

WEEK 3 LESSON GUIDE

Miracles

BIG IDEA

Jesus knows what we need.

BIBLE

The Healing at the Pool:

John 5:1–9a; Jeremiah 17:7–10

ABOUT THIS WEEK

There are so many different sea creatures in the world, and to take care of them, we have to know what each one of them needs. This week, we'll hear about the miracle of Jesus healing a man who couldn't walk. The man thought the water would heal him, but Jesus had something different in mind because

Jesus knows what we need.

LARGE GROUP TIME

We've been having a blast exploring Jesus' amazing miracles, and doesn't it remind us of how vast and creative God is, especially when we think about the ocean? Imagine if we could dive deep into the sea with scuba gear and proper training to discover even more.

But you know what? Today, we're diving into a different kind of adventure—we're plunging into another incredible Bible story about a miracle Jesus did. Get ready to explore this amazing story with us!

WHAT? *What are we talking about today?*

ACTIVITY | Float To The Finish Line

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *For this activity, you will need small inflated swim tubes (one per team) and tape to mark the start and finish lines. Create as many teams as you'd like. Each team member will take turns wearing the tube around their waist and run to the finish line and then roll the tube back to the next player to hand it off. They're not allowed to let it roll freely, they must always be in contact with the tube. The first team to get all players to the other side and back wins.*
 - ✂ **PRETEEN HACK:** *Level up the challenge for this activity by making it into an obstacle course with things to jump over, run around, or even crawl under. When they roll the tube back, have them weave around the obstacles.*
 - ✂ **ACCESSIBILITY HACK:** *Instead of rolling the swim tube back to the next player, have them lay the tube down and then use their hands to slide it back along the floor. Keep the rule of always being in contact with the tube if you like!*
- Taking care of sea creatures doesn't only happen inside an air-conditioned aquarium. A lot of the work requires going out into the ocean to study sea life and to understand what each animal needs to make it out in the big blue. To do that, we need to be able to swim.

- Today, we're going to be talking all about needs. More importantly, about the one who always knows what we need.

ACTIVITY | Gone Fishing

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *For this activity, prepare as many tubs for as many contestants as you want with water and several objects (the same in each tub). You may also want a tarp to protect your floor and some paper towels on hand for kids to dry their hands. The objects can be whatever you have on hand, but they must be the same in each bucket. Think LEGOs, a bouncy ball, a shoelace, a paper clip, a small stone, a penny, and more. Have each contestant wear a blindfold and fish out the item you call out. The first person to hold the item up wins. You can have a new contestant for the next round or keep going with the ones who volunteered. To level it up and connect with today's Bible story, try having kids fish out the item using their toes.*
- It must have been challenging to fish for an object when you could not use the other sense you're used to.
What might you have needed to help you do this challenge more quickly?
- In today's Bible story, we meet a man who desperately needed something, but nobody was able to offer it to him ... until Jesus!

QUESTION | Sea Creature Alter Ego

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Ask the following questions. You can have every kid shout their answer but then ask a few kids to share their answers with everyone. Comment briefly on their answers—and have fun with this!*
- **If you could be any ocean animal, what would you choose and why?**
- **Which ability of this animal do you find the most fascinating?**
- The man in today's Bible story probably would have loved to have been any of these animals because he really wanted to get into a body of water but couldn't. But Jesus shows up to give the man what he really needs.

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

SCRIPTURE | John 5:1–9a (The Healing at the Pool)

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Like in previous weeks, talk to kids as a marine biologist at an aquarium, sharing fun ocean tidbits and connecting them to the Bible story. Your diving gear could include wearing all black (sweats are okay), goggles, a snorkel, and flippers. Optional: Have a kiddie pool on the stage or a large tub with or without water to be your "Bethesda Pool."*
- Hello, Miraculous Marine Institute visitors! So glad you're back to learn more about the miracles of ocean life. One of our main goals here is ocean conservation: we want to help people take better care of our oceans by being more careful about what we do with our waste. You don't even know the number of poor sea creatures that we've rescued from mounds of trash floating in the ocean that we've rehabilitated and released back to their homes!
- Thinking about these helpless animals reminds me of a Bible story about a man who also needed someone to take care of him.
- **Let's read John 5: 1–3.**
 - When Jesus walked the earth over 2,000 years ago, things were quite different for people with disabilities. For example, if you couldn't use your legs to walk like a typical person, that almost always meant you couldn't work. You couldn't earn a living. You would need to be taken care of by family, or your only option would be to ask people on the street for money and food.
 - But in the town of Jerusalem, there was a pool of water called Bethesda. It was a very special pool for the people. This water was believed to have healing powers, but as the rumor went, it could

only heal you when the waters “stirred.” So you needed to get into the pool at the exact right time.

- Medicine in those days wasn’t what it is now, so people relied on places like this to find healing or relief. But not everyone could even get into the pool, let alone get the healing they thought this water provided.
- **Let’s keep reading John 5:4–7.**
 - Could you imagine spending 38 years at the side of a pool of water, waiting to be healed? That’s a really, really, really long time.
 - So when Jesus asked the man if he wanted to get well, he *wanted to*. But with each passing year, the chances of that seemed less and less likely. The man thought he needed someone to help him into the pool. But Jesus knew what he really needed.
- **Let’s finish up our reading in John 5:8–9.**
 - Jesus told him to get up and pick up his mat, and without hesitation, without question, without an argument or discussion, he followed Jesus. He picked up his mat and walked. Just like that! That is *miraculous*.
 - This man, who hadn’t been able to walk for 38 years, could finally walk. It wasn’t because of what he thought he needed. He thought he needed the water to heal him. But it wasn’t. What he needed was Jesus.
- Alright, it’s time for me to go feed the sea otters ... it’s always a blast watching them crack open shells against the rocks. They sure know how to get to what they need.

BIG IDEA | Jesus knows what we need.

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *You will need five plastic clam shells ([like these](#)) and ping pong balls to be the pearls. You can secure the clams closed with tape or rubber bands. You can also use clamshell to-go containers ([like these](#)) instead. Write one word from the Big Idea with a permanent marker on each “pearl.” Place the clams at the bottom of a large clear plastic tote container and invite a few kids to come up and dig for the clams, taking the pearls out of the clams. Level it up by lining the bottom of the container with sand and adding water (you will use this for the Big Idea every week this month). Once all the “pearls” are found, put them in order and say the Big Idea together.*
- Did you know that pearls are the only gemstone to come from a living creature? That’s what makes them so special. Just like today’s Big Idea.
- **Jesus knows what we need.**

VIDEO | A Clip About The Special Olympics

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Show [this video](#) that talks about the history of the Special Olympics. If you are able, bring in a person from your ministry who is disabled. Have them share their experiences with everyday tasks and mobility. If allowed, have the kids ask a few questions to understand better someone who does things differently than they do. For more information on how to legally use copyrighted material for educational purposes, [read this!](#)*
- If you’ve never seen the Special Olympics, it’s incredible. Kids and adults who have physical and intellectual disabilities compete in sports at an Olympic level. They are all amazing athletes. That’s because a lot has happened with technology since today’s Bible story happened.
- Check out all the ways these athletes have their needs met:
 - Ramps give access to all.
 - Cars can be built so someone can drive them with hand controls instead of foot pedals.
 - Bikes can be pedaled with your arms instead of your legs.
- What a way for so many more people to be included and loved. God helped people develop creative solutions to ensure everyone can be valued, celebrated, and cared for.
- Isn’t that *miraculous*? **Jesus knows what we need**, every single one of us!

ACTIVITY | What Do You Need?

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** For this activity, have kids seated in a circle with one person starting in the middle. Have them go to someone in the circle and ask, "What do you need?" If they answer, "Nothing," then the person on either side of that person has to switch seats while the person in the middle tries to take one of their empty seats. They can also answer with something they need (pizza, video games, family, pet, sleep, music, sunny weather), and everyone who agrees with that statement must get up and swap seats. The person without a seat is the new question-asker.
 - ✂ **PRETEEN HACK:** Show [this video](#) of a whale protecting a diver from a shark. Talk about how, even though the diver wanted to go in one direction, the whale knew that the diver needed to go in a different direction, away from the scary shark. Relate this to the man in the Bible story and how Jesus knew exactly what that man needed. For more information on how to legally use copyrighted material for educational purposes, [read this!](#)
- We usually say "I need" to a lot of things that we could probably live without. When we talk about needs, we mean the things that we require to survive.
 - **What are some things you want but you say you need?**
 - **What are some things we absolutely need?**
- Jesus knew that the man in today's Bible story needed to walk. But he needed more than that. He needed to reenter society and connect with other people. He needed to find a way to survive. Most importantly, he needed to know Jesus. By telling him to pick up his mat and walk, Jesus met all of his needs.
- Jesus doesn't need to ask us, "What do you need?" because he already knows. **Jesus knows what we need.**

SCRIPTURE | Jeremiah 17:7–8

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Read this passage or invite a volunteer to read.
- This scripture reminds us that we can trust God—and Jesus—with our needs. Trust and confidence in God is like a tree planted by water. Trees get all of the nutrients they need through their roots. A tree does not worry where these nutrients will come from because it knows it will always have what it needs, no matter what. These things are not coming from something that can be seen around them but from what's holding them strongly in place.
- When we follow Jesus and turn to Jesus whenever we are in need, we can stop worrying about the things we need. I mean, we probably will worry because it's such a natural thing to do, but when we do, we can stop worrying when we remember that **Jesus knows what we need.**

VIDEO | Miraculous, Episode 3

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

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

REFLECTION | Big Idea Deep Dive

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Play some ocean sounds like [this](#), as you discuss the Big Idea with kids and have them reflect on the prompts given below. For more information on how to legally use copyrighted material for educational purposes, [read this!](#)
 - ✂ **PRETEEN HACK:** Remind preteens that, in this week's Bible story, even though Jesus met the man's physical needs, Jesus knew the man's spiritual needs were more important. What are some specific spiritual needs they can identify for themselves? Perhaps they need to be introduced to Jesus or need prayer. Maybe they need help understanding a Bible passage they read at home or need help figuring out how to share Jesus and their story with someone. You

may see a big range of needs depending on where they are already in their relationship with God.

- Let's dive deeper into what we learned today.
- **What part of today's Bible story is the most memorable to you? Why?**
- Our Big Idea for today is **Jesus knows what we need**. But do we know what we need? Sometimes, we think we do, but it ends up being something we don't really need at all.
- **Think about the following scenarios. Complete each blank with the word "want" or "need." Why did you choose the way you did?**
 - **My sibling broke my Switch, and now I can't play my video games. I ____ a new Switch.**
 - **It's 110°F (or 43°C) outside, and I'm waiting for the school bus in the sun. I _____ some water.**
 - **My stomach is growling, and lunch is 45 minutes away! I _____ a bag of chips.**
 - **It's 10 AM on a Saturday morning. I'm in bed, and everyone in the house is loud and telling me to get up. I _____ to sleep.**
- Sometimes, what we want and need can be the same thing. But sometimes, what we want is not what we need. But Jesus always knows the difference and leads us to the things we need to survive and thrive.
 - **When was a time when Jesus helped you, and you didn't even realize you needed help?**
 - **How is Jesus giving you what you need right now?**

RESPONSE | Mural Of Miracles

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Add to the mural you started in Week 1 using the [printable](#) provided. If you're in a mobile space, you can roll up the paper and unpack it again next week. You may choose to show a video of emperor penguins (like [this one](#)) before kids respond and share. For more information on how to legally use copyrighted material for educational purposes, [read this!](#)
 - ✂ **ACCESSIBILITY HACK:** This week is a great opportunity to normalize disabilities for kids. Show [this video](#) of the incredible sport of wheelchair tennis or something similar, not to discuss their challenges but to show the diversity of people and careers. For more information on how to legally use copyrighted material for educational purposes, [read this!](#)
- **Did you know that emperor penguins are incredibly social animals who sacrifice much to protect their families bravely?** Females are responsible for laying the eggs, and the males protect and incubate them. They also take turns hunting for food to provide everything their baby penguins need. What a marine miracle!
- **On your penguin handout, answer the following questions:**
 - **What is a need you have in your own life?**
 - **What is a need you see in the world around you?**
 - **What is a need someone you know might have that you can do something about right now?**
- Add your penguin to the mural to remember **Jesus knows what we need**. Why don't we pray together for our needs right now?

MEMORY VERSE | Psalm 77:14 (NIV)

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Learn the memory verse together using any combination of the resources provided: [memory verse coloring page](#), [sign language motions](#), or choose from [this list](#) of our favorite memorization techniques!
- **"You are the God who performs miracles; you display your power among the peoples."**

PRAYER

- Dear God, you are the God of miracles! Thank you for knowing what we need and giving us even more than that. We know we can trust you to take care of all of our needs. Help us to see the needs of others and how we can help them with their needs. Amen.

SMALL GROUP TIME

DISCUSSION

● SCRIPTURE QUESTIONS

- **Where did today's story take place?** *In Jerusalem, at a pool called Bethesda.*
- **What did the man think he needed?** *The man thought he needed to enter the water of the pool once it was stirred up. He believed this was the only way he could be healed.*
- **How did Jesus give the man what he really needed?** *Jesus helped him walk after not being about to for many years. But more than the miraculous healing, the man got to meet Jesus!*
- **Read Jeremiah 17:7–8. What does this verse say happens, or what does it look like when you trust in God?** *We will be like a tree planted by water that doesn't fear the heat or worry during drought. When we trust in God, God takes care of our needs.*

● APPLICATION QUESTIONS

- **What is a need you can ask Jesus for today?**
- **Who is someone in need you can pray for or help this week?**
- **Can you think of a time you or someone you know got what was needed in a miraculous way? Can you think of another story from the Bible where something similar happened?**

ACTIVITY | Up From The Mat

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *For this activity, have kids color in the [printable](#) and cut out the pieces. Have them attach brass fasteners where indicated to adjust the legs from sitting to standing positions. Give each kid a small rectangular piece of fabric or felt to act as the man's "mat" that he can sit on. Kids can roll it up when he's standing and insert it into the opening in his arms. See a worked example [here](#).*
 - ✂ **ACCESSIBILITY HACK:** *Have kids make a Bethesda rock pool craft by using glue dots, or hot glue, to adhere small rocks to the edge of a [blue plate](#).*
- The man in today's Bible story started out beside a pool thinking all he needed was his mat and someone to get him into the water. But when he met Jesus, he learned that everything he needed could be found in Jesus!
- **Jesus knows what we need** and provides for us!