, blue and green tempera paint, drinking straws, and plastic spoons.

Have children put on paint shirts or paper-bag smocks. Show children how to spoon a small amount of blue and green paint on one end of the poster board strips. Then have children use their straws to blow the paint across the poster board. Explain that today’s Bible story is about a stormy wind that made giant waves on a lake. Tell children that Jesus’ friends were in a boat on the lake and were very afraid! Explain that today children will learn that Jesus is with us when we’re afraid!

Set the Windy Paintings in a sunny place to dry until the “Hear and Tell the Bible Story” activity.
Lesson 12

**Option 2: Life-Ring Toss**

**SUPPLIES:** newspapers, yarn or string, masking tape

Have children wad several sheets of newspaper into balls and place them on the floor. Make a masking tape line on the floor about 5 feet from the paper wads. Then tie a 10-foot length of string or yarn to the plastic ring. Have children take turns tossing the plastic ring around the paper wads and pulling them across the tape line. Explain that in today’s story, Jesus saved his friends when their boat was in danger during a terrible storm. Say that today children will learn that **Jesus is with us when we’re afraid.**

**BIBLE POINT**

When everyone has arrived and you’re ready to move on to the Bible Story Time, encourage the children to finish what they’re doing and get ready to clean up.

**Option 3: Wonderful Waves**

**SUPPLIES:** graham crackers, frosting or whipped cream topping, bowl, blue food coloring, plastic knives, plate

Set out graham crackers, plastic knives, and a bowl of frosting. Let children drop a few drops of blue food coloring into the frosting and take turns stirring until the frosting is tinted blue. Have children spread frosting “waves” on the graham crackers and place the crackers on a tray or plate. Set the plate aside for later. Explain that Jesus and his friends were caught in a storm that had big, scary waves. Say that today children will learn that **Jesus is with us when we’re afraid.**

**BIBLE POINT**

For extra fun in Option 3, provide gummy fish or fish crackers for children to place in the waves!

**Pick Up Our Toys**

**SUPPLIES:** CD player

Lead children in singing “Pick Up Our Toys” (track 2) with the CD to the tune of “Skip to My Lou.” Encourage the children to sing along as they help clean up the room.

If you want to include the names of all the children in your class, sing the song without the CD, and repeat the naming section. If you choose to use the CD, vary the names you use each week.

**Sing**

We will pick up our toys.  \(\text{[name]}\) picking up toys.  
We will pick up our toys.  \(\text{[name]}\) picking up toys.  
And put them all away.  \(\text{[name]}\) putting them all away.

(Repeat.)
Jesus Calms the Storm

Bible Story Time

Setting the Stage

SUPPLIES: table; yarn or string

Before this activity, turn a table upside down to make a “boat.” If you have more than 10 children in your class, push two overturned tables together to make a large boat.

Tell the children you’ll clap your hands to get their attention. Explain that when you clap, the children are to stop what they’re doing and focus on you. Encourage children to respond quickly so you’ll have time for all the fun activities you’ve planned.

Stand on the boat, and have children sit a few feet away from it. Say: Let’s pretend you’re all swimming in a lake and I’m in my nice, safe boat! You must be cold and wet in that lake! Show me how cold you are. Pause while children shiver and rub their arms to keep warm. Brrr! I get cold just watching you! I get scared when I’m in cold water. I’d better help you! I know—I’ll toss this life preserver to you and pull you into my boat. Here I go. Heave-HO!

Toss the plastic ring (with the string attached) to two or three children, and pull them into the boat. Be sure children don’t pull on the string since it won’t hold much weight. Then say: Hmm. Now it’s getting dark out on this lake! I’m really afraid of the dark, so I’ll pull a few more of you to safety. Toss the plastic ring to a few more children, and pull them to the boat. Yikes! Did you see that lightning? Ooo—listen to the thunder! I get scared during storms! I’d better get some more of you out of the lake before that storm gets any closer! Toss the plastic ring, and pull two or three children to the boat. The rest of you look so lonely out there in the water. Sometimes I get scared when I’m alone. Why don’t you come and join the rest of us on the boat? Pull the rest of the children into the boat. Put the plastic ring away and out of sight.

I feel much better now that we’re all safe on our boat. We all get scared sometimes, but today we’ll learn that Jesus is with us when we’re afraid. Now let’s all get nice and comfortable on our boat and prepare to hear a stormy story!

Bible Song and Prayer Time

SUPPLIES: Bible, basket of surprise cards from Lesson 10, CD player

Set the basket of surprise cards that you made in Lesson 10 next to you. If you don’t have surprise cards, follow the directions in the “Bible Song and Prayer Time” section of Lesson 10 for this activity. Bookmark Matthew 8:23-27 in the Bible you’ll be using.

Have the children sit in a circle. Say: Each week when we come to our circle for our Bible story, I’ll choose someone to be the Bible helper. The Bible helper will bring me the Bible marked with our Bible story for that week. Before I choose today’s Bible helper, let’s sing our Bible song. As we sing, I’ll pass out the surprise cards. Don’t look inside your card until the song is over.

Lead children in singing “Read God’s Book” (track 3) with the CD to the tune of “The Muffin Man.” As you sing, pass out the folded surprise cards.

This Bible story is featured in the new My First Hands-On Bible. Order several now for your ministry at group.com.
Lesson 12

**SING**

Now it’s time to read God’s book,
Now it’s time to read God’s book.
Let’s hear a Bible story.

(Repeat.)

After the song, say: You may look inside your surprise cards. The person who has the Jesus and me figures stamped inside his or her card will be our Bible helper for today.

Identify the Bible helper, and then have the rest of the children clap for him or her. Ask the Bible helper to bring you the Bible. Assist the Bible helper in opening the Bible to the marked place, and show the children where your story comes from. Then have the Bible helper sit down.

Say: [Name] was our special Bible helper today. Each week we’ll have only one special Bible helper, but each one of you is a special part of our class! Today we’re all learning that Jesus is with us when we’re afraid.

Let’s say a special prayer now and ask God to help us learn how Jesus is always with us. I’ll pass around this basket. When the basket comes to you, put your surprise card in it and say, “God, thank you for sending Jesus to be with us.”

Pass around the basket or box. When you’ve collected everyone’s surprise card, set the basket aside for use next week, and pick up the Bible. Lead children in this prayer:

**Hear and Tell the Bible Story**

**SUPPLIES:** Bible, table, Windy Paintings from Option 1

Bring out the Bible Big Book: Jesus Is With Us. Have children gather on the “boat” from “Setting the Stage.” Hold up a Bible and say: Our Bible story comes from the book of Matthew in the Bible. Our Bible Big Book shows us pictures of our Bible story. As I tell the story, I’ll need a few volunteers to help us act it out. Choose as many as half the children to stand around the outside of the boat. Show them how to wave the Windy Paintings from Option 1 so the poster board strips make “stormy sounds.” Choose one volunteer to be Jesus.

The children outside the boat are our Storm-makers. They’ll make wind, waves, and thunder for our story. The rest of you have an important job, too. You’ll be Jesus’ disciples. Listen carefully, and I’ll tell you what to do as the story goes on.

Read the following story, and have children act out the directions in the column on the right.

When Jesus and his disciples visited the city of Capernaum, crowds of people gathered to see and hear him. Many brought sick people for Jesus to heal. All day long people pushed and shoved and crowded together to get close to Jesus. By evening, Jesus was very tired.

Have Jesus yawn and stretch.
After you’ve gone through the story once, have children switch roles, and do the story again. Then collect the Windy Paintings, and have everyone gather on the boat.

Ask: **Why were Jesus’ friends so scared?** (Because they thought they’d drown; because the storm was scary; because the boat was full of water.)

- **What did Jesus do when they woke him up?** (Made the storm stop; talked to the wind and waves; helped his friends feel better.)
- **What makes you afraid?** (Storms; being alone; big dogs; loud noises; when people fight.)
- **How can Jesus help you feel better?** (He’ll be my friend; he’ll take those scary things away; he’ll protect me.)

Say: **Just as Jesus was there for his frightened friends,**  

> **Jesus is with us when we’re afraid.** Even if it’s in the middle of the night, or we’re far from home, or at school, Jesus will be there to comfort, love, and protect us. Do you remember our Bible verse? It’s from Matthew 28:20, and it tells us that Jesus said,  

> “I am with you always.” Let’s discover more about how Jesus can calm our fears.

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scene Description</th>
<th>Action</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>So he and his friends got into a boat to cross the lake.</td>
<td>Have the Disciples point across the room.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>While his disciples sailed the boat, Jesus lay down and fell fast asleep.</td>
<td>Have Jesus lie down and pretend to sleep.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suddenly, a dark storm cloud raced across the sky.</td>
<td>Have the Storm-makers wiggle the Windy Paintings.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A strong wind whipped the lake into angry waves that splashed over the boat and sent it rocking from side to side.</td>
<td>Have the Disciples sway back and forth. Hold the Bible Big Book so children can see pages 4 and 5, and then lay it aside.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The boat dipped and crashed in the waves and began to fill up with water. The disciples were terrified! They thought, “If this keeps up, we’ll all drown!”</td>
<td>Have the Disciples act afraid.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The frightened disciples turned to Jesus, who was still fast asleep. They shook him and cried, “Lord, save us! We’re going to drown!”</td>
<td>Have the Disciples shake Jesus.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jesus woke up and asked, “Why are you afraid?” Then he got up and spoke to the wind and the waves.</td>
<td>Have Jesus stand up, face the Storm-makers, and hold out his arms.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suddenly, the storm stopped.</td>
<td>Have the Storm-makers stop wiggling the Windy Paintings and sit down.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The wind died down and the waves became calm. The disciples were amazed! Even the wind and waves obeyed Jesus! His friends weren’t afraid anymore.</td>
<td>Have the Disciples act surprised.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Do the Bible Story**

**SUPPLIES:** CD player

Form a circle on the floor. Say: **We're going to create our own rainstorm to remember the storm that Jesus calmed.** Follow my instructions, and listen to the storm get louder and louder. When the storm is at its loudest, I'll point to different children. If I point to you, pop up, tell us something that people are afraid of, and then sit down. Ready?

Lead children through the following sequence of motions.

- Rub your fingertips together.
- Rub your palms together.
- Snap your fingers. (Some children may have trouble with this one, but encourage everyone to try.)
- Pat your legs.
- Clap your hands, and stomp your feet.

As you point to different children, encourage others to continue the storm noises. When everyone has had a turn to share, lead children in calming the storm by reversing the sequence. Then ask:

- **What do you do when you're afraid?** (Pray; hold my teddy bear; talk to my parents.)
- **Can Jesus make your fears go away? Why?** (Yes, because he's bigger than what I'm afraid of; yes, because he can do anything.)

Say: **We're learning that Jesus is with us all the time—even when we're lonely or afraid. Let's sing the song we learned last week to remind us of Jesus, our forever friend. As we sing, sit shoulder-to-shoulder with your neighbors, and move from side to side with the music. That will help us remember that Jesus is with all of us!**

Lead children in singing “I Am With You Always” (Matthew 28:20b) (track 20) to the tune of “Row, Row, Row Your Boat” along with the CD.

**Sing**

“I am with you always,”
Said Lord Jesus.
While we work,
And while we play,
He is with us.

“I am with you always,”
Said Lord Jesus.
During the night
And during the day,
He is with us.

Thank you Lord,
For being here.
Hallelujah!
Thank you, Lord,
For staying near.
Hallelujah!
Say: **Jesus is with us when we're afraid.** He wants to comfort and love us through all the storms in our lives. What kind of face do you make when you're feeling afraid? Let's all make a scared face. Pause for a moment, and then say: Wow! I think we need Jesus to make us feel better. We'll do that again, but this time, when I say our Bible verse, let's change our scared faces to happy faces. Ready?

Have children say the Bible verse, *Matthew 28:20b,* with you: **Jesus said,** "I am with you always." Lead the children in making happy faces, and then pray: Dear Lord, thank you for sending Jesus to be with us even through the storms in our lives. We don't need to be afraid when Jesus is near. Thank you. In Jesus' name, amen.

Say: We can comfort our friends, too. Let's share our stormy story with our friend Pockets.

## Closing

### Fear Not, Pockets!

**SUPPLIES:** none

Bring out Pockets the Kangaroo, and go through the following puppet script. When you finish, put Pockets away and out of sight. Have the children sit in a circle.

(Pockets is lying down, snoring softly.)

**Teacher:** (Whispers.) Pockets is asleep! Let’s gently wake her up. (Gently shakes Pockets and whispers.) Pockets! Pockets!

**Pockets:** (Groggy.) Huh? What? Oh, I must have fallen asleep. (Yawns.)

**Teacher:** Why are you so tired this morning? You’re usually bouncing with energy.

**Pockets:** (Yawns.) I didn’t sleep very well last night. My night light broke, and I was scared of the dark.

**Teacher:** Pockets, you know your room is safe.

**Pockets:** I know, but when it’s all dark, I imagine that three-headed monsters with long, hairy fingers and bad breath live under my bed. That’s scary! I also imagine that bats are hanging from my ceiling, and that…

**Teacher:** You certainly have an active imagination! It’s OK to be afraid. We’re all scared sometimes. But today we learned that **Jesus is with us when we’re afraid.** He was with his special friends when they were afraid, too. Children, can you tell Pockets what happened to the disciples? (Have children tell Pockets about Jesus calming the storm.)
Lesson 12

**SUPPLIES:** wastebasket, scrap paper, crayons, snack from Option 3

**BIBLE POINT**

**Goodbye, Fears!**

**SUPPLIES:** wastebasket, scrap paper, crayons, snack from Option 3

Form a circle and say: *Pockets might sleep better tonight, knowing that Jesus is with her—even in the dark. Jesus will help take away your fears, too. I’m going to pass out some paper and give you one minute to draw a picture of something that scares you.* Distribute crayons and scrap sheets of office paper. After one minute, have children each tell a partner what they drew.

Then say: *We’ll all be scared sometimes. But now we know that Jesus is with us when we’re afraid. You can call on Jesus, just as his disciples did, and Jesus will help your fears go away. Let’s get rid of these scary things right now.*

Place a wastebasket in the middle of the circle. Say: *We’ll take turns tossing our papers in the wastebasket and saying, “Jesus is with me when I’m afraid.” I’ll go first.* When children have tossed all their “fears,” lead them in a prayer similar to this one: *Dear God, thank you for watching over us and loving us all the time. Thank you for Jesus who knows our fears and is with us when we’re afraid. Help us call on him whenever we’re scared. In Jesus’ name, amen.*

If children made the Wonderful Waves snack from Option 3, let them enjoy the snack now.

**Growing closer to Jesus extends beyond the classroom.**

Photocopy the “Today I Learned…” handout (at the end of this lesson) for this week, and send it home with your children. Encourage parents to use the handout to plan meaningful family activities to reinforce this week’s topic.
Lively Learning: Boat Races

Take children to an area with a slippery tile floor. Form two groups, and have each group make a boat at one end of the room. Have children sit on the floor in a line with their legs outstretched and their hands on the shoulders of the person in front of them. On your signal, have the boats race by scooting to the other side of the room. Be sure children work together to help their “boats” get to “shore.” Remind children that Jesus’ friends were scared in their boat, but Jesus calmed their fears.

Make to Take: Frothy-Wave Pictures

Have children roll up their sleeves, put on paint shirts or paper-bag smocks, and gather around a table. Place a fist-sized dollop of shaving cream on the table in front of each child. Add two drops of blue food coloring to the shaving cream, and instruct children to mix the foam with their hands. Encourage children to finger-paint pictures of the stormy lake that Jesus and his friends were on. When children have finished their pictures, demonstrate how to place a sheet of heavy paper on top of the design and gently rub over it. Then lift the paper to show the transferred picture.

Treat to Eat: Chip Ships

Have children work together to spread a layer of tortilla chip “ships” on a microwavable plate. Allow children to “storm” the ships with grated cheddar cheese. Microwave the ships for a few seconds, or until the cheese melts, and then allow children to dip their ships in a “sea” of mild salsa. If you don’t have access to a microwave, children will still enjoy the unmelted cheese.

Story Picture: Jesus Calms the Storm

Give each child a “Today I Learned…” handout. Have children color the picture with crayons and then paint the lake with watercolor paints. As they work, remind children that Jesus is with us when we’re afraid.
Today your child learned that Jesus is with us when we’re afraid. Children heard about Jesus calming a storm when his disciples were afraid. They discovered that they can call on Jesus to help them, too.

**Verse to Learn**

“I am with you always” (Matthew 28:20b).

**Ask Me...**

- Why were Jesus’ friends afraid?
- When are you afraid?
- How can our family remember that Jesus is with us when we’re afraid?

**Family Fun**

- Have family members make a Fear-Fighters Feast to remember that Jesus calmed the storm. Hollow out half a loaf of French bread, and have family members tell about things that make them afraid. Then fill the bread shells with tuna salad, and share how Jesus helps us when we’re afraid. As you enjoy your tuna “boat” sandwiches, remember that Jesus calmed his disciples’ fears when he stillled the storm.

**Jesus Calms the Storm (Matthew 8:23-27)**