



Jesus Heals a Little Girl

Goal: To explore the miraculous power of Jesus.

RECOGNIZING GOD'S GRACE . . .

. . . In Mark 5:21-24, 35-43

Jesus was a person of love and compassion. His care for others burst forth in the healing stories; Jesus brought new life where life appeared to be gone forever.

When Jairus, a synagogue leader, begged Jesus to come because his daughter was about to die, Jesus went with him. When word came that the daughter had died, Jesus said, "Don't be afraid; just keep trusting" (v. 36; CEB). This was a word of hope and encouragement in the midst of despair.

At the house, Jesus said the daughter was just sleeping. But people laughed at him (v. 40). Then Jesus spoke the word of life to the little girl: "Young woman, get up" (v. 41). Suddenly, the twelve-year-old "got up and began to walk around" (v. 42).

Jesus healed the girl in response to the father's plea and through the faith of the father in the power and love of Jesus. When confronted with word of his daughter's death, the father continued in Jesus' word, in faith: "Don't be afraid; just keep trusting." This was all he could do, and he continued to trust in Jesus' grace. When the daughter got up, gratitude flooded his heart!

. . . In Your Children's Experiences

Engage the children in hearing this story from the perspective of the different characters in the story: Jairus, Jesus, the people in the crowd, and Jairus's daughter. In doing this, they will be able to name the variety of perspectives, reactions, and emotions of the people. This activity will help the children engage with the story and relate to their own experiences of being sick or knowing people who are ill and, like Jairus's daughter, want to be healed.

. . . In Your Relationships with the Children

Jairus came to Jesus seeking healing for his sick daughter. Children in your group will be able to talk about people they know who are sick and would like to be healed. Some may have experience with relatives or friends who are critically ill or who have died. Be prepared for a question like, "Does God still heal people today?" Help them know that, when they pray to God for someone, healing may come in different ways—like comfort or care. Healing may come in strength to manage pain. Help children know that God's love and care is always with people who are sick.

O God, there is nothing worse than losing a child. Give us the faith to call on you in our darkest hour. Amen.



Supplies

Music & Melodies
(MM) 2023–2024

Stories, Colors & More
(SCM) i–iv, 9, 9a, 9b, 16,
20

basic supplies
(see p. vii)

story audio (see p. vii)

white cloth

candle

Responding

Claiming

copies of **Grace Notes**
(GN) 1

Extra

copies of **GN 2**

GATHERING IN GOD’S GRACE

Post **SCM i–ii**, “Your Visual Schedule,” to provide clear expectations and a visual cue for the group.

See **SCM iii–iv** for the key to icons (for example, **LG** **T**) and ways to adapt for children who have special needs or disabilities.

Welcoming and Preparing

LG **A** **B** **L**

Greet the children by name and with the words “Christ is risen!” Prompt the children to respond, “He is risen indeed!” These words are spoken during Eastertide, the fifty days between Easter and Pentecost.

Invite the children to help prepare the worship space. Provide a Bible, a candle, a white cloth (white is the liturgical [church] color for Eastertide), and **SCM 9a** and **9b**.

Ask some children to help prepare today’s “Responding in Gratitude” activities, and suggest that one or two prepare to lead today’s singing. Invite a couple of volunteers to practice reading the Scripture passage for today.

Invite children to make a bedroom in a Bible-times house using what is available in the room. This will be the storytelling area.

Take time to talk with the children about what is happening in their lives. Point out the photos of hospital items. Ask the children:

- ▼ When have you been sick?
- ▼ Who helped you to get well?
- ▼ What do you think today’s story might be about?

Tell the children that today’s story is about Jesus healing a girl.

Singing

A **MS**

Play and sing “Tell Me the Stories of Jesus”—**MM 16**; **SCM 20**. Suggest that the children sway from side to side or march in place while singing.

Praying

L

Turn on the candle. Invite the children to repeat your words and actions as you pray:

O God, you heal the sick, (*touch head as if you have a headache*) /
you straighten the bent and crooked, (*bend down and then slowly come up*) /
and you raise us all to new life. (*stretch arms to the sky*) /
Be with us in our time together. (*make a circle by holding hands or touching elbows*) /
Amen. /



L *When telling a story, slow down and speak clearly. Above all, have fun! If you enjoy the story, the children will too.*

Preparing to Hear the Story **L**

Explain that Jesus' days were busy teaching his disciples and all the people who came to hear him. He also healed people who had all kinds of illnesses.

Invite the children to play the parts of Jesus, one or more disciples, and people in the crowd. Jesus is in the midst of the crowd. Each disciple tells a person in the crowd that Jesus healed someone. The message gets spread one to another. When all have been told, act the part of Jairus and rush into the crowd to ask Jesus to heal your daughter. Move into the "bedroom."

Hearing the Story **L B**

Invite a volunteer to open the Bible to Mark 5. Have volunteers read Mark 5:21–24, 35–43. Conclude the reading by saying, "Word of wisdom, Word of grace," and prompt the children to say, "Thanks be to God." Place the open Bible on the worship center.

Explain that, today, everyone will work together to help to tell the story. Read the story again from **SCM 9** or use the story audio. If reading, tell the story with feeling and expression and a sense of wonder.

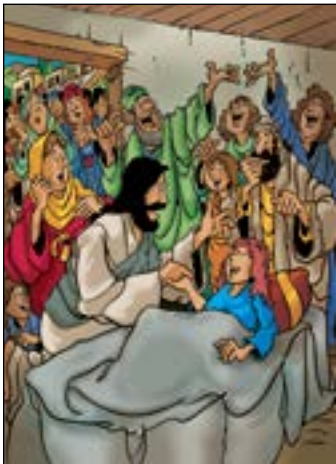
Invite volunteers for the following roles: Jesus, Jairus, Jairus's daughter, and a servant. For larger groups, add other roles, such as Jairus's wife, servants, disciples, and mourners.

As you tell the story this second time, encourage the children to listen carefully to the story so that they will be able to act out their parts. Facial expressions and body language are important and will add to the drama of the story. Pause where necessary to cue actors with a look or a nod, allowing enough time for action to take place.

B *Providing opportunities for children to act in front of others can be a fun way to learn from one another and can build children's confidence. However, it can also provide opportunities for unwanted behavior such as bullying or fidgeting. Help children focus on respecting others and being polite.*

Reflecting on God's Grace **C**

Refer to the picture of Jesus and the little girl on **SCM 9**, and discuss what you see. Comment that Jesus does some pretty amazing things. Sometimes people called Jesus' works miracles. Explain that the word *miracle* comes from the Latin word *mirari*, which means amazing or marvelous.



Today's story can be found in *Growing in God's Love: A Story Bible*, edited by Elizabeth F. Caldwell and Carol A. Wehrheim (Louisville, KY: Flyaway Books, 2018), www.pcusastore.com.



Discuss together:

- I wonder, “What do you think is the most wonderful thing about this story?”
- I wonder, “How might Jairus have felt when he heard that his daughter was already dead and then Jesus said, ‘Don’t be afraid, just believe and your daughter will get better?’”
- I wonder, “What do you think it might have been like when Jesus took the dead child’s hand and told her to rise, and she did?”

Singing



Play and sing “Jesus Says God Cares for Us”—**MM 12; SCM 16**. Walk in a circle, switching directions each time they sing, “. . . each and every day.” Turn off the candle.

RESPONDING IN GRATITUDE

Select activities appropriate for your group and for the time available.

Claiming God’s Grace

Distribute copies of **GN 1**, pencils, and colorful markers. Ask a volunteer to read the sentence at the top of the page. Invite the children to trace their hand and wrist inside the border. While they are tracing, tell them that, when we help others, we are faithful in showing God’s love as Jesus did.

Show the children how to make 3-D lines. Beginning at the bottom of the page near their wrist, have them draw straight lines from the border until they touch the pencil outline, then make curves reaching to the other side of the wrist, then continue straight to the opposite border. Repeat this all the way up the page. When they get to the fingers, it is a bit tricky, but it is the same principle: each time they hit a line they change from straight to curve and vice versa (see sidebar).

While they are working, have volunteers read the words forming the border. Encourage a discussion of ways they recall Jesus’ power in other stories. Ask for ways they, too, can bring God’s healing love to a hurting world. Encourage them to display their hands at home as a reminder to be a healing helper.





Celebrating God's Grace

B MS

Play a game of freeze tag. Ask a volunteer to be Jairus. Tell the other children that they are the family and friends of the sick little girl, and that they are running around, afraid of what might happen to her. Let Jairus try to tag people as they run. If someone gets tagged, they are frozen until someone who is not frozen touches (heals) them. When everyone is frozen, or after a little while, allow another volunteer person to be Jairus. Play until all who want to be Jairus have had an opportunity.

Praying God's Grace

C L

Invite the children to wonder about the story by asking questions such as:

- ▼ I wonder, "How did Jesus help the girl?"
- ▼ I wonder, "How did the people feel when the little girl got up?"

Some children may have other questions as well. Do not be too quick to provide answers, but invite the children to express their ideas. Other children may want to talk about people they have known who are sick. Some of their experiences may be with people who did not get better, but who got worse or died.

Remind them that Jesus cares—in sickness, in death, and beyond death.

It helps the children to know that you can take a few moments to say a prayer out loud. It may seem appropriate in the midst of this discussion to have time for sentence prayers, a kind of prayer that is just one sentence: "Dear God, be with (Name) today. Amen."

C *Simply put, some children are introverts. For them, it isn't a matter of being shy, not understanding something, or being afraid; they are uncomfortable. Making your group a safe place will help these children find their voice. Encourage other children to be patient.*



GN 2 Solution:

- No tear
- Child's closed mouth
- Sheep's ear
- Adult's closed mouth
- Head covering on adult
- Palm tree
- Woman's hair
- Head covering on child
- Beard
- Jesus' sleeve/blanket



Ask parents and caregivers for their email addresses so you can send the Grace Sightings link, or invite them to visit www.pcusastore.com/GGGdownloads. Remind the parents and caregivers about the story audio (see p. vii).

Extra Activity

Hand out copies of **GN 2** and crayons or markers. Invite the children to find the ten differences in the two pictures. While they work, wonder about differences between trusting Jesus and believing what others say.

LOVING AND SERVING GOD

Invite the children to gather, and lead them in cleaning up the worship space.

Sing “Jesus Says God Cares for Us”—**MM 12; SCM 16.**

Give the children an opportunity to tell any new insights they have had from today's story. Ask questions such as:

- How did you feel when you learned that Jesus brought the girl back to life?
- How would you feel if Jesus hadn't brought her back to life?
- What will you remember about this story?

Lead children in this echo prayer:

God, sometimes we are sick and afraid /
and we need you with us. /
Thank you for your healing presence /
that never ever leaves us. /
We can trust the power /
of Jesus' love and compassion /
and we are grateful. /
Amen. /

Dismiss each of the children with the charge: “(Name), go forth this day, showing love and care to others.”

As Jesus traveled around the countryside, he showed people God's healing love.

and helped her stand up straight (Luke 12:13). • I, too, can bring God's healing love to a hurting world. • Jesus touched Jairus's daughter and brought her back to life (Mark 5:41). • Jesus reached out to bless the children (Mark 10:16). • Jesus touched a man with a skin disease and healed him (Matthew 7:3). • Jesus touched a crippled woman



