

BIG IDEA

Wow!
Jesus has the power to calm our fears.

BIBLE

Jesus Calms the Storm:
Luke 8:22–25; Psalm 50:1–6

LARGE GROUP TIME

Wow! Welcome back. Are you ready to continue exploring the power of God through STEM, or science, technology, engineering, and math? STEM is everywhere you look, especially in the outrageous inventions that were designed to help humans do all sorts of things. There is someone who is way more powerful and helpful than anything we can engineer!

WHAT? *What are we talking about today?*

ACTIVITY | Inventions For Fear

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Show the kids various inventions that were developed to combat common fears, and ask kids to call out what fear they think each invention matches. You'll need photographs or props of inventions, such as a [nightlight](#) (fear of the dark), [bug spray](#) (fear of bugs), [Ava the Elephant](#) medicine dispenser (fear of taking medicine), [noise-canceling headphones](#) (fear of loud noises), or [security systems](#) (fear of unknown danger).
 - ✂ **PRETEEN HACK:** Assign preteens a few phobias from a list like [this one](#) and have them come up with their own inventions to help people suffering from phobias like dendrophobia (fear of trees), somniphobia (fear of sleep), or theatrophobia (fear of theaters).
- Did you know that the scientific name for fear is “phobia”? When you’re afraid of heights, it’s called “acrophobia,” and when you’re afraid of being in tight, crowded spaces, it’s called “claustrophobia.” There are lots of inventions out there that were made to help people who have different phobias.
- **Can you guess what fear each of these inventions was designed to help?**
- **What fear do you have that you could use an invention for?**
- We'll learn today that no matter what we're afraid of, there's someone who can calm our fears!

ACTIVITY | Wind-Powered Racers

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Watch a video like [this](#), and invite kids to work in teams to build and race a wind-powered vehicle that can reach the finish line first. You'll need materials like cardboard, construction paper or card stock, wooden skewers, plastic straws, plastic bottle caps, tape, scissors, hot glue or glue sticks, handheld fans, popsicle sticks, and corks. Mark a start and finish line about two feet apart using painter's tape. The first team to power their vehicle across the finish line is the winner! For more information on how to legally use copyrighted material for educational purposes, [read this!](#)
 - ✂ **ACCESSIBILITY HACK:** You can create a simpler version of this activity by having kids push around a cup using balloons or battery-operated fans.

- **How did your vehicle get to where it needed to go? What powered your vehicle?** *Wind!*
- Wind is so powerful! It can cause storms and move just about anything. This experiment helped us see what it would be like to harness the power of wind!
- Did you know there's someone that's even more powerful than the wind? Let's find out more!

QUESTION | "What makes our fears go away?"

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *You'll need a large beaker or a similar container, water, [dissolving paper](#), and pens or pencils. Pass out small pieces of dissolving paper and have kids write their fears on them. Then, have them come up and drop their paper into the beaker of water, where they will disappear.*
- **The paper with your fear written on it disappeared, but did your fear go away, too? Do you feel calmer?** *Not necessarily, right?*
- There are many ways we can deal with our fears, but the first thing we can do is turn to the one who can calm our fears for sure!

SO WHAT? *Why does it matter to God and to us?*

SCRIPTURE | Luke 8:22–25 (Jesus Calms the Storm)

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Read the passage or tell the Bible story using the provided script below. Dress up (or ask another volunteer) as a quirky researcher named "Scientist Sam" who says "Wow!" a lot. Use costumes and props from the previous week.*
 - *For the experiment portion, you'll need a cylinder or tall glass of warm water, an additional thermos of warm water, dish soap, and a small piece of dry ice. Protect your surfaces from potential spills. Note: Wear gloves when handling dry ice as it can burn skin. The dry ice should only be handled by the grownup showing the experiment. Watch a video [this](#) to familiarize yourself with the experiment beforehand.*
- Wow! Hello again, friends! If we haven't met, my name is Scientist Sam, and I cannot wait to share with you all the biggest, strongest, greatest power I have ever known, inside or outside of a lab.
- **Any guesses about what power I'm talking about?** *The power of Jesus!*
- Wow! That's right! Let's examine another example of how Jesus made his friends go "wow" at his great power.
- **Let's read Luke 8:22–25 together.**
 - Wow! Imagine being on a boat out in the middle of the sea. **Would any of you be afraid to ride in a boat?** I understand! That can be a really scary thing to do. Then add to that a huge storm — Jesus and the disciples were on this boat in the middle of the sea when a storm came out of nowhere, tossing the boat. It was filling up with water and looked like it could flip over and sink! Wow — but like a bad wow! That sounds super scary!
- **But what was Jesus doing?** *Sleeping.*
 - Jesus was asleep while everyone else was scrambling on deck, terrified by the storm. They must have felt like they didn't have any control over it and they didn't know what to do. When they finally woke up Jesus, he stayed calm and full of peace. Wow! Everyone else was so afraid of that storm!
 - Jesus got up and told the wind and the sea to calm down. And guess what? They stopped! Jesus is so powerful that he could stop a giant storm with just his words! Wow!
 - Then, Jesus asked his friends, "Where is your faith?" They had forgotten whom they were with — Jesus, who has power over everything! Jesus was with them on the boat, but their fear got in the way of their faith.

- Speaking of fears, I had a scary moment in my lab one day. I was doing my latest experiment when suddenly, something went wrong.
 - (Carefully place the dry ice into the soapy water using gloves or tongs.)
 - I was scared I would blow up my lab! I'm not Jesus, so I couldn't just tell the foaming mess to calm down, but I did the next best thing – I calmed down and prayed for God to help me see the solution.
 - (Pour hot water quickly to allow the rest of the dry ice to disappear.)
- Wow! It worked! This reminds me of how Jesus has the power to do anything, like helping us when we are afraid! Wow!

BIG IDEA | Wow! Jesus has the power to calm our fears.

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Show a video like [this](#) on creating a simple close-circuit experiment. Then do a demonstration or have kids work in pairs to create a simple close-circuit experiment. Each pair will need a D-battery, a small light bulb and holder, and insulated wires, which you may want to strip the ends of in advance. You can also purchase kits like [these](#). Once everyone's light bulbs are lit, hold up to the light the piece of paper you've prepared ahead of time with the Big Idea written on it. For more information on how to legally use copyrighted material for educational purposes, [read this!](#)
- Electricity, light bulbs, nightlights, and other marvelous inventions help us cope when it's dark, which many of us are afraid of. The instant the light turns on, we are calmer because we see there's nothing to be afraid of. That's what trusting Jesus is like! And now that the lights are on, we can read the Big Idea!
- Let's say our Big Idea together: **Wow! Jesus has the power to calm our fears.**

ACTIVITY | Rube Goldberg Machine

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Have kids work in groups of four or five to create their own Rube Goldberg machine that creates a chain reaction, ending with knocking over a domino tile with the word "fear" written on it. You'll need supplies like aluminum foil, cardboard tubes, domino tiles, cereal boxes, cups, funnels, marbles, string, magnetic tiles, toy cars, buckets, or anything else you might want to provide. As an example, show a video like [this](#) on creating a Rube Goldberg device. For more information on how to legally use copyrighted material for educational purposes, [read this!](#)
 - ✂ **ACCESSIBILITY HACK:** Instead of building a contraption using random materials, have them work on lining up dominoes or Jenga tiles on their short edges and knock them over in sequence.
- **Have you ever heard of a Rube Goldberg device?** It's a wacky but cool contraption that people build in order to complete a certain task. Your task was to try and create a device that would do away with our fears. It took some work to knock over that "fear," right?
- Facing fears in real life can feel that way, too. Sometimes, it's a fear that we need to work on through practice, like speaking in front of people. Other times, it's a fear that may require help from a doctor or a counselor.
- And while God certainly works through all of these ways, don't forget to talk to God about your fears because, as you know, **wow! Jesus has the power to calm our fears.**

OBJECT LESSON | When Fear Comes Swinging

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** For this object lesson, you'll need a tennis ball, string, and duct tape or something on the ceiling to tie the string. Tie a string around the tennis ball and hang the other end from the ceiling, tucked in between ceiling tiles or duct-taped. The ball should be two to three feet from the floor, leaving enough room to allow the ball to swing. Invite a kid to volunteer for this demonstration and have the kid stand about two feet away from the ball. Pull back the ball on the string until it's just under the volunteer's chin.

- Jesus has the power to calm our fears, but here's the thing — having faith that Jesus can do what he says he can do doesn't mean you won't be afraid anymore . . . but it does mean that when you are afraid, you know what to do and who to call on!
- Now, I'm going to let go of this ball, and it's going to swing the other way because of gravity before it swings back toward you. I can explain the physics behind this and assure you that the friction in the air will cause the ball to slow down so you won't get hurt. **But the question is, do you believe me?** Okay, let's see how still you can stand!
 - *(Release the ball and let it swing without adding any additional force. The ball will first swing away from the volunteers face, then swing back towards it without hitting it.)*
- **Were you afraid the ball was going to hit you? Was it difficult to stand firm while the ball was flying toward your face?**
- Fear can make you feel out of control and make it hard to stand firm in your faith. Even when we know perfectly well that Jesus has the power to calm our fears, it's human nature to be afraid.
- That's exactly what happened to the disciples while they were on the boat with Jesus himself. The next time you feel afraid, remember this story and call on Jesus. **Wow! Jesus has the power to calm our fears.**

SCRIPTURE | Psalm 50:1–6

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Create slides in Google Slides or PowerPoint with this Bible passage, in the translation of your choice, using a chalkboard template like [this](#). Have kids read the passage together or have someone read it for the group.
- Wow! The same God who commands all of the heavens and all of the earth, who tells the sun when it should rise and when it should set, is the very same God who cares about what you and I care about. In addition to overseeing the entire universe, God sees you and me.
- In verse 6, we're reminded that God is for justice. The word "justice" means to make right what is wrong. God is all about defending people who feel powerless and paralyzed by fear. Just knowing that helps me feel calm when I'm afraid.
- This psalm says that God has the power to do anything — like calming storms — but also, **wow! Jesus has the power to calm our fears . . .** and he cares enough to do that for us!

VIDEO | Wow!, Episode 2

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Play this week's episode of [Press Play](#).

NOW WHAT? What does God want us to do about it?

REFLECTION | Thought Experiments

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Have kids add to the lab notebooks they created and started last week. Have kids draw and write as they think about the prompts given.
- It's time for more thought experiments related to what we've been talking about today. Fill up your notebook with notes and doodles as you think about these things.
- The definition of fear is the feeling you get when you believe something is dangerous or might hurt you.
 - **What are some things that cause that feeling in you?**
 - **How might you ask Jesus to calm your fears?**
 - **Draw a picture of yourself feeling calm!**

RESPONSE | Pinwheel Promises

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Give each kid a piece of origami paper. Have them write a coping mechanism they have or want to try on the paper. Then have them fold their paper into a pinwheel (like [this](#)). They can use a push pin to attach the sail of the pinwheel to the eraser of a pencil. Create labels with the Big Idea printed on them or have them write it on the pencil using fine permanent markers.
 - ✂ **PRETEEN HACK:** Some preteens might be reticent to talk about their current fears among their peers. In this instance, you can have kids open up about fears they had when they were much younger and have them reflect on the things that helped them feel calm in those situations.
 - ✂ **ACCESSIBILITY HACK:** You can create these pinwheels ahead of time that say the Big Ideas on them. Have kids blow on their pinwheels or turn them with their hands as they say the Big Idea with you. If they are willing to share, talk about what they do when they're afraid, and go over some words they could pray.
- Inventions are never random. Sometimes they're discovered by accident after someone starts trying to fix a specific problem. That's how certain devices that help people manage some fears were invented, like medicine dispensers and noise-canceling headphones.
- But those aren't the only ways we can handle fear. We can develop strategies called "coping mechanisms" that help bring our fears under control. It can be as simple as breathing, clutching something that makes you feel safe, or turning to someone you trust whom God put into your life.
- **What are some habits that come up whenever you face fear? Do you have a go-to coping mechanism for whenever you feel afraid?**
- Maybe it's time to develop one by entrusting your fears to Jesus. One way to start is by saying out loud, **"Wow! Jesus has the power to calm our fears."** As you watch your pinwheels spin in the wind, remember that Jesus has power to calm the wind, the seas, and your fears!

MEMORY VERSE | 1 Chronicles 29:12b (NIV)

- **"In your hands are strength and power to exalt and give strength to all."**
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Have kids form a line and become human Rube Goldberg machines, passing a ball from one person to the next in some creative way like rolling it down their arms, lying down on the ground and passing it with their feet, or bouncing it off their heads. As the ball is handed off from one person to the next, everyone has to say one word of the memory verse in sequence. See how creatively they can pass the ball while they finish reciting the verse together.
 - ✂ **PRETEEN HACK:** Write out the words of the memory verse on separate pieces of paper. Pass one out to each kid. Have them silently move around the room and try to line up in order. Once they are lined up, have each person say their word aloud to see if they were able to find the correct order.

PRAYER

- Wow, God, you are powerful! The wind, the storms, and all of creation are at your command, yet you care about us most of all. Thank you for your power that calms our fears. Help me to remember you are with me whenever I am afraid. Amen.

SMALL GROUP TIME

DISCUSSION

● SCRIPTURE QUESTIONS

- **What was Jesus doing when the storm came?** *Sleeping.*
- **How did Jesus calm the storm?** *He spoke to it, rebuking the wind and sea.*
- **What did Jesus say to his disciples afterwards? What do you think he meant by that?** *He asked them where their faith was. They might have let their fear cause them to forget that Jesus was with them or what Jesus can do.*
- **Read Psalm 50:1. How does this psalm remind you of today's Bible story?** *Jesus spoke to the storm because he can command all of nature.*

● APPLICATION QUESTIONS

- **Whenever you were afraid, what would you do in response to your fear?**
- **Now that we know Jesus has the power to calm our fears, what can we do when we face our fears?**
- **How can you help others when they are feeling afraid?**

ACTIVITY | Catapults of Courage

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Challenge kids to come up with a creative and functional catapult for a crumpled piece of paper that they wrote the word "fear" on. You'll need jumbo craft sticks, rubber bands, spoons, and paper cups. Check out instructions like [this](#) for examples of how to create a catapult.*
 - ✂ **ACCESSIBILITY HACK:** *This series contains a lot of hands-on experiments that require fine motor skills. To include kids for whom that might pose a challenge, prepare worked examples or partially finished projects for kids to work on so they can fully participate in the results.*
- Even though your contraptions were spectacular, our real-life fears may not be catapulted out of our lives so easily. In those situations, what can we do? Turn to Jesus! **Wow! Jesus has the power to calm our fears.** It never stops being true, and it never stops being amazing!