ACTIVATE: God’s Power

**MS & HS CURRICULUM**

**Connect Groups**

 **June 27, 2021**

**Lesson 38:** He’s Over It All

**What we want students to learn:** That Jesus exercises His power for our good.

**What we want students to do with what they’ve learned:** To flesh out how Christ’s power impacts their own personal lives.

**Scripture Focus:** Mark 4:35-41; Mark 2:1-12

**Overview:** So, God can do anything and everything He wants. Are we talking just big-picture things or specifics that have to do with our own personal lives? As we look through the Gospels, we see that Jesus does both, and both have to do with our own personal lives. He has power over the natural and spiritual world and is in control of it all. As you go through this lesson, you'll help students see how much peace and comfort they can draw from this truth. In lesson 50 you showed students that God has the power to do everything He pleases. In this lesson, you'll help them see how Jesus embodies that power and uses it for our good.

**Bible Background**

The *Bible Background* is designed to help you provide some context for the Scripture you’ll be studying. *The Details* gives you background info for each book. *The Setting* informs you of what’s happening in and around the passage. *The Main Point* gives you an overview of how the passage will be used in the lesson.

* ***What do we mean by “context”?*** In every **YM360** Bible Study lesson, you’ll notice we make a point to encourage you to provide the context for the passages you study. By “context” we mean at the very least helping students know *who* wrote the book, *when* it was written, and *why* it was written.

***What’s the big deal?*** When we teach the Bible without giving context, students don’t get a “big picture” understanding of the story of the Bible. But this view is vital to grasping the story of God’s plan of redemption for humankind. As you teach, use the *Bible Background* to help summarize the context.

**The Details**

Matthew

* **Author:**Matthew, a former tax collector, was a disciple of Jesus and a firsthand witness to the stories he relates in his Gospel.
* **Timeframe:** Most people hold to Matthew’s Gospel being written in the late 50’s or 60’s AD, though there are some who think it was written after the destruction of the Temple in 70 AD.
* **Purpose:** Matthew was writing to a primarily Jewish audience to convince them that Jesus was indeed the long-awaited Messiah. But he was probably aware of a Gentile audience, as his Gospel makes the case that the saving truth of Christ is for all nations.

Mark

* **Author:**The Gospel of Mark was written by its namesake. Mark, also known as John Mark, is believed to have received most of his information for his Gospel from Peter’s firsthand accounts.
* **Timeframe:** Mark is thought to have written his Gospel in the mid 50’s AD.
* **Purpose:** Mark was writing primarily for a non-Jewish audience. His Gospel explains Jewish customs to non-Jews in an effort to get them to see the big picture of Jesus’ identity.

**The Main Point**

You'll start by showing students the power of Christ through the Mark 4 passage. You'll help students understand that Jesus was beyond a good teacher, or a good person, as many people like to think about Him. You'll talk about the significance that Jesus, who lives in us, has power over the entire physical world. Then, you'll teach Mark 2:1-12 to show students that Jesus has power and authority over the spiritual world, as well. Jesus not only heals a man, but He also says that his sins are forgiven. Talk about the significance of Jesus having the power to do this.

Then, you’ll show students that Jesus' power and authority allow us to never be afraid. You'll do this using Mark 4:40-41. These are the last two verses of the Mark passage from the first point. Help students deal with why they can sometimes be afraid. Try and craft this part to get the students talking about their own lives, their worries, fears, etc.

**Lesson Plan**

The **Lesson Plan** contains three elements: An introductory activity called *The Lead In*; the Bible study section called *The Main Event*; an application-focused segment called *The Last Word.*

**The Lead In**

* **Goal:** To have students begin to think about Jesus’ power over all things, including their own lives.
* **Set Up:** You’ll need two sheets of paper, two pens, a dry-erase board, and a few different color dry-erase markers.

FIRST, divide your students into two teams.

THEN, explain that they’re going to have a little competition to see which team can list the most miracles performed by Jesus. Give them a short amount of time, like 30 seconds to a minute. Consider providing a prize for the winning group.

NEXT, after they’ve had time to brainstorm their miracles, have each team share their miracles. Have one student write down the miracles on the board. Again, if you want, award a prize to the group that came up with the most miracles.

THEN, as a group, go through the list of miracles and mark (with different colors) each miracle according to its kind. Your students may come up with their own categories, but, start with miracles over nature (walking on water, for example), physical healing, and maybe spiritual healing. (Feel free to identify more categories. But these three are pretty vital to the lesson.) Leave these miracles up on the board to reference later.

FINALLY, explain to the students that today’s lesson is about the power of Jesus over the natural world, the spiritual world, their world, and the world to come. Say something like:

* **In the last lesson, we learned that God is all-powerful. He is literally over all things. There is nothing He can't do. In this lesson, we're going to take a look to see how Jesus fits into this equation.**

**The Main Event**

* **Goal:**  To have students understand the Jesus has power over all things. He uses this power for their good.
* **Set Up:** None

FIRST, briefly review the last lesson. See if students can remember any of the key points from last week. Use the following bullet points to help:

* **God has power over all things and all circumstances. His power, unlike earthly power, is total.**
* **God exercises this power over creation, history, and our lives in love.**
* **God’s power includes His power to keep His promises. We will see this point illustrated even more as we see God’s promise to redeem His people and all of creation fulfilled in Jesus Christ.**

THEN, explain to the students that you're about to see that Jesus has the same power that God has. Explain that his is true two reasons: First, He was sent by God and thus exercises authority on His behalf. And, more importantly, Jesus is God. Explain to students that the goal of this lesson is to show students the nature and scope of Jesus' power.

NEXT, instruct students to turn to Mark 4 in their Bibles. As they’re doing so, consider providing a little context from the Bible Background. Then, read or have a student read Mark 4:35-39. Then, ask students to react to this. Ask what their reaction is when they read a story like this. Engage in discussion as you see fit. Then, ask:

* **Many non-believers are OK with the idea of Jesus as a good teacher, a good person, or even as a good example of how to live a good life. How does this story challenge these ideas about Jesus? Why does it explode those concepts as viable options for looking at Jesus?**
	+ *Answer:* The New Testament does not give us the option of viewing Jesus as merely a teacher or example. We have to do something with these stories in the New Testament that speak of Jesus’ power.
* **How would a story like this one enlarge, strengthen, and enhance someone’s view of Jesus?**
	+ *Answer:* Jesus couldn’t have just been a good person. Either these stories are false, or Jesus had power over nature. There really isn’t another option.
* **How are we like the disciples in this story? Have we ever asked Jesus if He even cares that we are in a storm? Where do these questions come from?**
	+ *Answer:* We often ask Jesus where He is or why He is doing nothing because we cannot understand or see the purpose or goal of His plans. We forget or choose to forget, that His thoughts are higher than our thoughts.
* **Do we ever expect Jesus to help us in our own efforts rather than letting Him use His power to do His will rather than ours?**
	+ *Answer:* It’s a constant temptation to expect Jesus to do our will like He is some sort of personal genie rather than the Lord of all creation who has power over the entire natural world as well as our lives.

Bring the truth of Jesus' power over the natural world home to how it can bring comfort to their lives. First, explain that Jesus calmed the storm with three simple words. This is incredible power! Have students imagine or remember a storm. Explain that even if they could gather all of the armies in the world or all earthly power, they could do nothing to stop a storm. Jesus did it with three words simply spoken. And creation obeyed in an instant. Say:

* **Jesus has power and authority over the natural world. Even if Jesus seems to be asleep in a storm in your life, call on Him. He will either calm the storm (as in this story) or get you through it. The same power He has over the natural world, He has in your life.**

THEN, read, or have a student read Mark 2:1-12. When you’ve finished, point out to the students that, just as in the last passage, Jesus address this man's need in an unexpected way. The paralyzed man came for physical healing, but Jesus first gave him spiritual healing. Explain that Jesus' power to heal the spiritual and the physical are on display in this passage. Then, ask:

* **What does it suggest that the friends of the paralyzed man lowered their friend from a roof into a crowded house?**
	+ *Answer:* They had faith that He would heal their friend physically but probably did not expect to heal Him spiritually. This story confronts again with the fact that Jesus ultimately came to earth to heal the soul.

Explain that Jesus healed the man physically to show that He has the power and authority to heal people spiritually. Jesus healed the man outwardly to show that He had that power to heal the man inwardly. Explain that we can sometimes neglect the importance of this spiritual healing. This story in Mark shows us that Jesus forgiving us of our sins is just as much of a miracle as telling a paralyzed man to walk.

Look back to the miracles listed on the whiteboard. Have students identify which ones refer to Jesus' miracles in the spiritual lives of people. (You may or may not have written any from this category.) Then, ask:

* **Why is it such a miracle that God saves us spiritually?**
	+ *Answer:* Because sin separated us from God. This can sound cliché because it is repeated over and over again in church circles. But because sin separated us from God, the only way to get back to Him is through a way He provides. Only God can save.
* **Reflect on the last time they stood in amazement of the miracle God worked in their life to save them from their sin. Why is this something we can sometimes overlook the longer we are Christ-followers?**
	+ Answers will vary.

NEXT, have a student turn back to Mark 4 and read verses 40-41. Ask:

* **Why do you think the disciples were afraid of this situation?**
	+ *Answer:* It seemed like Jesus was sleeping and not doing anything to meet their needs (granted, it did seem like a very urgent need for them at the time).
* **How would you feel in that situation?**
	+ Answers will vary.
* **Can you think of a metaphorical storm that you’ve had in your own life? Maybe it was a family crisis or time when you have been afraid. Did you stay in that fear or did you call out to Jesus? Did it ever seem like Jesus was sleeping in the middle of your storm?**
	+ Answers will vary. Allow students to express themselves as they will.

Talk about the relationship between faith and worry. Say something like:

* **When we call out to God in the midst of a storm we expect and assume that He has the power to get us out of it. Is it possible that if Jesus is powerful enough to get us out of the storm that He has some plan for us being in the storm? Storms in our lives don’t take God by surprise. He’s in control of all things and had a plan in all things. When it’s hard to understand what God is doing, we know we can trust His plan (even though it is above our understanding) because we have seen the character of God and know that He is good and loving.**

FINALLY, ask if any students have any comments or questions. Then, move on to The Last Word.

**The Last Word**

* **Goal:** To have students reflect on the hope and comfort the power of Jesus brings.
* **Set-Up:** A piece of paper for each student, pens or markers.

FIRST, give students 3-5 minutes to draw or write out a brief history of their faith journey. Have them include the basics of when they were saved, and any significant events like baptism, plus any high spiritual moments in their lives, whatever those may be. But, more importantly, have them include tough times in their life as well as the best times of their life. Give them several minutes to do this. This is primarily a time of drawing, writing, and reflection. They have discussed aspects of this throughout the lesson. This activity is meant to have them put it all together in one place.

THEN, after they’ve finished, ask them to think about how they saw Jesus work in power in their lives in each step of that journey. Maybe they can’t think of how He has done that off the top of their heads but encourage them to do so throughout the week. Be sure to have your own story ready to talk through and give examples from.

FINALLY, have them think about Jesus' faithfulness in their past and remind them that He will be faithful in the future to get them through the storms of their lives and to bring them to their eternal home where all will be made right. Jesus can do all of this, and we know He can do all of this because He has all the power!

Close in prayer.

* Don’t forget to distribute the devotions to your students this week. If you’re posting them on Instagram, or some other means of electronic distribution, make sure you inform students of when they will be receiving them.
* Use the *Social Media* guide to stay in touch with students via text or Instagram, and to encourage them to follow through with reading their devotions.

**We Want To Hear From You . . .**

* Do you have questions about a lesson?
* Something that worked particularly well you want to share?
* Something that didn’t work you want to bring up?

We value your feedback! Please do not hesitate to email us with your questions, comments, or concerns, at feedback@youthministry360.com.