

Signs and Wonders

Miracles - Do miracles still occur today?

This session aims to help group members understand that God works miracles today as well as in the Bible. Please use any of the resources below that you think would work well with your child(ren)

1. What Is A Miracle? (8 min Discussion)

Give your child(ren) the list of things (below) that might be construed as a miracle. Ask the children to make two piles: things that ARE miracles and things that AREN'T.

Discuss what a miracle actually IS and come up with a working definition.

On the basis of this discussion ask the child if they think that God still does miracles today?

List:

- Someone is raised from the dead.
- A car isn't working and then suddenly starts to work.
- You pray for a parking space and one appears.
- Someone has cancer and is made well by drugs.
- Someone is very depressed, but after prayer is back to normal.
- A cold suddenly gets better after prayer.
- You pass your driving test even though you were nervous.
- You find that you are able to be nice to an enemy.
- The wind is very high, but you pray and it dies down.
- A baby is born.
- Two people who hate one another suddenly become friends.
- Suddenly there is money in your purse even though it was empty.
- Someone has an operation and recovers in less than half the normal time.
- Someone needs an operation, but then the doctor realises that after prayer they have got completely better with no medicine or anything.
- Someone becomes a Christian.

The Point: To think about what counts as a miracle.

2. Tim and Rachel: A True story (8 mins Illustration)

The following is a true story:

In 2002 a group of us Christian leaders went on a youth holiday to work with the 11-14's age group. One night Tim, one of our leaders was praying and felt as though God was telling him to pray specifically about healing. As he was praying, He felt that God showed him that someone in the venue needed healing of a problem with her leg. As he continued to pray God also showed him that this same girl had a real concern for her Mum's health. Tim shared this feeling with us and we prayed that God would continue to speak to us about it.

The following few days went by and nothing happened. On the last night a girl came into the venue on crutches. None of the team had seen her before. Tim asked us if he could go and talk to her with another female leader. We agreed. As he spoke to this girl, Rachel, she shared that she had hurt her leg 18 months earlier and that she would have to be on crutches for at least another 6 months. She also began to cry as she told Tim that her Mum had just been told she had cancer. Tim and the other leader began to pray with Rachel. They prayed for about an hour. In that time, they asked God to look after Rachel's Mum and to heal her. They also prayed that God would heal Rachel's leg.

Rachel left much happier, still on crutches, but saying she had a tingling feeling in her leg. The following day Rachel came back into the venue. She got up on stage, without her crutches and said that she had woken up with no pain in her leg at all. She had walked with her crutches to the venue, as she wanted to be sensible, but felt as though she no longer needed to rely on them. She told all the other young people what God had done for her. Everyone was clapping and cheering. All of the leaders were amazed at what God had done in front of our eyes.

Discuss:

- What do you think of Rachel's story?
- What miracles do you think took place?
- Have you ever heard of anything like this happening?
- Do you think it is possible for God to do other things like this?

If you don't want to use this example, perhaps you could share a miracle that is personal to you and then ask similar questions as the one's mentioned above.

The Point: To allow the group to hear about a modern miracle and think about what they believe about miracles and why.

3. Amazing but true!

Getting Started (8 mins)

Set your child (ren) a challenge. They have to write down as many miracles in the Bible as they can in 5 minutes. They are allowed to use Bibles.

When you have created your big list ask questions such as:

- What do you think these miracles teach us about God/Jesus?
- Why do you think God does Miracles?
- Are there any miracles you find it hard to believe in? Why?

You could use the following true or false list to help jog the memory:

1. God parts a massive sea and creates a huge path through which people walk (True)
2. God feeds millions of people every day with special food for 40 years (True)
3. God turns a large fish into a big boat (False)
4. God destroys a huge city, surrounded by thick walls, by simply asking His people to walk around it and shout. (True)
5. God makes His people 2 foot taller than their enemies so that they win every battle (False)
6. Jesus feeds 5,000 people with five loaves and two fishes (True)
7. Jesus raises a man from the dead (True)
8. Jesus flies over a city to show people He is God (False)
9. Jesus walks on water (True)
10. Jesus turns water into wine (True)

The Point: To get the children thinking about miracles in the Bible.

4. Creative visualisation, Thousands for dinner

Digging In (8 mins Activity)

Read the creative account below (adapted from John 6:1-15) & imagine you were there!

“In our imagination we are going to go back in time to when Jesus was alive on earth.

Imagine that you can see Him in the distance.

Which part of His can you see?

You are part of a large crowd.

What are people around you saying?

The road starts to get steeper and you realise you are going up a hill. You are feeling tired and hungry and want to stop soon.

Soon the whole crowd comes to a halt.

You can see Jesus in the distance at the top of the hill. He is sitting with His friends.

Other people begin to sit down, trying to make themselves comfortable on the grass or rocks. Some stay standing.

You watch Jesus carefully.

What is the expression on His face?

You look around and try to count the people, but there are so many sitting and standing everywhere. You can't remember seeing so many people in one place before.

Jesus stands up and begins to talk to His friends. They look worried.

What do you think they are saying?

Little children next to you are complaining to their parents that they are hungry and tired.

Jesus' followers come amongst the crowd asking questions. One of them comes near to you. You hear Him asking about food. You had forgotten that you had brought a small basket of food with you. You stand up and offer it to the man. But you are shy.

There is hardly anything there.

Just five loaves of barley bread and two little fish.

Only just enough to feed you.

He looks into the basket and smiles, taking you by the hand to Jesus.

Jesus looks at you.

What does He say?

What do you say?

Then you hear Jesus saying to His friends

“Get everyone to sit down.”

So the followers go amongst the crowd asking people to sit. There are thousands there.

When the crowd is seated Jesus takes your packed lunch in His hands and praises God for it.

What did He say?

Then He turns and gives the bread and fish to His friends who start sharing it with all the people. You want to help too, but when you smell the piece of bread in your hand you start to eat. At first you only have tiny mouthfuls, as you are sure that you have been given too much.

But then you hear that there is more to be had.

People around you eat as much as they want. The children begin to fall asleep and the adults are amazed at how much there is to go round.

You keep hearing people say things like:

“How many rolls have you had?” and lots of people ask you questions.

What sort of things did they say to you?

Then you hear Jesus say to His followers:

“Gather up all the leftovers so that nothing goes to waste.”

Jesus' friends gather up 12 baskets full of unwanted bread and fish.

When you see this you are amazed.

What did you think had happened?

People around you start talking about Jesus, saying He is a special prophet sent from God, or maybe even a King.

You don't want to leave, but sit still on the grass trying to take it all in.

How did you feel? What were you thinking?”

Leave a little time to come 'back into the present.' Then ask them what they thought about the story and how they felt about imagining that miracle for themselves.

The Point: To allow the group to think about this story and help them to feel a little of what it must have been like to have witnessed such a miracle.

5. Digging In Mark 4:35-41 (9 min Bible Study)

Read the passage. Then discuss some/all of the questions below:

- Why do you think Jesus wanted to go across the lake?
- In v36 it says ' Just as he was' what do you think this means?
- How do you think Jesus' felt in v38?
- How do you think his followers felt? What did they say to Jesus?
- How do you think you would have felt? Would you have said something similar?
- What did Jesus say to the wind and waves?
- What effect did this have?
- How did the disciples feel afterwards? Why?
- What did Jesus say to his friends? How do you think he was feeling?
- Why do you think Jesus did Miracles like this? What does it teach us about him?

The Point: To help the group to go deeper into the reasons why God allows us to see miracles.

6. Never Changing Memory Verse. (5-10 mins)

Print or write out the memory verse & give to your child to decorate and colour. Explain that because He is the same, He is still more than able to do miracles. Say the verse through together

“Jesus is the same yesterday, today and for ever.”

Hebrews 13:8

The Point: To encourage your child to learn the Bible.

7. Miracle Experience. Take Away (4 mins Discussion)

Get your child to think about the following, maybe come back to it later in the week:

1. If you had the chance to sit and chat with Jesus after the miracle of feeding the 5,000, what questions would you like to ask Him?
2. Think about a time when you were really frightened about something and there was no there to help you. What happened? How would you have felt at the time if you knew for sure that the same Jesus that calmed the storm was there with you and that He could sort out the situation?