



## **Dear Parents,**

God has given your precious child to your family on loan. People say the days of parenting can feel long, but the years are short. Indeed, the daily grind of running a home and juggling work and family needs can sometimes feel endless and tiring. And yet the years do slip by so quickly . . .

In this publication you'll find carefully selected, age-appropriate stories and activities to help guide your child toward knowing and loving Jesus. **Every day, read the simple weekly story** and invite **interaction from your child** as you do so. The (*prompts*) throughout the narrative will be your guide as you read. Point to the pictures (or invite your child to) as you read. Make this learning time a very special daily routine. The **Play Throughout the Day activities** are ideas you can do with your child to reinforce the Bible story messages. Turn these activities into memories that are woven into your lives to strengthen the Bible messages. Take time to read the **Heart of the Matter** spiritual message that is written just for you. Say the **memory verse** to your child every day, even if they are still learning to speak. Place the memory verse card somewhere prominent in your home to remind you to do so and show this to your child.

Accept the challenge to “lead them to Jesus Christ day by day, lovingly, tenderly, earnestly. You must not allow anything to come between you and this great work” (Ellen G. White, *Child Guidance*, p. 41).

It's often the small, daily routines, rather than the big moments in our lives, that shape our characters.

In this very busy season, may God refresh you, sustain you, and give you patience and consistency as you teach your child to love and follow Him, above all.

***Nina and the General  
Conference Sabbath School  
and Personal Ministries Team***



# Little Devotions

One of the most important life skills you can teach your child is to seek God every day in personal devotion. Although your child is now only 1, 2, or 3 years old, it's not too early to begin teaching them how to do this in simple ways.

## How can I begin to teach my Beginner child to turn his or her heart to Jesus?

1. **PRAY:** Every day, pray for your child's heart to be opened to Jesus.
2. **IN THE EVERYDAY MOMENTS:** Look for opportunities to talk about Jesus and how much you love Him. Sing simple songs about this and teach your child to sing along with you. Spontaneous, authentic praise at this age is an important part of building faith.
3. **YOUR DEVOTIONAL PLACE:** Choose a chair, windowsill, or regular place where you will daily read your Bible and pray. Do this in a visible part of your home, such as the living area, so your child sees you spending time with Jesus.
4. **YOUR CHILD'S DEVOTIONAL PLACE:** Not too far from your Bible study space, create a place for your child to spend time with Jesus. Spread a small mat or towel on the floor, along with a few simple Bible picture books (remove toys and other distractions). Make sure that your child is not tired or hungry during this time, so it is a pleasant time they look forward to.
5. **TIME WITH JESUS:** Explain to your child that every day, at this same time, you are both going to spend time with Jesus. This will be quiet time, during which you will read, pray, or sing to Jesus. Show your child how they can look at the pictures in the Bible books and think about the stories. Explain that when Mommy/Daddy spend time with Jesus, your child will spend time with Jesus too. You won't talk or read stories together during this time, although you can do this later! To begin with, spend two to five minutes of individual time, depending on their ability to sit still and focus. Gradually increase the time as your child gets older.



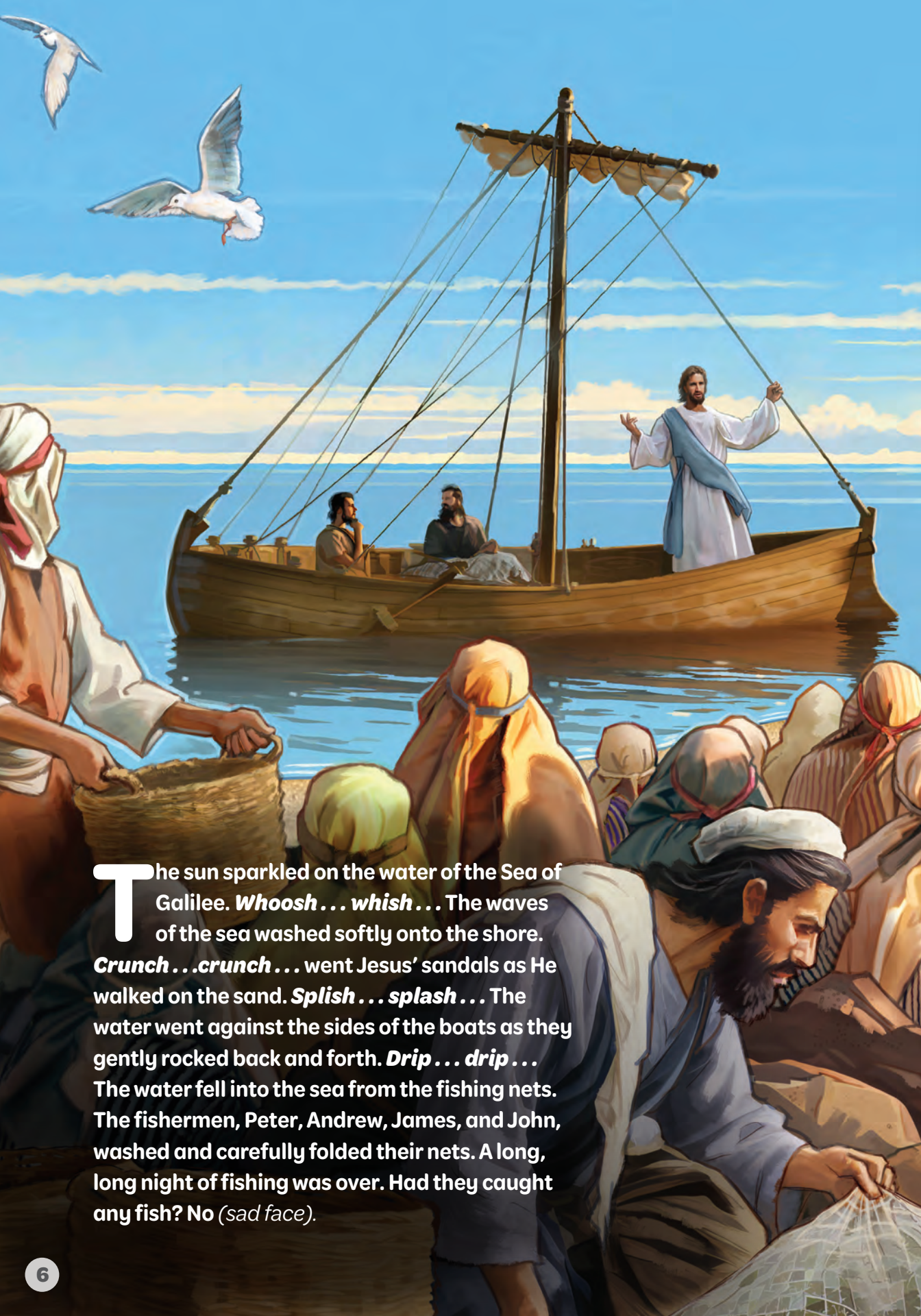
**BIG IDEA:** Jesus wants me to follow Him.

Week 1

# Fishing with Jesus



This lesson is based on Matthew 4:18-22; Mark 1:16-20; Luke 5:4-11; and *The Desire of Ages*, pp. 244-251.



**T**he sun sparkled on the water of the Sea of Galilee. *Whoosh . . . whisk . . .* The waves of the sea washed softly onto the shore. *Crunch . . . crunch . . .* went Jesus' sandals as He walked on the sand. *Splish . . . splash . . .* The water went against the sides of the boats as they gently rocked back and forth. *Drip . . . drip . . .* The water fell into the sea from the fishing nets. The fishermen, Peter, Andrew, James, and John, washed and carefully folded their nets. A long, long night of fishing was over. Had they caught any fish? No (*sad face*).

A crowd of people gathered on the sandy shore. They moved closer to hear Jesus talk. Jesus stepped into a boat. He asked Peter to push Him away from the shore. Now the people could hear and see Him better.

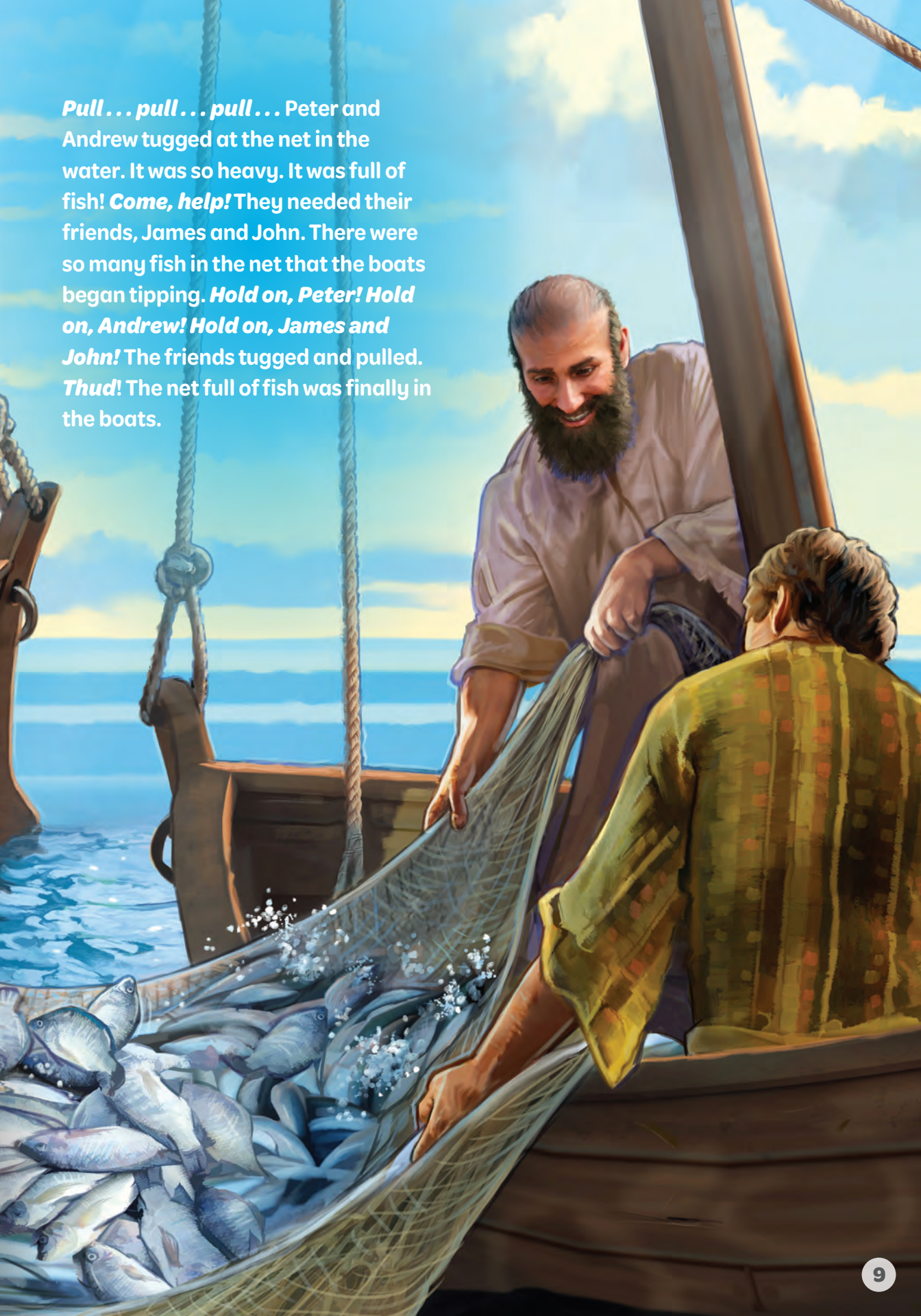
**Rock . . . rock . . .** went the boat on the sea. Jesus spoke about God, His Father in heaven. God loved the people very much! Jesus wanted the people to know God and to tell others about Him too.





Peter and Andrew listened to Jesus. Jesus finished talking. He smiled at the people. He smiled at Peter (*big smile*). Then He told Peter to take the boat out on the lake and throw his fishing net into the water. Peter knew the only time to catch any fish was at night. How would they catch any fish now in the morning? But Peter didn't shake his head. He nodded yes to Jesus (*nod*). He did as Jesus asked. Over the side of the boat, out into the deep water, he threw his fishing net. **Splash!** It went out, then down into the sea.

***Pull . . . pull . . . pull . . .*** Peter and Andrew tugged at the net in the water. It was so heavy. It was full of fish! ***Come, help!*** They needed their friends, James and John. There were so many fish in the net that the boats began tipping. ***Hold on, Peter! Hold on, Andrew! Hold on, James and John!*** The friends tugged and pulled. ***Thud!*** The net full of fish was finally in the boats.



Shiny fish filled the boat—right to the very top. Peter, Andrew, James, and John were amazed. There were so many flip-flopping fish in their boat! Peter jumped out of the boat and knelt at Jesus' feet. He knew that Jesus had done a miracle. Only the Son of God could have put all those wiggly fish into their nets. Jesus looked at His friends. "Follow Me," He said (Matthew 4:19). Jesus wanted them to be His special helpers. He wanted them to learn to be like Him. The four fishermen left their fishing boats and followed Jesus.

Jesus loves you! He wants you to learn to be like Him too. He says, "Follow Me, (*say child's name*)."

(*Say together*) **Yes, Jesus, I want to follow You!**



# play

## throughout the Day

### Create

Use paint or ink to stamp your child's footprints on a blank piece of paper. Write on top of the footprints *"I want to follow Jesus!"* Share how we can follow Jesus by doing the kinds of things He loved to do: being kind and caring to those around us, helping, showing love with our words and actions, and obeying. Write or draw pictures of some things you could do to follow Jesus.

### Play

Use a magnet, a string, and a stick to make a simple fishing rod. Put paper clips on some cut-out paper fish. Take turns catching fish.

### Explore

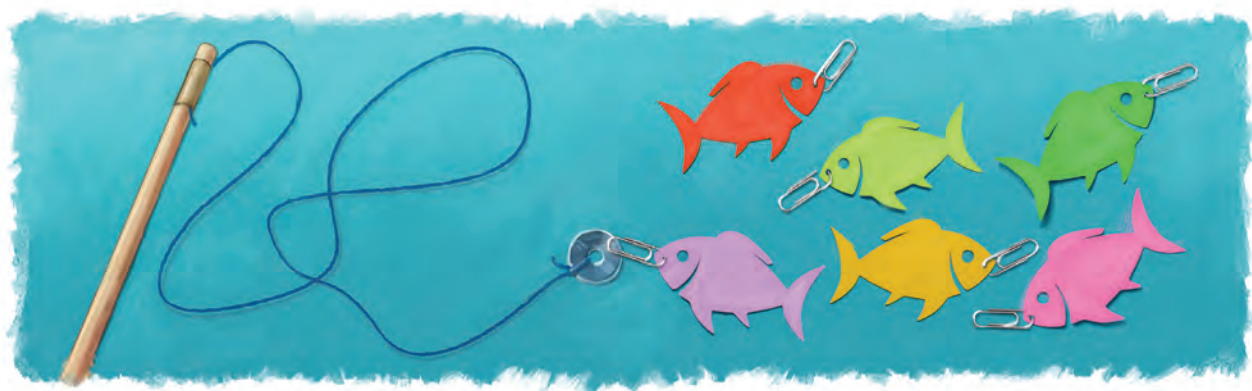
If there is snow, sand, or dirt nearby, go for a walk with your child. Go ahead of them and make footprints, encouraging your child to follow you by stepping in your footprints. Tell your child that Jesus wants us to follow Him.

### Connect

Set up an obstacle course. Let your child watch you complete the course, and then say, "Follow me." Complete the course together. Share how Jesus is there to help us with every hard or happy thing we face.

### Pray

In family worship, thank God for being the leader of your family. Share a prayer: *"Jesus, we want to follow You!"* Write it on a poster. Decorate this poster together with your child. You can draw a picture, decorate it with flowers, or glue footprints on the bottom. Place your poster in a prominent place in your home.



# THE HEART OF THE MATTER

## For You, Parents

Jesus is calling you to follow Him, just as He called His disciples. Will you, like Peter, jump in feet first?

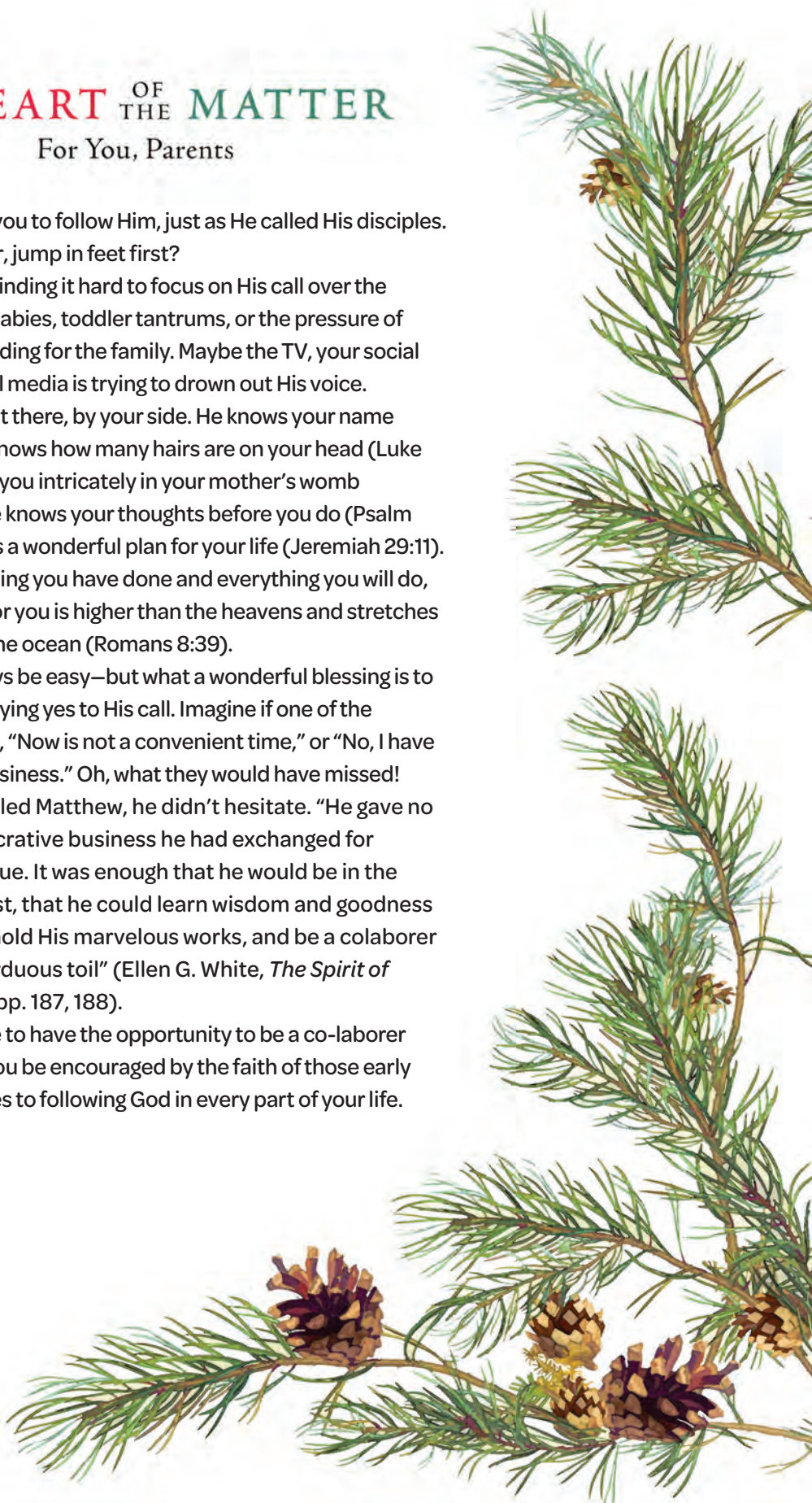
Maybe you are finding it hard to focus on His call over the clamor of crying babies, toddler tantrums, or the pressure of working and providing for the family. Maybe the TV, your social calendar, or social media is trying to drown out His voice.

But Jesus is right there, by your side. He knows your name (Isaiah 43:1). He knows how many hairs are on your head (Luke 12:7) and created you intricately in your mother's womb (Jeremiah 1:5). He knows your thoughts before you do (Psalm 139:4), and He has a wonderful plan for your life (Jeremiah 29:11). He knows everything you have done and everything you will do, and yet His love for you is higher than the heavens and stretches out farther than the ocean (Romans 8:39).

It may not always be easy—but what a wonderful blessing is to be gained from saying yes to His call. Imagine if one of the disciples had said, “Now is not a convenient time,” or “No, I have to focus on my business.” Oh, what they would have missed!

When Jesus called Matthew, he didn't hesitate. “He gave no thought to the lucrative business he had exchanged for poverty and fatigue. It was enough that he would be in the presence of Christ, that he could learn wisdom and goodness from His lips, behold His marvelous works, and be a colaborer with Him in His arduous toil” (Ellen G. White, *The Spirit of Prophecy*, vol. 2, pp. 187, 188).

What a privilege to have the opportunity to be a co-laborer with Jesus! May you be encouraged by the faith of those early disciples to say yes to following God in every part of your life.



**BIG IDEA:** Jesus gives me the things I need.

Week 2

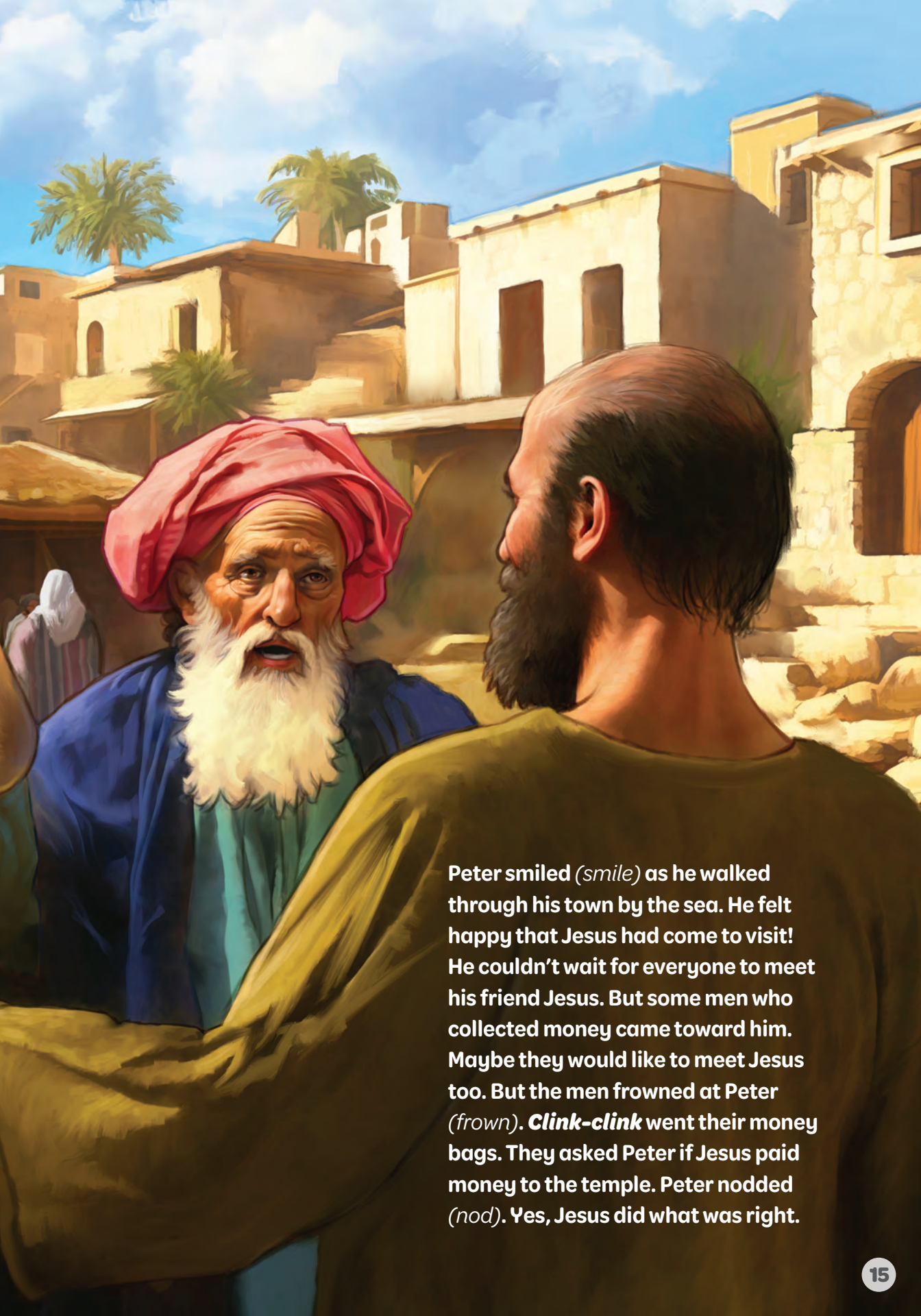
# A Coin and a Fish



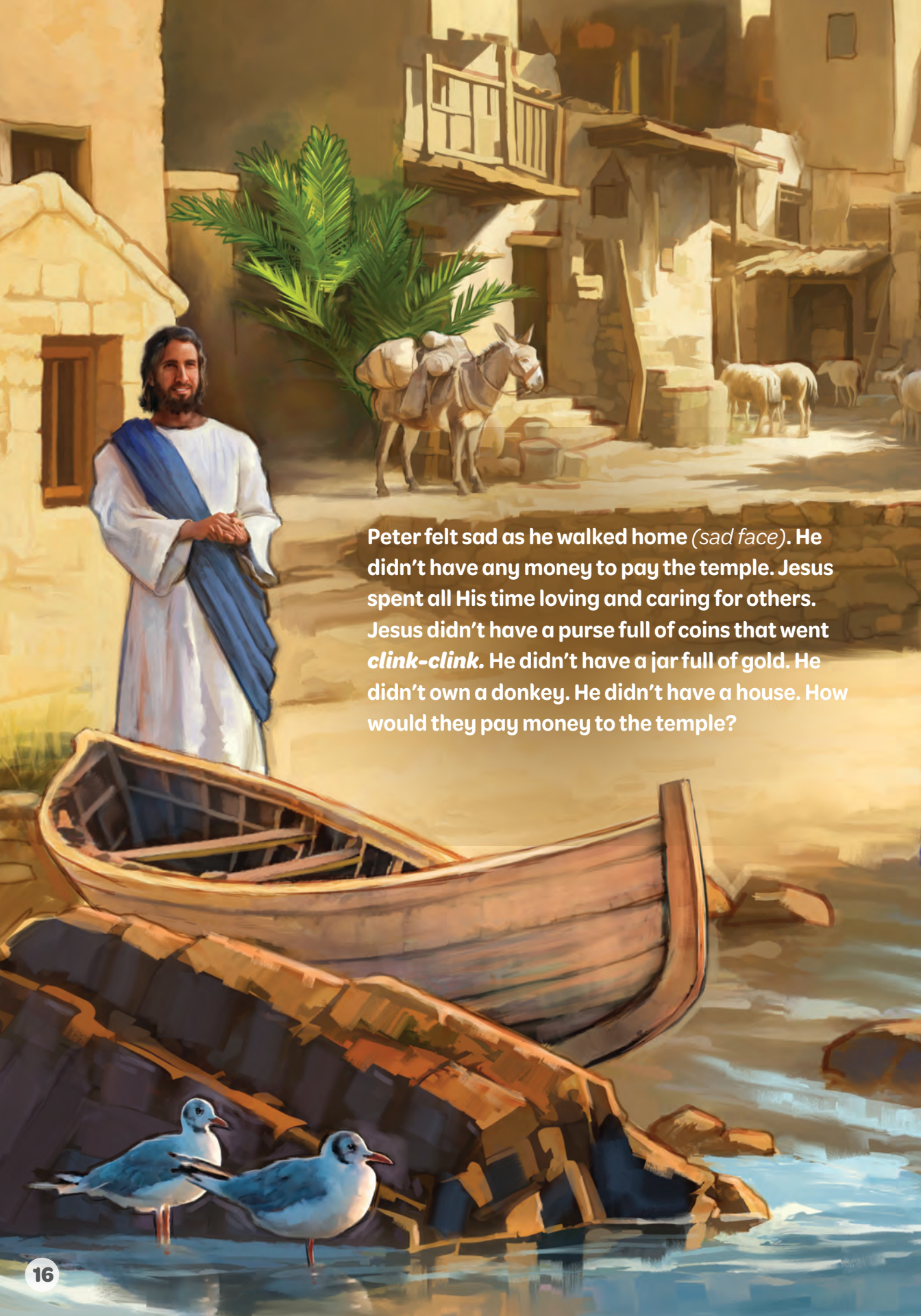
This lesson is based on Matthew 17:24-27 and *The Desire of Ages*, pp. 432-435.

**S***plish-splash* went the water on the sparkling Sea of Galilee. All was still. Then *splish-splash* went the water again. What made the water splish and splash? It was a fish! A fish jumped through the water. What fun! This fish would be Jesus' special helper today.





Peter smiled (*smile*) as he walked through his town by the sea. He felt happy that Jesus had come to visit! He couldn't wait for everyone to meet his friend Jesus. But some men who collected money came toward him. Maybe they would like to meet Jesus too. But the men frowned at Peter (*frown*). **Clink-clink** went their money bags. They asked Peter if Jesus paid money to the temple. Peter nodded (*nod*). Yes, Jesus did what was right.



Peter felt sad as he walked home (*sad face*). He didn't have any money to pay the temple. Jesus spent all His time loving and caring for others. Jesus didn't have a purse full of coins that went *clink-clink*. He didn't have a jar full of gold. He didn't own a donkey. He didn't have a house. How would they pay money to the temple?



Jesus smiled at Peter. He knew just where to find the money. It wasn't in a purse. It wasn't in a jar. Peter's eyes opened wide in surprise as Jesus told him what to do. Then Peter obeyed. He went fishing!

He threw the fishing line into the water. ***Plop!*** Down, down, down it went. Peter quietly waited for a fish. ***Tug, tug, tug...*** Oh, he'd caught one! He pulled the fish up out of the water and opened its mouth. There it was—a bright, shiny coin! Peter found the money exactly where Jesus said he would—in the mouth of a fish!

Jesus is amazing! He put the bright shiny coin in the fish's mouth. He knew where Peter would find the money to pay the temple. Jesus' friends saw that even the fish obey Him! Jesus cared for Peter.

Jesus cares for me too. He gives me all I need.

*(Say together)* Thank You, Jesus, for giving me the things I need.



# play

## throughout the Day

### Create

Create a collage using colorful paper or crepe paper to make a fish. Glue scales on to the shape of a fish. Cut out a coin and place it in the fish's mouth. Place it where your child can see it throughout the week.

### Play

Use your fishing magnets from last week (paper clips attached to fish; a magnet on a string) to play a fishing game. Hide a little coin behind one of the fish's heads and mix them all up. Take turns trying to catch the fish with the hidden coin.

### Learn

Take a trip to the library and check out some ocean and sea-life books. Talk about the chances of finding coins in fish's mouths. Jesus really did do an amazing miracle! He will certainly look after you too!

### Explore

Draw simple pictures of some of the things God has provided for you (for example, food, water, home, caring family, friends, etc.). Make two copies of each picture and play a game of memory with older toddlers. At the end of the game, thank God for each of the pictures and for caring for your family.

### Pray

Talk about some of the pictures you drew of things God has given you. Ask your child to choose one of the pictures, then pray a "Thank You" prayer to God. Have others in the family choose one too, each thanking God for giving us what we need.



# THE HEART OF THE MATTER

## For You, Parents

Worry. Oh, how it can consume, and drain, and steal. It has a habit of making the present look bleak and stormy. How much of our lives do we spend at the mercy of worry? Finances, schooling, technology, homes, mortgages, work, the future, the current world climate, and of course, are we being good enough parents who are giving our children what they need?

The thing about worry though, is that it is based on our own self-reliance. When we try to control things, we realize the sum of our failings. Anxiety sets in, and suddenly the worries multiply and grow like weeds. "Worry is blind and cannot discern the future. But Jesus sees the end from the beginning, and He has prepared His way to bring relief. 'So much to do!' Yes; but who is the chief worker? Jesus Christ your Lord. He offers to lighten the loads we carry by putting Himself under the loads. Abiding in Christ, and Christ abiding in us, we can do all things through Him, who strengthens us" (Ellen G. White, *Christian Leadership*, p. 77).

Jesus is so wonderfully able to take our worries away and provide the things we need in amazing ways (even a coin in a fish!). He desires for you to live a free life, and He wants to take the load of your burdens from you. Prayerfully give your worries to Him this week and watch the miraculous ways He will provide.

"Therefore I say to you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink; nor about your body, what you will put on. . . . Look at the birds of the air, for they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they? Which of you by worrying can add one cubit to his stature?" (Matthew 6:25-27).



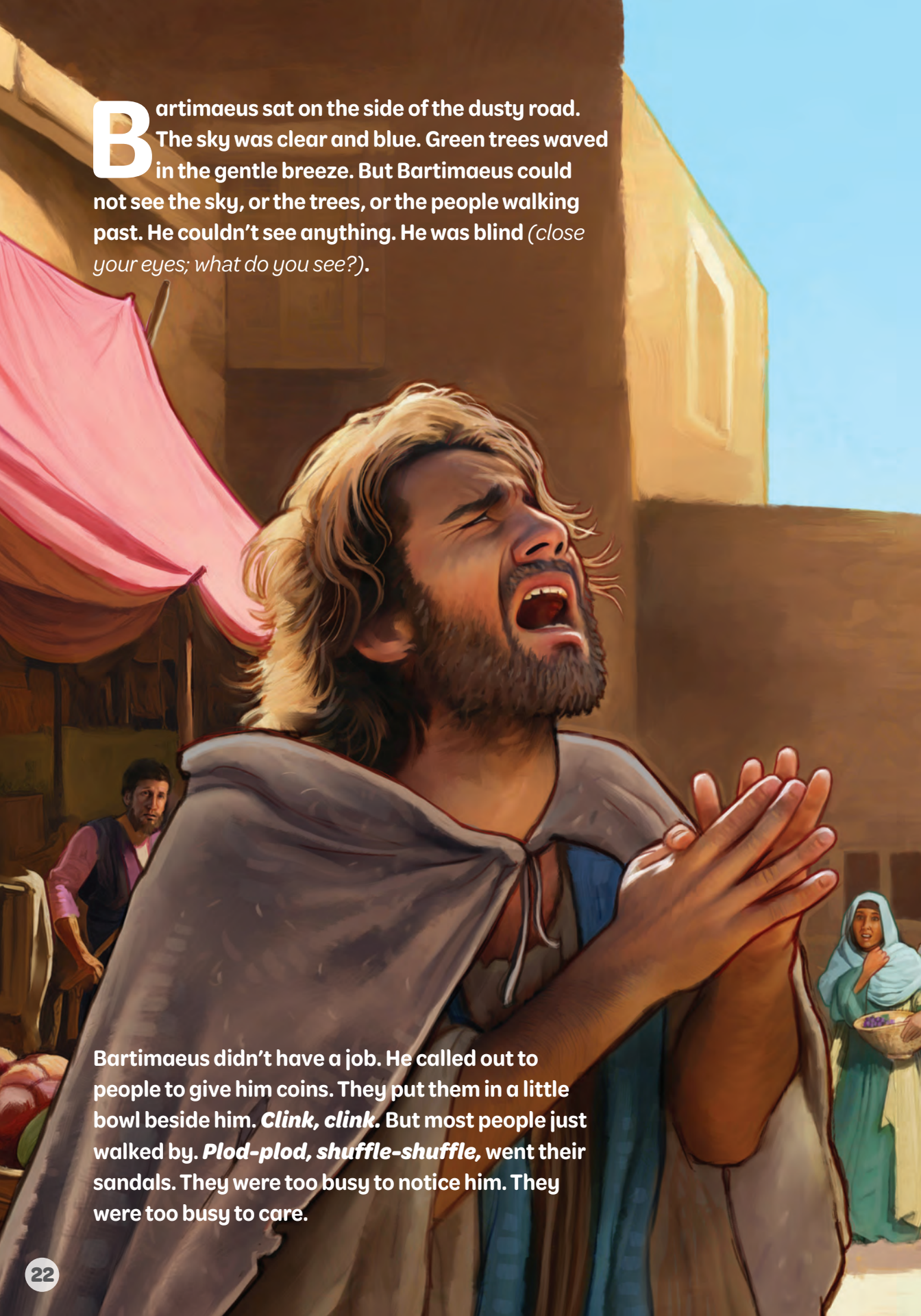
**BIG IDEA:** Jesus can do miracles!

Week 3

# "I Can See!"



This lesson is based on Mark 10:46-52.

A colorful illustration of Bartimaeus, a blind man, sitting on the side of a dusty road. He has long, wavy brown hair and a beard, and is wearing a grey cloak over a blue tunic. He is crying with his mouth wide open and his hands clasped together in a pleading gesture. In the background, there are simple buildings, a pink cloth hanging from a structure, and other people, including a man in a purple tunic and a woman in a blue headscarf carrying a basket of grapes. The sky is clear and blue.

**B**artimaeus sat on the side of the dusty road. The sky was clear and blue. Green trees waved in the gentle breeze. But Bartimaeus could not see the sky, or the trees, or the people walking past. He couldn't see anything. He was blind (*close your eyes; what do you see?*).

Bartimaeus didn't have a job. He called out to people to give him coins. They put them in a little bowl beside him. ***Clink, clink.*** But most people just walked by. ***Plod-plod, shuffle-shuffle,*** went their sandals. They were too busy to notice him. They were too busy to care.

Bartimaeus heard Jesus walking down the road. Jesus! He had heard of this Man. He heard that Jesus did miracles! Bartimaeus got excited (*clap hands*). He listened very carefully (*cup ear*). Was Jesus close by? He was **sure** that Jesus would care. He was **sure** that Jesus would help. Bartimaeus started shouting, "Jesus . . . please help me!" The people around him told him to be quiet, but he only shouted louder. Again and again Bartimaeus called out to Jesus. He wanted to meet Jesus!



**Jesus heard Bartimaeus' cry for help. He stopped walking (*hold hands up to stop*). Jesus said, "What do you want Me to do for you?" (Mark 10:51). Bartimaeus told Jesus that he wanted to see. Jesus then said to him, "Go your way; your faith has made you well" (Mark 10:52).**





All of a sudden, Bartimaeus could see! The very first thing Bartimaeus saw was the kind, smiling face of Jesus. Bartimaeus was so happy that he ran down the road, following Jesus. He noticed *everything*: the green rolling hills, the yellow flowers, the bright-blue sky, and the tiny sparrows in the trees.

Bartimaeus' heart was filled up to the top with happiness. Jesus had done a miracle in his life! Jesus still does miracles today. He loves to hear us call out and ask Him for His help. Whenever we need something, we can pray to Jesus too. Thank You, God, for healing Bartimaeus.

*(Say together)* **Thank You**  
for being a mighty God!



# play

## throughout the Day

### Create

Using colored pencils, draw a picture together of Jesus healing Bartimaeus.

### Play

Go outside and close your eyes. Talk about the sounds you hear. What can you feel and touch? Alternatively, play the game “I See Something . . .” and invite your child to guess what you see. (For example, “I see something big and green . . .”)

### Learn

Share how Jesus gives us five senses to explore His amazing creation. Teach your child what they are by allowing them to experience something for each sense: touch, sight, smell, taste, sound.



### Explore

Blindfold your child and lead them around the room, avoiding any obstacles. Talk about how they felt when they couldn't see. They had to trust you to lead them so they wouldn't fall. Bartimaeus trusted God and believed that God would heal him. We can trust Jesus to lead us too!

### Pray

Take turns thanking God for something you can see, hear, touch, taste, and smell.





# THE HEART OF THE MATTER

For You, Parents

Bartimaeus knew he needed a Savior, and he sought after Jesus with his whole heart. He did not give up at the first roadblock. He called out to Jesus with determination and faith! What an example for us each busy day. Do we recognize our need for Christ? Are we filled with a burning desire to really *know* Him? Do we make room in our schedules for Him, no matter the obstacles?

Make today a new day to become a “Bartimaeus.” Jesus longs to hear your cry out to Him. He will always respond. He sees you. He knows your darkest pains and heartaches, and He holds out His hand to make you well. He sees your faith and is willing to open your eyes to the new life He has for you.

“Not only is physical sight restored, but the eyes of his understanding are opened. In Christ he sees his Redeemer, and the Sun of Righteousness shines into his soul. All who feel their need of Christ as did blind Bartimaeus, and who will be as earnest and determined as he was, will, like him, receive the blessing which they crave” (Ellen G. White, *Sons and Daughters of God*, p. 126).

May you be blessed this week as your eyes are opened to the myriad of ways God loves and cares for you. May you be earnest and determined to know Christ and follow Him too.

“And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free” (John 8:32).

**BIG IDEA:** I can help my friends be close to Jesus.

Week 4

# Four Good Friends



This lesson is based on Matthew 9:1-8; Mark 2:1-12; Luke 5:17-26; and *The Desire of Ages*, pp. 267-271.



**T**he little house was too full! There wasn't enough room. There wasn't even room for a little mouse! Mothers and fathers squished together (*squish close*). Grandfathers and grandmothers squeezed in close (*pull child close*). Young, old, short, tall—everyone pressed together to be near Jesus. Children peeked through windows to see and hear Jesus. People waited outside the little house to see Jesus too.

Four friends carried a man who lay on a mat to the little house. The man's legs didn't work anymore. He couldn't move them to walk and run. His four good friends wanted to take him to Jesus. They knew Jesus could make his legs work again. If only they could get to Jesus! But there were so many people in the little house. What could they do?



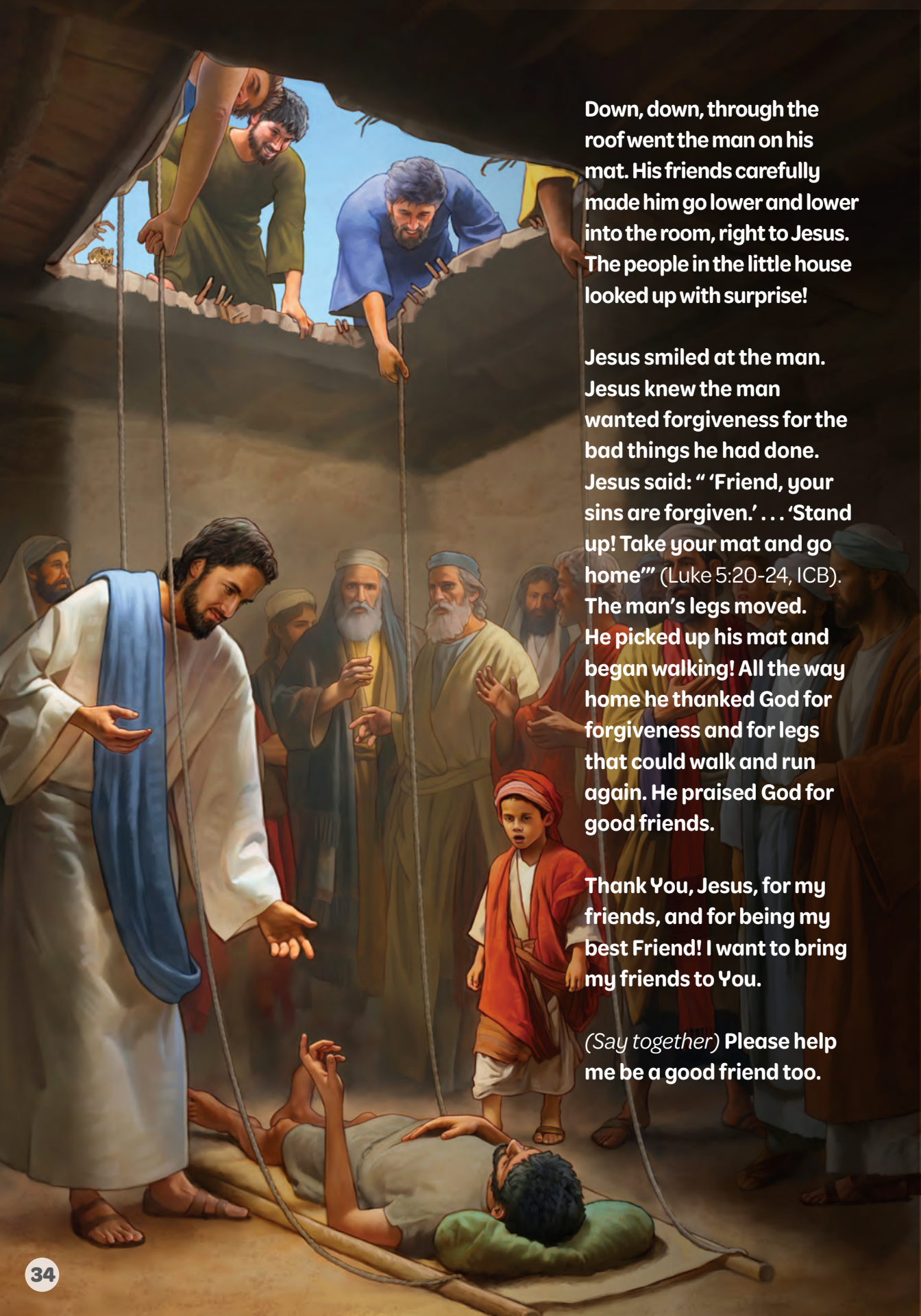
The four friends tried to carry the man through the front door of the little house, but there were too many people! They couldn't help him through a window—it was too small! How would they help their friend see Jesus? The four friends cared for the man on the mat. They were kind and helpful friends. They would look for another way to Jesus.





The four friends looked and looked (*hand at forehead searching*). Ah, there was a way! The roof—through the top of the house! Very carefully they climbed one step . . . two steps . . . They carried their friend all the way up to the flat top of the little house. They scratched away the straw and mud to make a hole in the roof. The man lying on his mat smiled at his four good friends. He was going to see Jesus!





Down, down, through the roof went the man on his mat. His friends carefully made him go lower and lower into the room, right to Jesus. The people in the little house looked up with surprise!

Jesus smiled at the man. Jesus knew the man wanted forgiveness for the bad things he had done. Jesus said: " 'Friend, your sins are forgiven.' . . . 'Stand up! Take your mat and go home'" (Luke 5:20-24, ICB). The man's legs moved. He picked up his mat and began walking! All the way home he thanked God for forgiveness and for legs that could walk and run again. He praised God for good friends.

Thank You, Jesus, for my friends, and for being my best Friend! I want to bring my friends to You.

*(Say together)* Please help me be a good friend too.

# play

## throughout the Day

### Explore

Re-create the story using sticks, leaves, and bark to create a house. Take a piece of cloth, tie a thread to its four corners, draw and cut out a paper man, and lay him on the cloth bed. Make a hole in the “roof” and send down the “sick man.” Thank Jesus together for healing the sick man in such an amazing way, and for his four kind friends who brought him to Jesus.

### Create

Invite one of your friends to Sabbath School. Create a special invitation, then mail it or deliver it to their home.

### Worship

In worship, re-create the story using a blanket and some teddy bears. Read the story from your Bible or the lesson again. Take turns giving your child a turn to be carried around the room in the blanket by holding each of the corners.

### Connect

Think about a friend (who may also be a family member) who may need your help or encouragement. Spend time making a card, gift, or practicing a song to sing, to encourage this person.

### Pray

Choose a different friend to pray for each day this week. Model praying for that person and then ask your child if they would like to pray too.





## THE HEART OF THE MATTER

For You, Parents

How blessed the man with paralysis was, to have four good friends. These friends were so invested in his life, health, and happiness that they personally *carried him to Jesus*. They didn't just stop at the first roadblock. No! They thought outside the box and created a solution that would allow their friend to come close to the Savior. Then they watched with joy as Jesus healed him—wholly and fully. His life was changed forever. They too would never be the same.

You have an opportunity to be one of these friends. Whom will you carry to Jesus? How will you go out of your way to help someone discover His love, forgiveness, and healing? What obstacles are you willing to overcome in order to get them there?

The four friends didn't judge their friend with paralysis. They didn't allow polite society to keep him at the edge of the crowd. They found a way to bring him right to Jesus. "Now, in words that fell like music on the sufferer's ear, the Savior said, 'Son, be of good cheer; thy sins be forgiven thee.' The burden of despair rolls from the sick man's soul; the peace of forgiveness rests upon his spirit, and shines out upon his countenance. His physical pain is gone, and his whole being is transformed" (Ellen G. White, *The Desire of Ages*, p. 268).

Imagine the joy, amazement, and wonder!

As you go throughout this week, intentionally invest in friendship. Ask God to help you to find time and create opportunities for meaningful connections. That's not always easy in this phase of life. We need His help! Saturate your friendship in prayer. You may even consider boldly having a short prayer to begin a conversation. Your children will watch how you do friendship and model your ways. Make Jesus your best Friend and ask Him to help you as you grow friendships for Him.

"This is My commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you" (John 15:12).

**BIG IDEA:** Jesus gives me gifts so that I can care for others.

Week 5



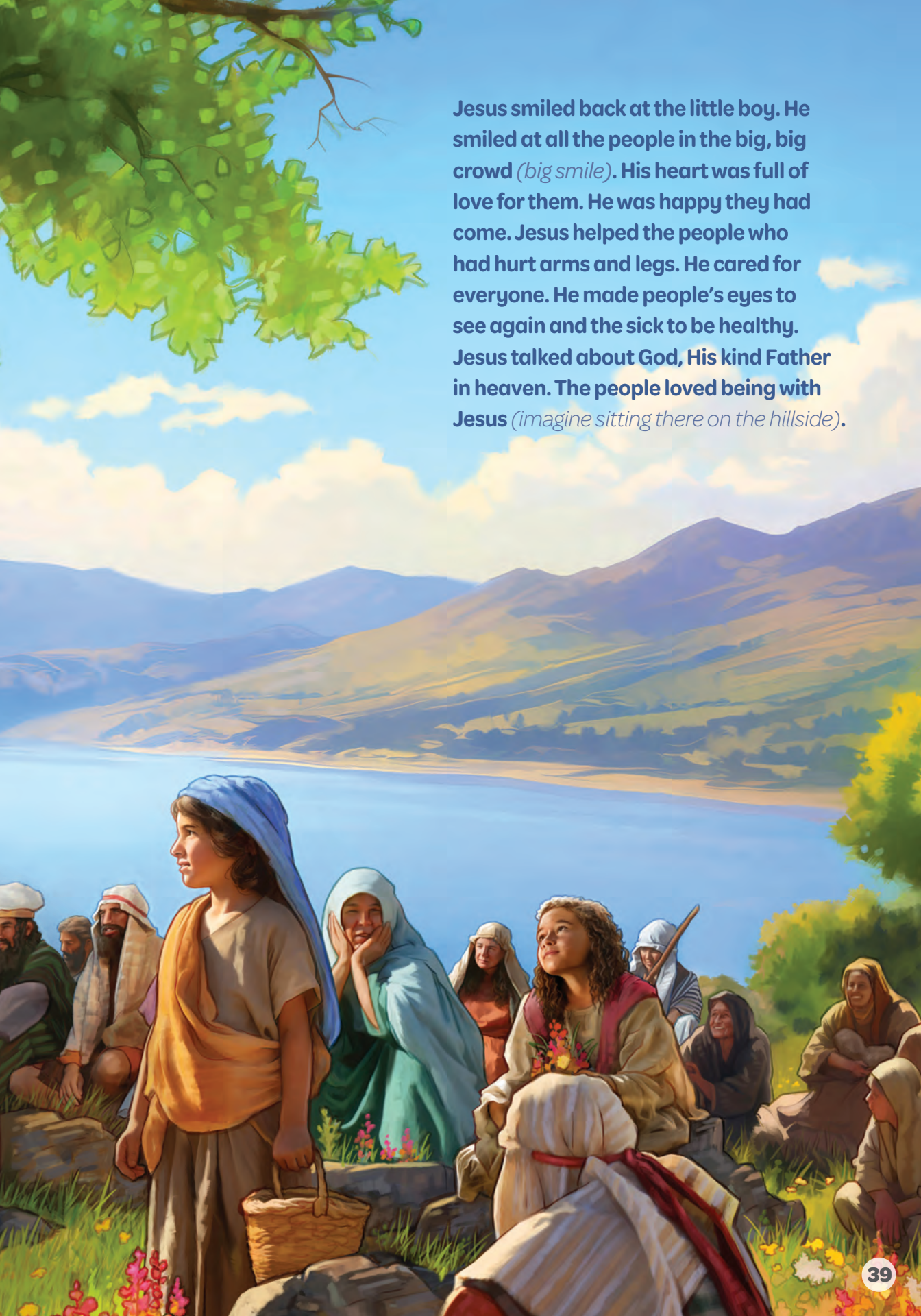
# A Little Boy's Lunch



This lesson is based on Matthew 14:13-21; Mark 6:31-44; Luke 9:12-17; John 6:1-14; and *The Desire of Ages*, pp. 364-371.



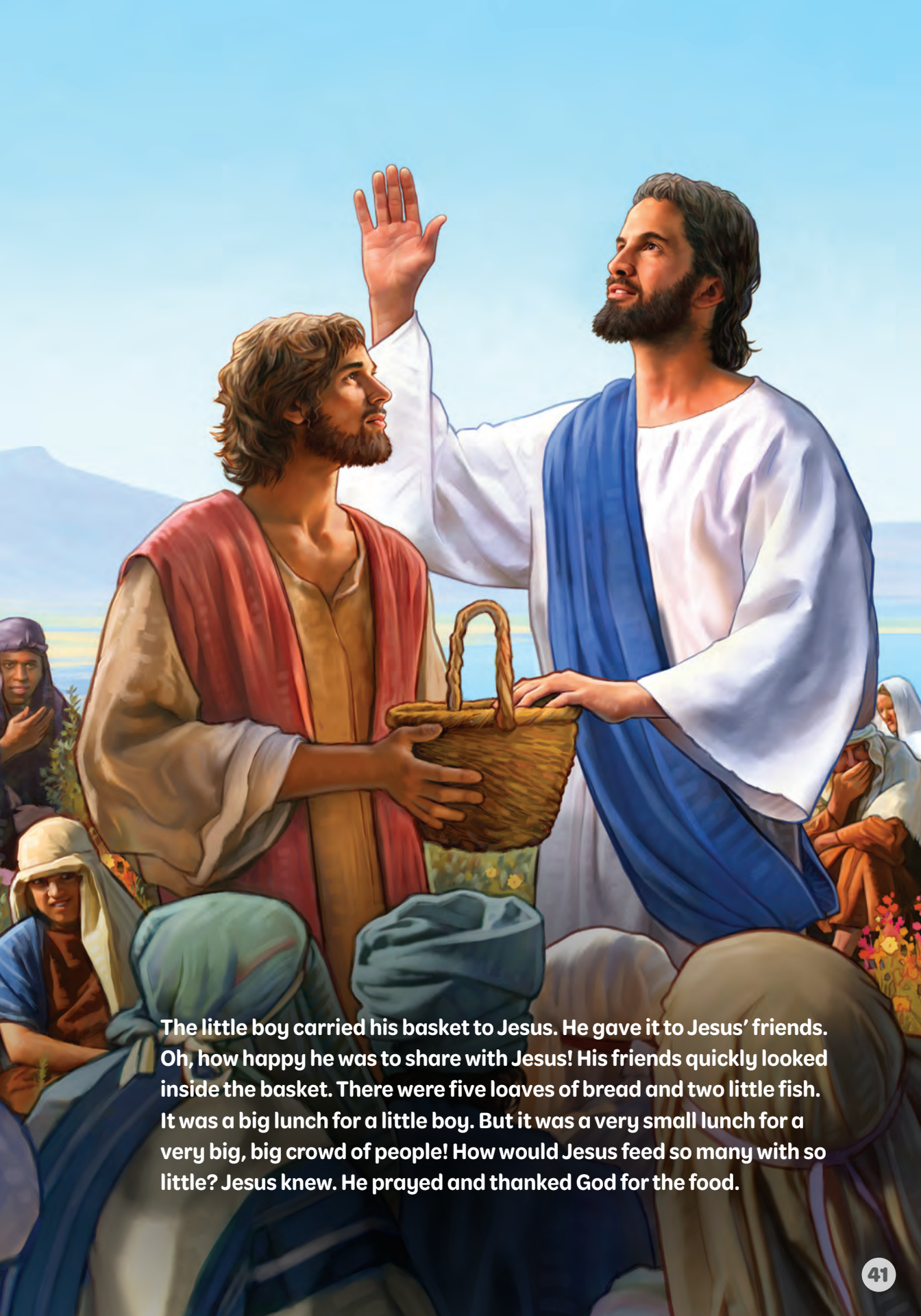
**T**he morning sun was bright and warm. The grassy hillside was dotted with pretty flowers. Butterflies flitted about. Birds sang in the trees. Jesus and His friends sat in the shade under a tree. A big, big (*stretch arms out*) crowd of people sat before Him. There were too many people to count! The people watched (*cup eyes*) and listened (*cup ear*). A little boy stood on the hillside and listened too. He was so happy to be there. He smiled up at Jesus (*big smile*).



Jesus smiled back at the little boy. He smiled at all the people in the big, big crowd (*big smile*). His heart was full of love for them. He was happy they had come. Jesus helped the people who had hurt arms and legs. He cared for everyone. He made people's eyes to see again and the sick to be healthy. Jesus talked about God, His kind Father in heaven. The people loved being with Jesus (*imagine sitting there on the hillside*).

The day would soon be over. The little boy's tummy began to rumble (*rub tummy*). He was hungry! The people beside him were hungry too. They had been there all day without anything to eat! Jesus' friends wanted to help them. But how? Jesus asked them to find out if anyone had something to eat. Mothers shook their heads . . . no (*shake head*). Fathers shook their heads . . . no (*shake head*). No one had any food! The little boy looked in his basket. He had some food! (*Clap hands.*) He would share it with Jesus.





The little boy carried his basket to Jesus. He gave it to Jesus' friends. Oh, how happy he was to share with Jesus! His friends quickly looked inside the basket. There were five loaves of bread and two little fish. It was a big lunch for a little boy. But it was a very small lunch for a very big, big crowd of people! How would Jesus feed so many with so little? Jesus knew. He prayed and thanked God for the food.

One by one, Jesus took one . . . two . . . three . . . four . . . five loaves of bread from the basket and broke them. There became more and more bread! Enough bread for everyone! Jesus then took one . . . two fish from the basket. Would there be enough fish too? There was! Everyone had so much to eat. The little boy was amazed. Jesus had made his food grow and grow to feed everyone.

*(Say together)* Thank You, Jesus, for the gifts  
You give me so that I can help care for others.



# play

## throughout the Day

### Retell the Story

Go on a picnic. Ahead of time, cut some food into the shape of a fish. Put these “fish” along with small pieces of bread into a basket and hide them under a kitchen towel. This will be your miracle “surprise food.” Invite your child to help pack a basket for a picnic. Count together as you put five small pieces of bread and two pieces of “fish” into the basket, then cover those with a cloth. Sit on a picnic blanket to tell the story. Thank God for the food, then take out five pieces of bread.. Reach into the basket again to find there is more bread and more “fish.” Exclaim, “There is enough for everyone!” Show your child that you had hidden the extra underneath. Talk with them about how what Jesus did was something amazing only He could do.

### Play

Set up a “Caring Center” with dolls or stuffed animals, bandages, child-safe ice packs, pretend food, and books. Talk with your child about how they can also help care for others by using kind, gentle words, taking time to read or play with someone, and sharing what they have.

### Give

Write a list of things we can do to help others. Let your child think of as many

ideas as possible. Choose an idea from the list each day to complete together. Pack bags with nonperishable food, socks and warm clothing items, toothbrushes and toothpaste, soap, and other personal-care items. Make and decorate small cards for each bag and write 1 Peter 5:7: “Give all your worries to him, because he cares for you” (ICB). Talk with your child about how Jesus can use their gift to help others who are in need and to show each person that He cares for them. Donate bags to a homeless shelter or other community organization.

### Share

Bake small loaves of bread with your child. Help them measure and pour each ingredient and knead the dough with their hands. Make enough to share with a neighbor or someone they know who is sick or hurt. Talk with your child about how their act of kindness can show others that Jesus cares for them.

### Connect

Sit outside and talk about what it would have been like to be part of the crowd that day on the mountainside. Imagine the people’s faces as they saw the little lunch grow bigger before their eyes!

### Pray

As you say grace and thank God for your food this week, reflect on the many things Jesus gives us. Ask your child to list the foods they enjoy most and thank God for them. Teach your child a grace song and sing it together at mealtimes.



# THE HEART OF THE MATTER

## For You, Parents

Have you ever been completely and utterly overwhelmed? Maybe it was finding out you were about to become a parent. Perhaps it was those first few hazy weeks of your new baby's life. The disciples were a little overwhelmed on the Galilee hillside that day. Faced with a hungry crowd, Jesus told them, "You give them something to eat" (Luke 9:13). They couldn't fathom where to begin to find enough food for the crowd, or how they'd pay for it. Again and again, Jesus proves that He is big enough to deal with the overwhelming facts, the impossibilities, and the clouds of doubt that we face.

"How often our hearts sink, and faith fails us, as we see how great is the need and how small the means in our hands. Like Andrew looking upon the five barley loaves and the two little fishes, we exclaim 'What are they among so many?' Often we hesitate, unwilling to give all that we have, fearing to spend and to be spent for others. But Jesus has bidden us, 'Give ye them to eat.' His command is a promise; and behind it is the same power that fed the multitude beside the sea" (Ellen G. White, *The Desire of Ages*, p. 369).

Jesus wants us to see the needs of those around us. When we are overwhelmed with the situations we face, Jesus offers to be our strength and support. He has given you special gifts and talents. However small they may seem, they have the potential to nurture others and lead them to Jesus. An act of kindness, a word of encouragement, the giving of time, or a listening ear are all things we can give—and God will multiply them and bless abundantly. How encouraging to know that we have access to the same power that fed the multitude that day.

For truly, "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me" (Philippians 4:13).



**BIG IDEA:** Jesus helps me to be thankful.

Week 6

# One *Thankful* Man



This lesson is based on Luke 17:11-19 and *The Desire of Ages*, p. 348.

**P**at, pat went their sandals on the grass. Jesus and His friends smiled and talked as they walked. The warm sun shone brightly as they talked about the amazing things Jesus had said and done. Jesus was amazing. He was God's Son.



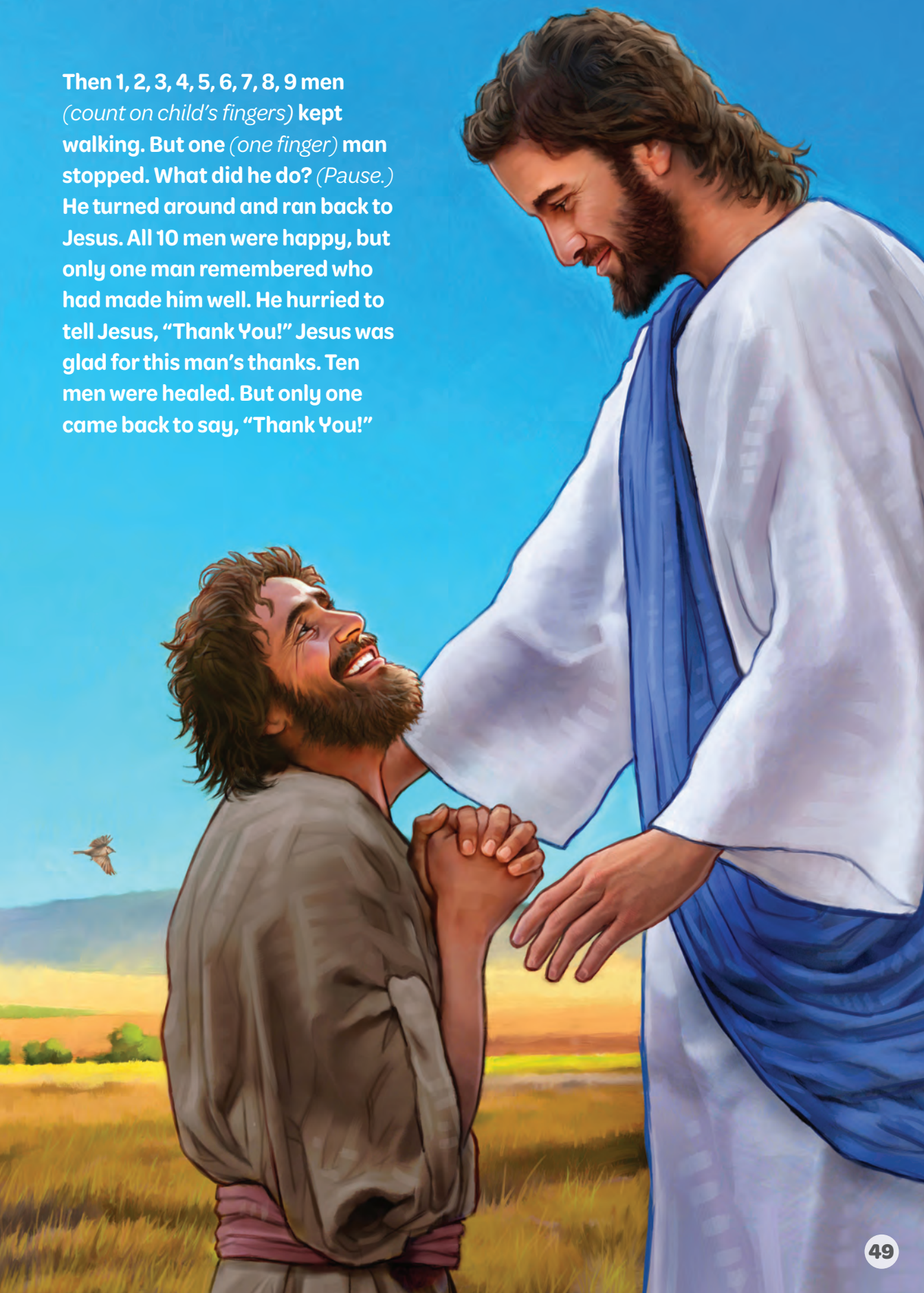
**One day** (*count to 10 on child's fingers*) **1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10** men called out to Jesus, "Jesus! . . . Please help us!" (Luke 17:13, ICB). These **10** men were very sick. White spots were on their skin, and bandages covered their awful sores. They had a terrible sickness called leprosy. The **10** men couldn't live with their families, or their families might get sick too. No one wanted to be near them.

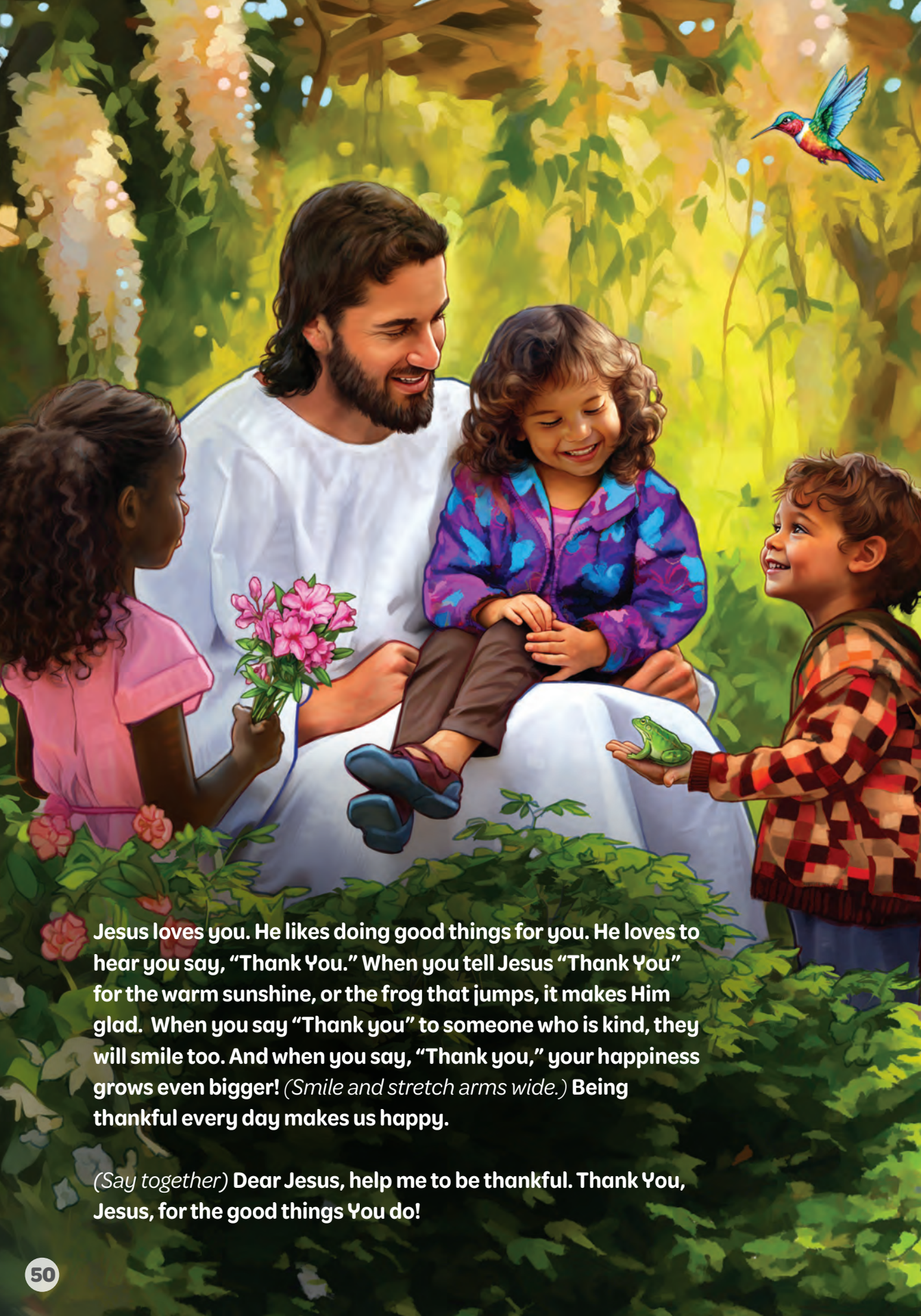


Jesus loved the 10 men. He was glad they asked for His help. Jesus came close to them. He wasn't afraid of their sickness. Jesus told them to go see the leaders of the temple. Yes, they would! The 10 men turned and rushed to the temple. As they walked, their white spots disappeared! Jesus had made them well! Ten happy men cheered and clapped with joy (*clap*).



Then 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9 men  
(count on child's fingers) kept  
walking. But one (one finger) man  
stopped. What did he do? (Pause.)  
He turned around and ran back to  
Jesus. All 10 men were happy, but  
only one man remembered who  
had made him well. He hurried to  
tell Jesus, "Thank You!" Jesus was  
glad for this man's thanks. Ten  
men were healed. But only one  
came back to say, "Thank You!"





Jesus loves you. He likes doing good things for you. He loves to hear you say, "Thank You." When you tell Jesus "Thank You" for the warm sunshine, or the frog that jumps, it makes Him glad. When you say "Thank you" to someone who is kind, they will smile too. And when you say, "Thank you," your happiness grows even bigger! *(Smile and stretch arms wide.)* Being thankful every day makes us happy.

*(Say together)* Dear Jesus, help me to be thankful. Thank You, Jesus, for the good things You do!

# play

throughout  
the Day

## Bring the Story Alive

Use flour to make white marks on your child's arms and hands, then wrap with a white strip of cloth. Tell the story. When the spots suddenly disappear, unwrap the white cloths by rubbing gently to take the flour off their skin. Clap for joy with your child! Thank Jesus for healing the 10 men of leprosy.

## Create

Create "Thankful" place mats together. Use a large blank 11" x 17" (A3) piece of paper to draw things for which you are thankful. Laminate, if possible, and use at your table for meals this week. As you say grace, thank God for some of the things drawn on the place mats. Alternatively, add a new drawing each day about something you are thankful for and display it as a picture in your home.

## Explore

Go for a "Thankful" walk in nature at a local park or around the neighborhood. Take turns saying, "Thank You, God, for the \_\_\_\_\_."

## Learn

Create a little cue as a visual reminder for times when your child could say "Thank you" for something (for example, you could wink, pull on your ear, tap your shoulder, etc.). Turn it into a little game and practice it throughout the day. Watch for opportunities to gently encourage your child to remember to say "Please" and "Thank you" appropriately.

## Connect

Spend time making thank-you cards for people who serve the community (for example, Sabbath School teachers, pastors, firefighters, nurses, or doctors). Deliver them during the week.

## Pray

Bedtime Routine of Thanks: At bedtime, ask your child what made them smile that day. Say this prayer of thankfulness with your child:

Help me to remember and say,  
"Thank You, dear Jesus!" every day.  
Thank You for my smile today.  
Thank You for: *(name three things with your child)*.  
Amen.



# THE HEART OF THE MATTER

## For You, Parents

Being thankful is good for you! It makes you happy and well. In this story 10 men were healed physically, but Jesus said to the one who said thank You, *“Your faith has made you well”* (Luke 17:19). What a wonderful response! Jesus wants us to give thanks so we can be **whole** too!

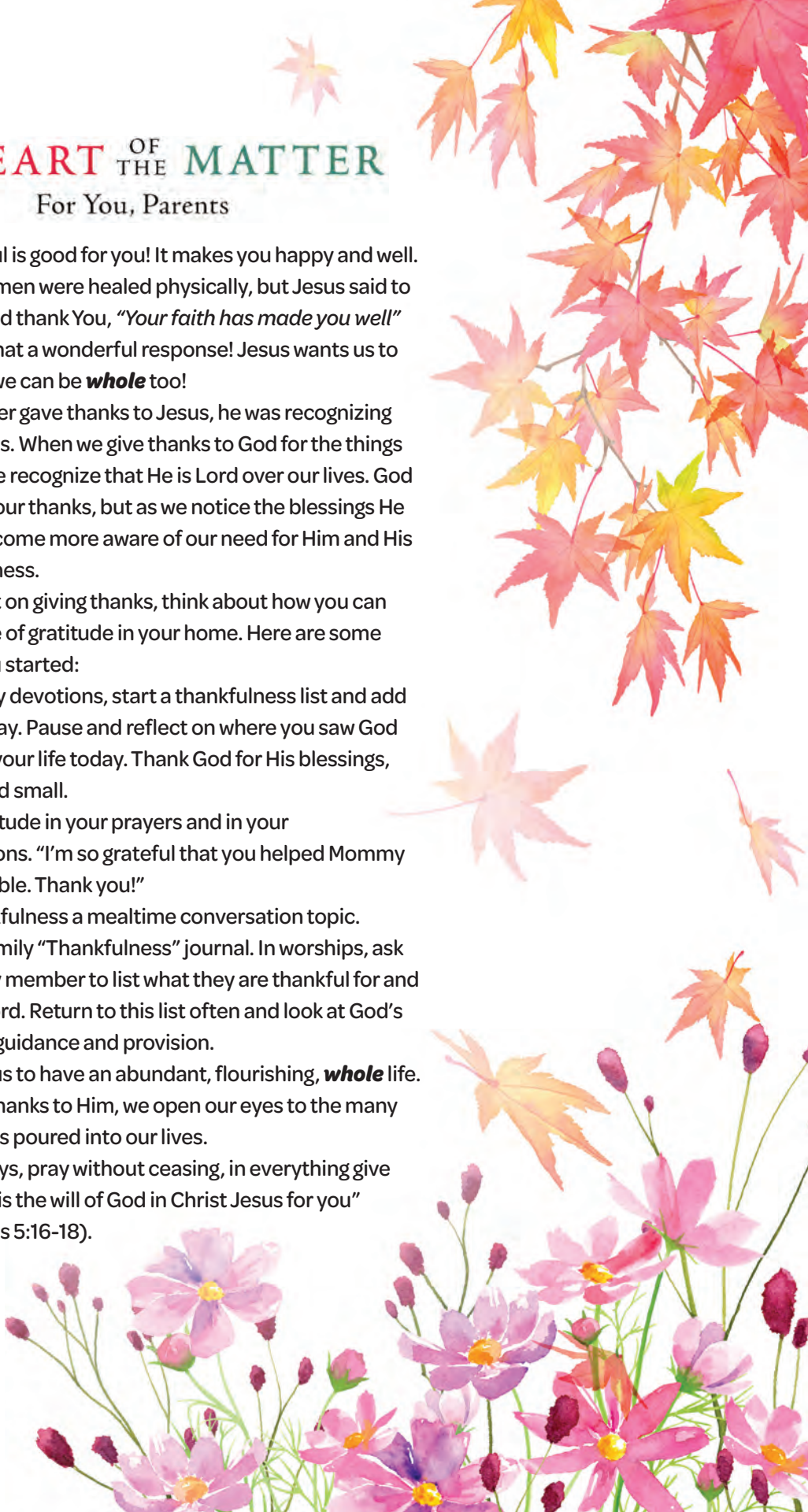
When the leper gave thanks to Jesus, he was recognizing Jesus’ greatness. When we give thanks to God for the things He has done, we recognize that He is Lord over our lives. God does not need our thanks, but as we notice the blessings He gives us, we become more aware of our need for Him and His constant goodness.

As you reflect on giving thanks, think about how you can create a culture of gratitude in your home. Here are some ideas to get you started:

- In your daily devotions, start a thankfulness list and add to it each day. Pause and reflect on where you saw God working in your life today. Thank God for His blessings, both big and small.
- Model gratitude in your prayers and in your conversations. “I’m so grateful that you helped Mommy clear the table. Thank you!”
- Make thankfulness a mealtime conversation topic.
- Create a family “Thankfulness” journal. In worships, ask each family member to list what they are thankful for and keep a record. Return to this list often and look at God’s wonderful guidance and provision.

Jesus wants us to have an abundant, flourishing, **whole** life. When we give thanks to Him, we open our eyes to the many blessings He has poured into our lives.

“Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, in everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you” (1 Thessalonians 5:16-18).



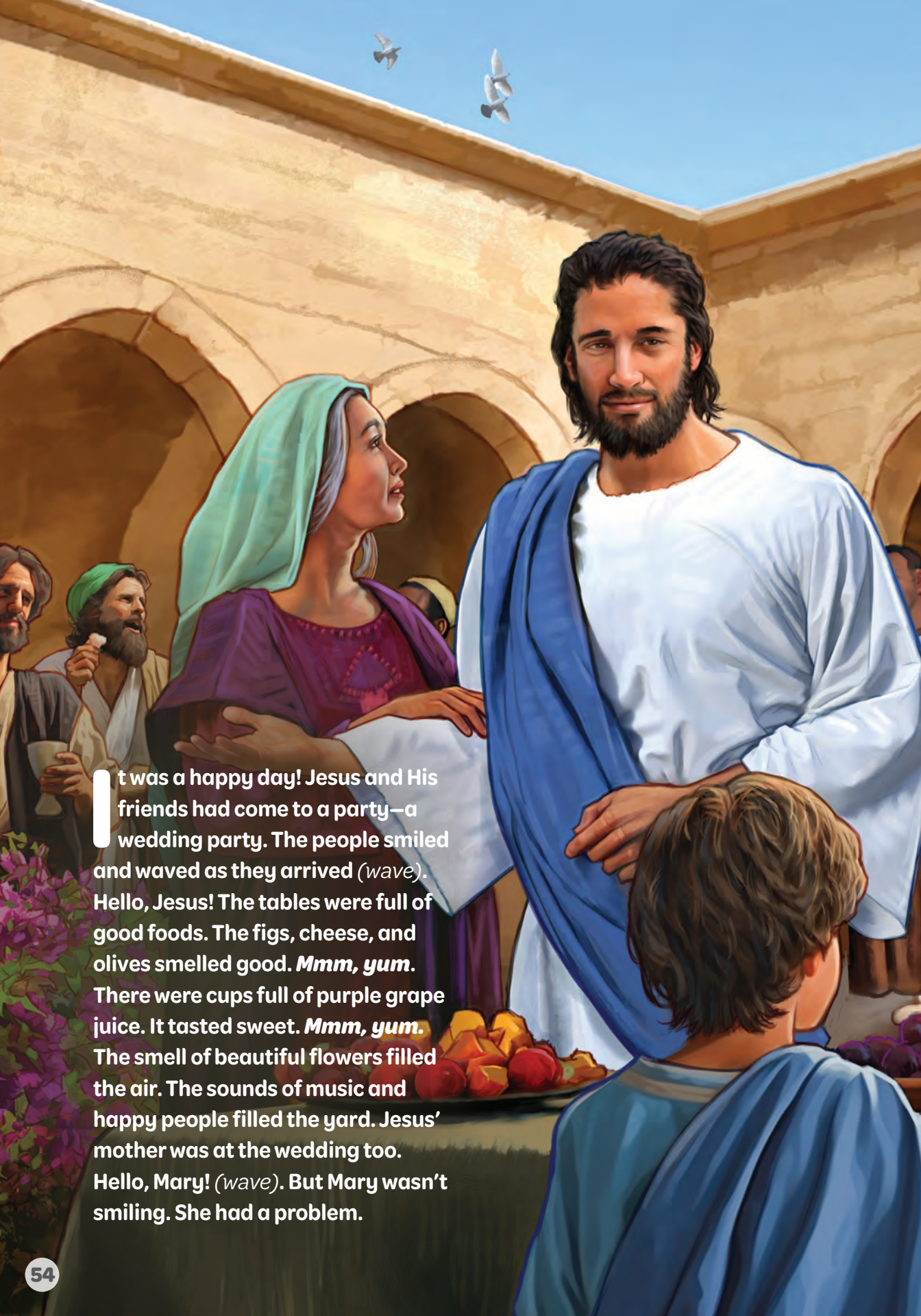
**BIG IDEA:** Jesus cares about my problems.

Week 7: Jesus performs His first miracle

# The Wedding Miracle



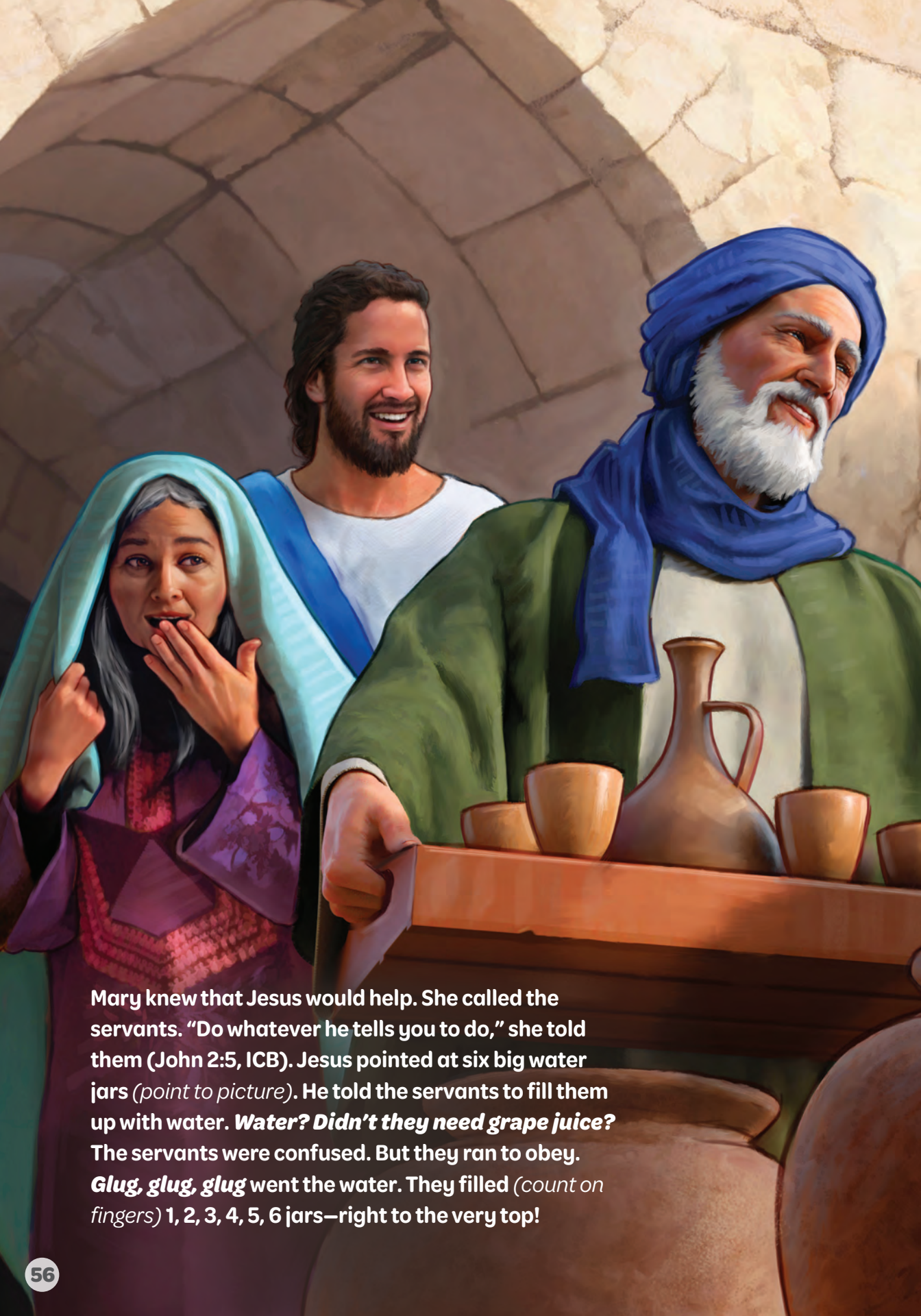
This lesson is based on John 2:1-11 and *The Desire of Ages*, pp. 144–153.



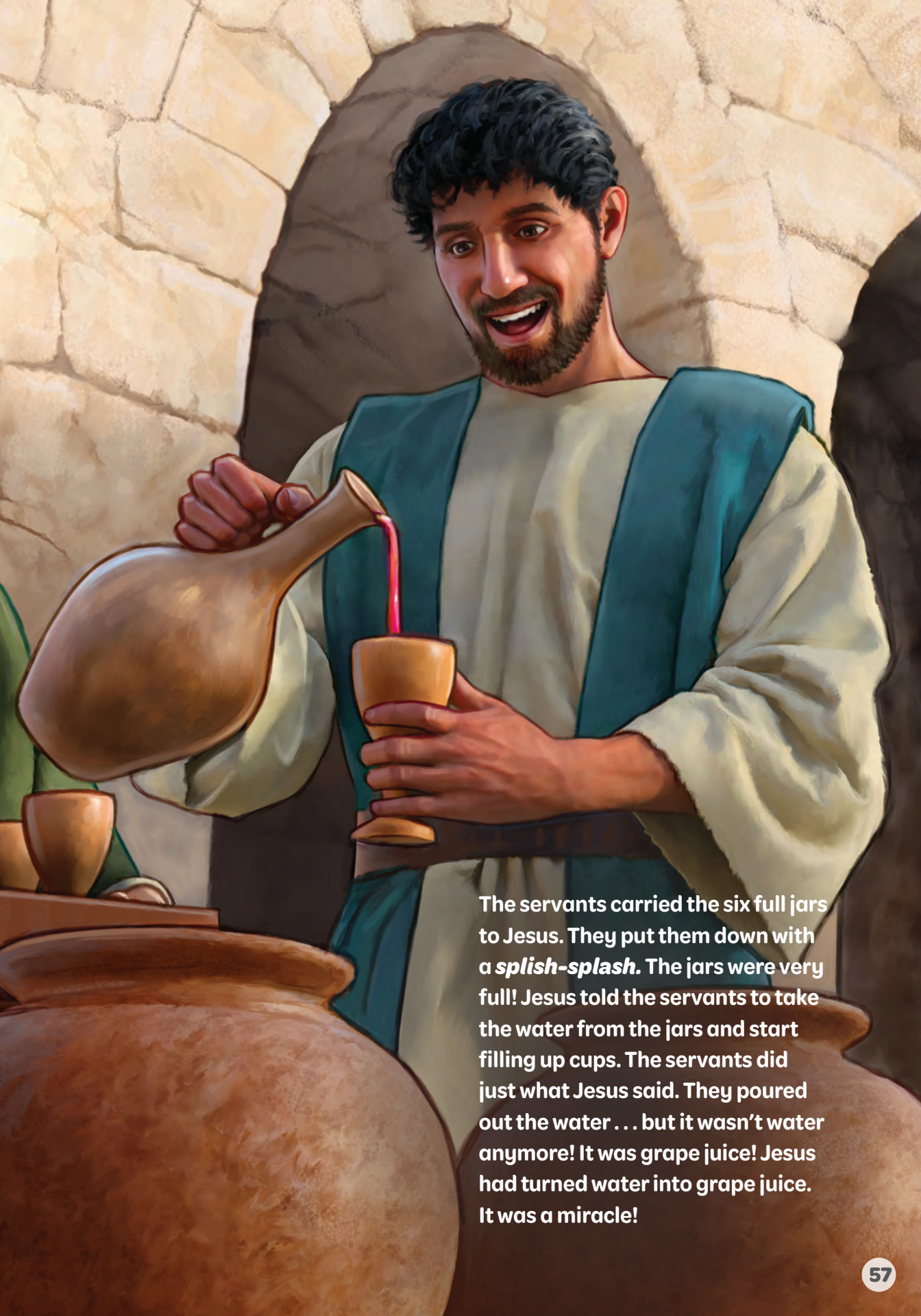
It was a happy day! Jesus and His friends had come to a party—a wedding party. The people smiled and waved as they arrived (*wave*). Hello, Jesus! The tables were full of good foods. The figs, cheese, and olives smelled good. **Mmm, yum.** There were cups full of purple grape juice. It tasted sweet. **Mmm, yum.** The smell of beautiful flowers filled the air. The sounds of music and happy people filled the yard. Jesus' mother was at the wedding too. Hello, Mary! (*wave*). But Mary wasn't smiling. She had a problem.

Mary hurried over to Jesus. She stood up tall on her tippy toes. Then she whispered her problem to Jesus. (*Whisper*) **They have no more grape juice.** Oh, no! There were lots of happy people at the wedding party. And lots of good food to eat. But they had run out of grape juice. And it was too late to buy anymore. What a big problem!





Mary knew that Jesus would help. She called the servants. “Do whatever he tells you to do,” she told them (John 2:5, ICB). Jesus pointed at six big water jars (*point to picture*). He told the servants to fill them up with water. **Water? Didn’t they need grape juice?** The servants were confused. But they ran to obey. **Glug, glug, glug** went the water. They filled (*count on fingers*) 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 jars—right to the very top!



The servants carried the six full jars to Jesus. They put them down with a *splish-splash*. The jars were very full! Jesus told the servants to take the water from the jars and start filling up cups. The servants did just what Jesus said. They poured out the water . . . but it wasn't water anymore! It was grape juice! Jesus had turned water into grape juice. It was a miracle!

The servants carried the cups of grape juice out to the people. They smiled to see its deep red color. It smelled so good. *Mmm, yum.* Then they took a big sip. *Mmm, yum!* It was so sweet. It was the best grape juice they had ever tasted! The people were so happy. Jesus had cared about their problem. He had helped them.

Jesus cares for me and my feelings. I can tell Him everything.

*(Say together)* Thank You, Jesus, for caring about my problems.



# play

## throughout the Day

### Explore

Buy some grape juice, or something similar, if possible. Pour a cup of water and a cup of grape juice and ask your child to describe the look and taste of both drinks. Can you turn the water into grape juice? No! Jesus did a big miracle! (Describe a miracle as being something that only God can do.) Thank God for His love and care for us and our problems.

### Learn

Set up a water play table outside. Use a big plastic tub and fill it with water. Find lots of little containers and use them in the big tub. Talk about the words “full” and “empty.” Practice making different containers full and then empty. Share how Jesus turned the empty jars into full jars of grape juice.

### Celebrate

Host a little celebration picnic outside in the backyard or a park. You could dress up, pick some flowers, decorate your picnic nicely, and invite friends over to celebrate. Set a place for Jesus and share what you love about Him. Invite others to share too. Explain that He is always with us. He loves to make us happy.

### Create

Draw a “happy” picture together. Ask your child which colors make them feel happy. Ask them what things make them happy. Use these suggestions to create your “happy” picture. Talk about how Jesus loves to make us happy.

### Pray

On a piece of paper, write down some problems your child might face. Talk about how Jesus can help them through those problems. Say this quarter’s memory verse: “He cares for you” (1 Peter 5:7). Say a special prayer, thanking Jesus for caring for us and helping us with our problems.





THE **HEART** OF THE **MATTER**  
For You, Parents

Jesus' first miracle was all about joy and compassion for human need. He is, after all, the Giver and Creator of joy. He desires for us to be filled with joy, overflowing with His love and peace. For His first miracle He could have marched into the temple and healed everyone in sight, or freed His people from their Roman oppressors, but instead He chose a humble Cana wedding to show "His sympathy with men, and His desire to minister to their happiness" (Ellen G. White, *The Desire of Ages*, p. 144).

Mary came to Jesus with a problem. This problem was stealing her joy and threatened to disrupt the joy of the wedding celebration. She came full of faith that Jesus could do the impossible. How amazing that Jesus honored Mary's faith in such a public way! Whatever problems you face, nothing is too small to take to Jesus. He longs to give you, your family, and your friends the joy that only He can give.

"If our eyes are fixed on Jesus, we shall see a compassionate Redeemer, and shall catch light from His countenance. Wherever His Spirit reigns, there peace abides. And there will be joy also, for there is a calm, holy trust in God" (*The Desire of Ages*, pp. 152, 153).

May God bless you this week as you catch light from His countenance. And may you experience His joy as you take your problems, both large and small, to Him, for "in Your presence is fullness of joy" (Psalm 16:11).

**BIG IDEA:** Jesus helps me and my family.

Week 8

# Jesus Heals *a Mother*



This lesson is based on Matthew 8:14, 15; Mark 1:29-31; Luke 4:38-39; and *The Desire of Ages*, p. 259.



**M**other liked to hum happy songs as she worked in her home by the Sea of Galilee. *Hum-hum-hum*. She swept the floors. *Sweep, sweep*. She dusted the shelf. *Swish, swish*. She filled up the water jars. *Splish, splash*. And she hummed some more. *Hum-hum-hum*. Mother stirred the big pot of yummy food. She liked to make people happy. She was always helping others.

**Do you know a special mother who likes to help? Jesus loves helpful mothers, grandmothers, and caregivers. He gives them extra love for hugs (*hug*), smiles (*smile*), tickles (*tickle*), and giggles (*laugh*). He gives them extra love for kisses (*kiss cheek*). He gives them extra love for listening ears (*cup ear*), and making frowns turn into smiles (*smile*). Jesus helps mothers to be our helpers. Do you know a special mother like this?**

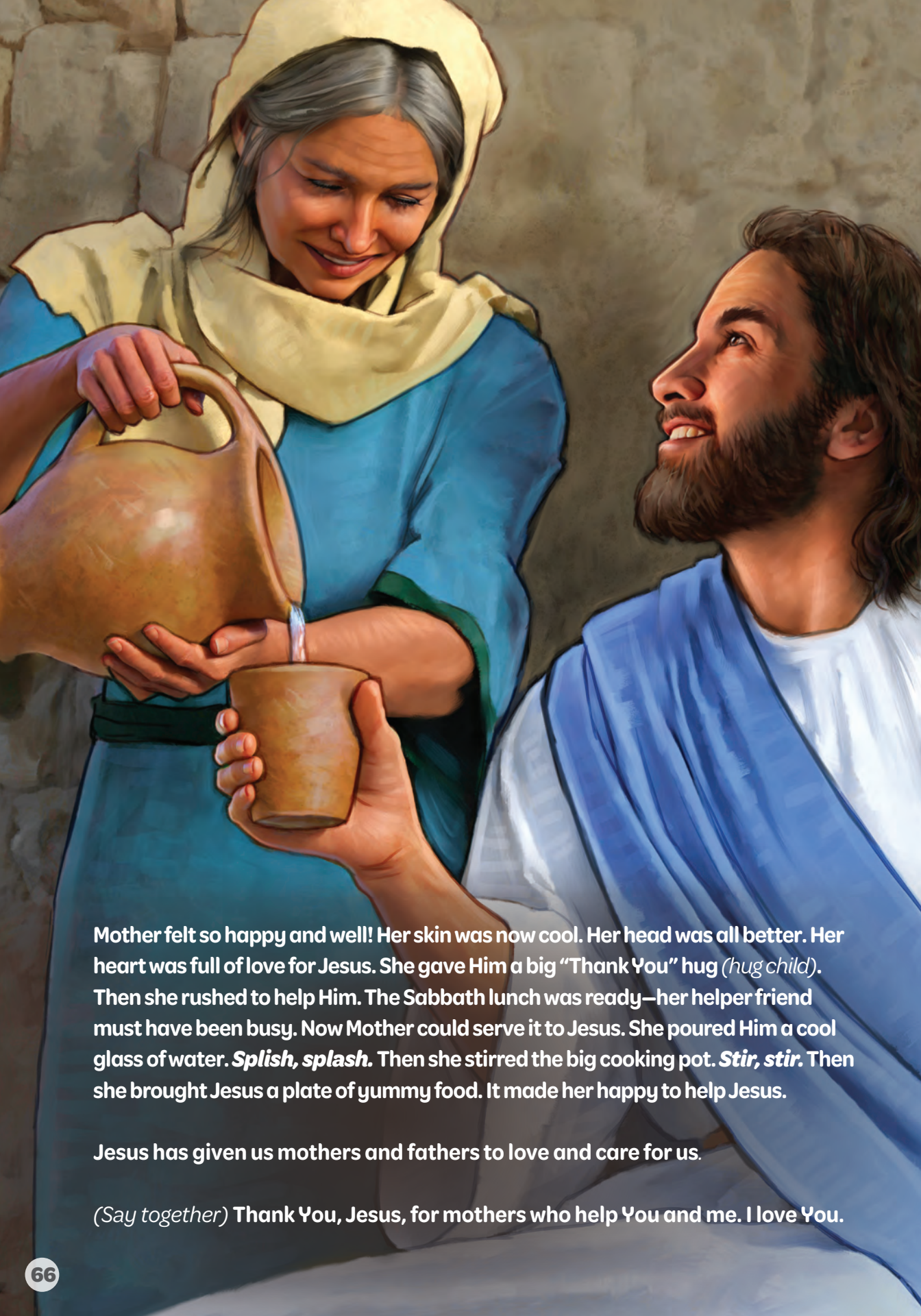


One Sabbath morning Peter's mother-in-law woke up, ready to love and help others. But she couldn't get out of bed. Her skin was hot. Her eyes were sleepy. Her head was very sore. She was sick. Very sick. Poor Mother! Who could help her?





***Knock, knock.*** Mother's helper ran to the door. There was Jesus! He had come to her house for Sabbath lunch. Maybe He could help! Jesus smiled at her. Yes, He would love to help Mother. He went straight to Mother's bed. She was too sick to get up. Jesus gently took her by the hand. He lifted her up. And just like that, Jesus made her all better!



Mother felt so happy and well! Her skin was now cool. Her head was all better. Her heart was full of love for Jesus. She gave Him a big “Thank You” hug (*hug child*). Then she rushed to help Him. The Sabbath lunch was ready—her helper friend must have been busy. Now Mother could serve it to Jesus. She poured Him a cool glass of water. ***Splish, splash.*** Then she stirred the big cooking pot. ***Stir, stir.*** Then she brought Jesus a plate of yummy food. It made her happy to help Jesus.

Jesus has given us mothers and fathers to love and care for us.

(*Say together*) Thank You, Jesus, for mothers who help You and me. I love You.

# play

## throughout the Day

### Create

Help your child create a love gift for a mother in their life: their mother (this may be you); grandmother; aunt; or caregiver. Draw a big heart and help your child to color and decorate it. Talk about how special mothers are to us. They are special to Jesus too! Pray together for this mother. Then have your child give them their love gift.

### Connect

Spend time doing “helping” activities with your child. Patiently involve them in parts of household jobs that you or your spouse usually do on your own. Even just handing you items in the kitchen will make them feel like helpers and show them how much parents and caregivers do to help them.

### Play

Role-play doctors and nurses with your child. Build empathy and compassion by asking “patients” how they are and what they need. Take time to “bandage wounds, give medicine, and check temperatures.” Share with your child how happy it makes Jesus when we show kindness to people who are hurting.

### Explore

As you go for walks this week with your child (around your neighborhood or at the stores), be on the lookout for people you can help. Maybe you could open the door for someone at the stores or help someone carry something. You could watch out for any injured animals on your walk through the neighborhood, or practice caring for a pet at home. Praise your child for having helping hands like Jesus.

### Pray

In worship, think about some people you know who may be feeling down or unwell. Pray for them to feel better and to know God loves them. As a family, brainstorm some ways you could encourage them or help them feel better (for example, drop off a home-cooked meal, go for a visit, sing them a song). Choose one suggestion to complete on Sabbath afternoon.



# THE HEART OF THE MATTER

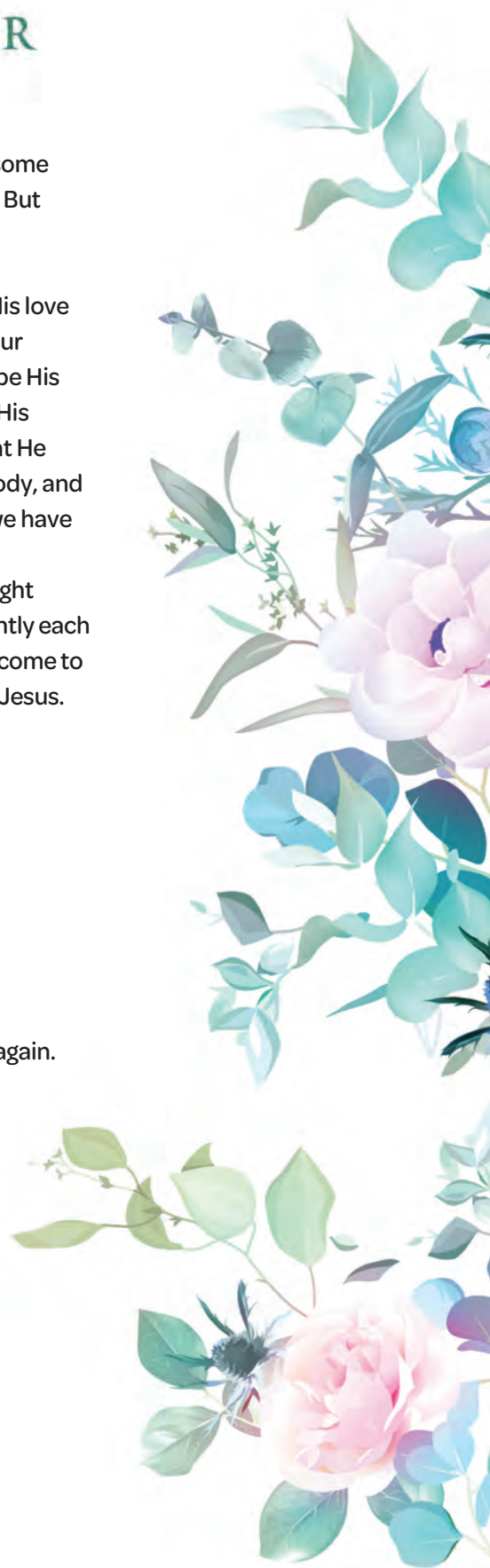
For You, Parents

Parenting is hard work. Some of us parent in couples, some supported by extended families, others by loyal friends. But none of us need to parent alone. Jesus promises to be our Helper.

Family is an important aspect of God's plan to show His love to the world. He values our efforts to love and care for our children, and none of our little tasks or challenges escape His notice. When we run out of patience, we can trust that His patience is eternal. When we feel tired, we can know that He never sleeps. He helps us to stay healthy in our mind, body, and soul. And when we ask, He fills the gaps between what we have to give and what is needed.

Spend time this week reflecting on this promise. Highlight different words that encourage or challenge you differently each day. Pray them out loud and personalize them. May you come to appreciate more deeply the beautiful Helper we have in Jesus.

“The Lord is the God who lives forever.  
He created all the world.  
He does not become tired or need to rest.  
No one can understand how great his wisdom is.  
The Lord gives strength to those who are tired.  
He gives more power to those who are weak.  
Even boys become tired and need to rest.  
Even young men trip and fall.  
But the people who trust the Lord will become strong again.  
They will be able to rise up as an eagle in the sky.  
They will run without needing rest.  
They will walk without becoming tired”  
(Isaiah 40:28-31, ICB).



**BIG IDEA:** Jesus is always with me.

Week 9

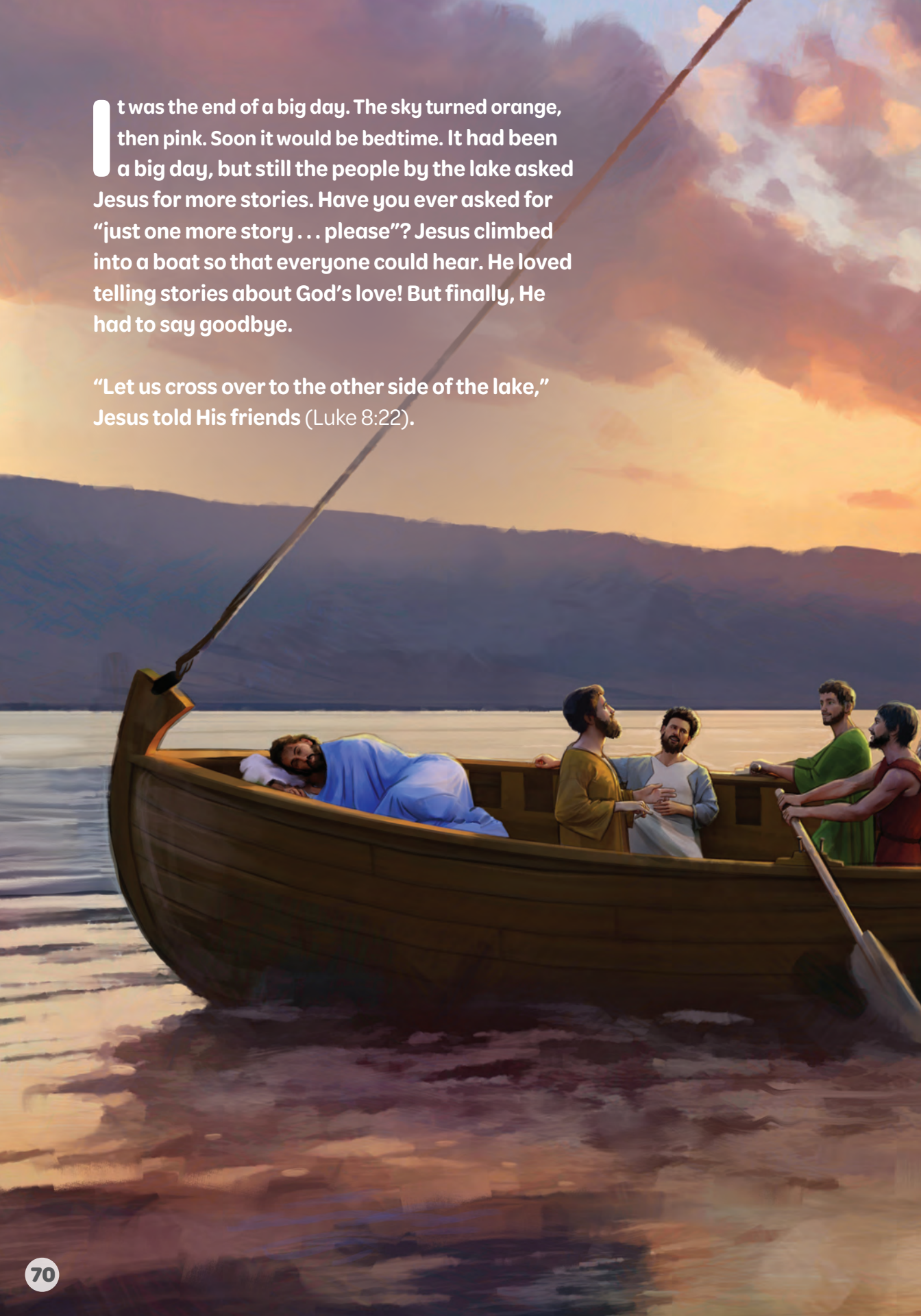
# “Peace, Be Still”



This lesson is based on Mark 4:35-41; Luke 8:22-25; Matthew 8:23-27; and *The Desire of Ages*, pp. 333-341.

**I**t was the end of a big day. The sky turned orange, then pink. Soon it would be bedtime. It had been a big day, but still the people by the lake asked Jesus for more stories. Have you ever asked for “just one more story . . . please”? Jesus climbed into a boat so that everyone could hear. He loved telling stories about God’s love! But finally, He had to say goodbye.

“Let us cross over to the other side of the lake,” Jesus told His friends (Luke 8:22).





The boat sailed away. The stars began to twinkle as the sky turned dark. Jesus was very tired. He stretched out and lay down in the back of the boat. The boat rocked softly back and forth on gentle waves (*slowly rock your child*). A soft breeze tickled His face. It was so peaceful, and Jesus fell fast asleep (*lay head on hands with palms together*).

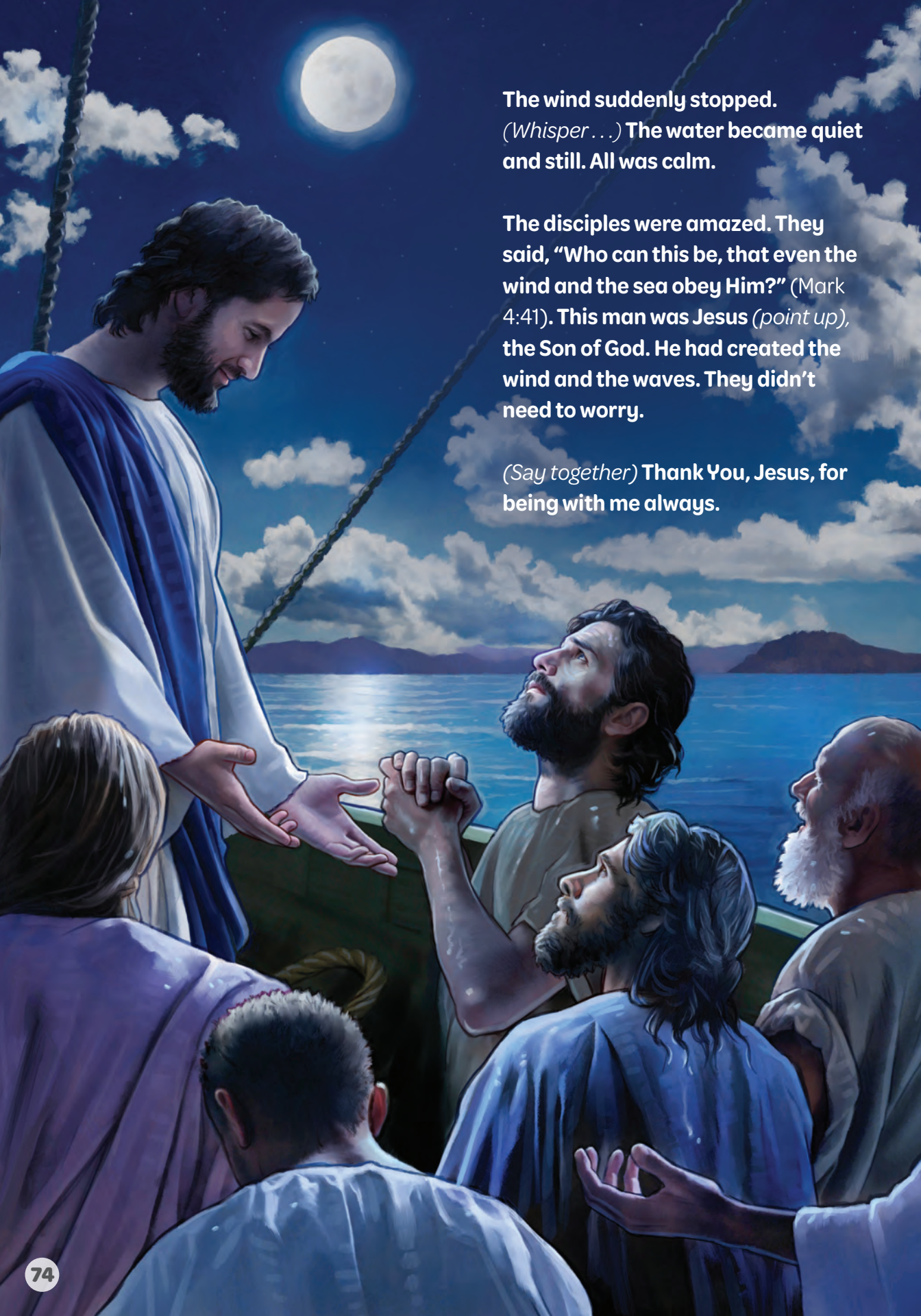
**Suddenly big clouds covered the moon. The gentle breeze began to blow stronger** (*blow, making sound of the wind*). **The waves rose higher. Still, Jesus slept. The boat began rocking faster and faster** (*rock quickly*). **Then big waves crashed into the boat** (*clap*). **Jesus' friends got very wet and very worried! Was Jesus worried?** (*Shake head side to side.*) **No, Jesus wasn't worried. He slept peacefully.**





The waves crashed (*clap hands*), and the wind howled. The disciples felt scared! Would the boat sink?

“Teacher!” they cried. Jesus opened His eyes. He saw they were scared. He saw that they had forgotten to trust in God. He stood up and spoke to the wind and the waves, “Peace, be still!” (Mark 4:35).



**The wind suddenly stopped.**  
*(Whisper . . .)* **The water became quiet and still. All was calm.**

**The disciples were amazed. They said, “Who can this be, that even the wind and the sea obey Him?”** (Mark 4:41). **This man was Jesus** *(point up)*, **the Son of God. He had created the wind and the waves. They didn’t need to worry.**

*(Say together)* **Thank You, Jesus, for being with me always.**

# play

## throughout the Day

### Create

Create a stormy sea in a bottle with your child. Fill a drink bottle half full of water. Add two or three drops of blue food coloring and one drop of green. Fill the bottle the rest of the way to the top with oil. You could add glitter or small plastic ocean animals. Close the lid very tightly. Tip the bottle side to side and watch the waves roll on the stormy sea.

### Explore

Set up a water play table by filling a big plastic container with water. Place a small plastic boat or other floating object (rubber duck) at one end of the container. Have your child blow on the toy to make it move across the water to the other side. Try other methods to move the boat across the water, such as using a straw to blow through or by making gentle waves with their hands in the water.

### Learn

Explore outside to find ways that God's creation obeys Him. For example: the sunrise or sunset, the stars and the moon that come out at night. Talk with your child about how God's creation shows us His loving care.

### Sing

Sing "See the Boat" (*Little Voices Praise Him*, no. 172) with the actions. This is a gentle lullaby-like song that tells the story of Jesus on the lake.

### Pray

Talk with your child about how Jesus was calm in the storm. When the wind was blowing, and the waves were crashing, He could sleep because He trusted in God to take care of Him and His friends. Even during a storm, we can be at peace because we know God is with us. Snuggle with a special stuffed animal or blanket and say a prayer, thanking God for watching over us *all the time*.





# THE **HEART** OF THE **MATTER**

## For You, Parents

Stormy weather can strike us at any moment. One minute it's bright skies and smooth sailing; the next, you're in a chaotic storm! Sometimes all it takes is a child with a cold or a new tooth to tip the boat. It's in these moments that God longs to bring you peace—real peace.

Aside from the precious family cargo in your boat, there's an incredible passenger: **Jesus**. When the waves of worry or fear crash over you, it can be easy to lose focus on Him. We look at the storm or how wet we're getting: depleted patience, drained energy, stressed nerves, raw relationships, or empty pockets. Look instead at who Jesus is, the source of love and all power over every situation. He's there with you, in your boat.

Just as you care for the needs of your child when they are afraid, God cares for you and wants to calm your anxiety. You can find rest in the midst of the storm because God is truly in control.

Think back on the ways God has blessed you in your past. Can you see a storm He has dissolved, a relationship He has calmed, a rough season He has brought you through? He wants you to trust Him with every storm. His word is your guarantee. Claim the beautiful promise of God's peace Isaiah 41:10 for yourself and your family and think about whom you might share this encouragement with today.

“Fear not, for I am with you;  
Be not dismayed, for I am your God.  
I will strengthen you,  
Yes, I will help you,  
I will uphold you with My righteous  
right hand” (Isaiah 41:10).

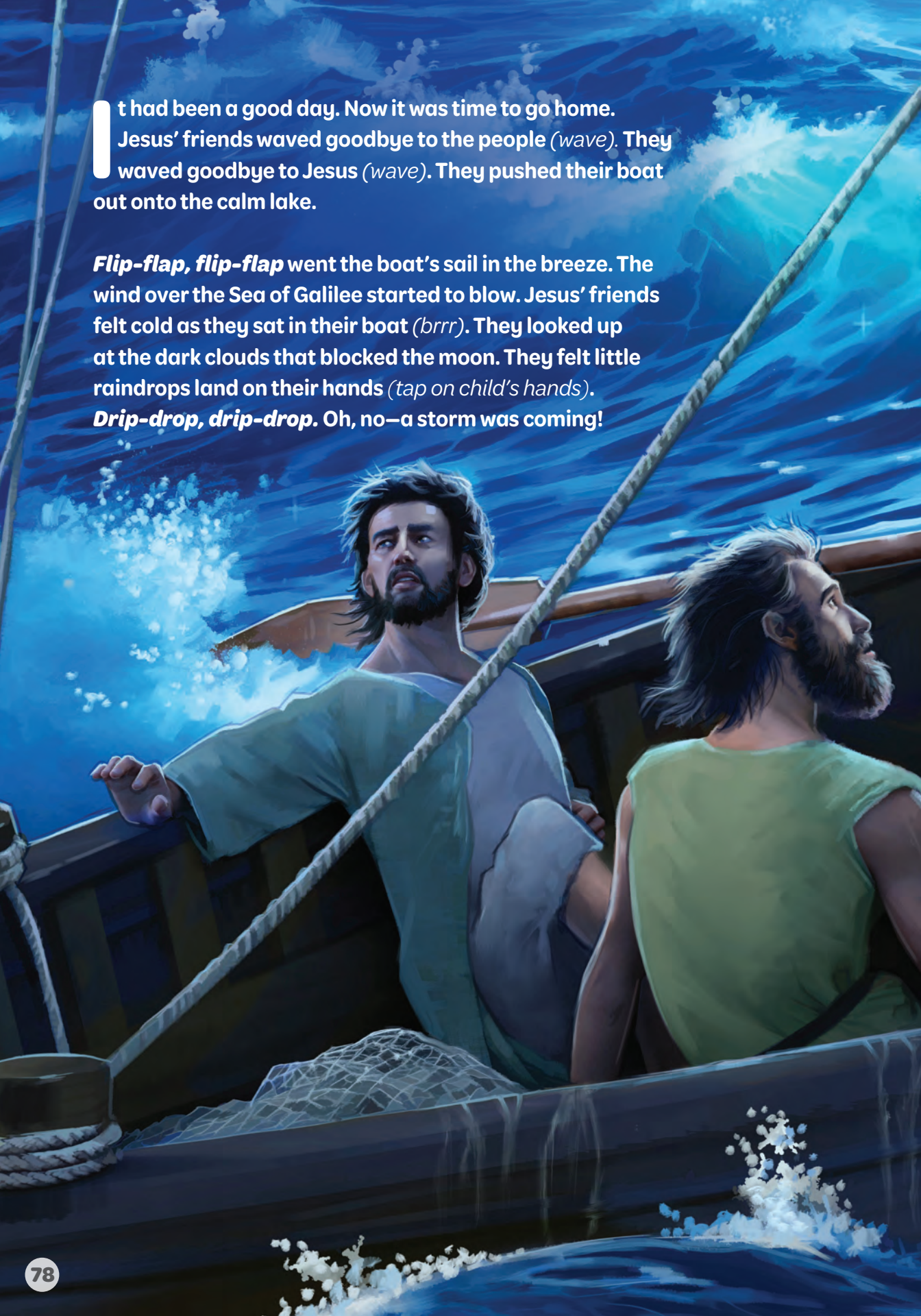
**BIG IDEA:** Jesus helps me be brave.

Week 10

# Walking on Water



This lesson is based on Matthew 14:22-32; Mark 6:45-52; Luke 8:22-25; John 6:16-21; and *The Desire of Ages*, pp. 377-382.

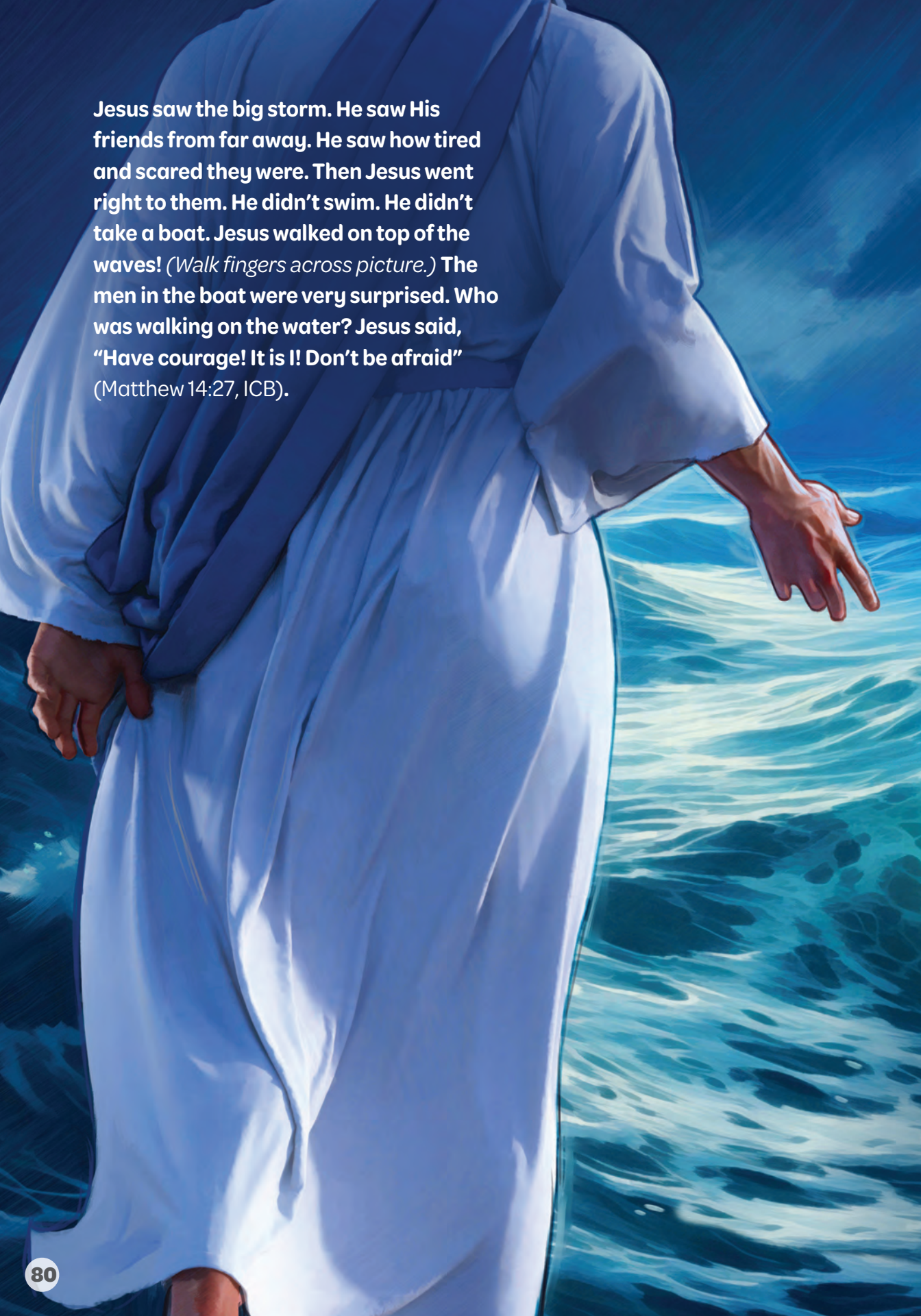
An illustration of two men on a wooden boat at night. The man in the foreground has long brown hair and a beard, wearing a light blue tunic. He is looking towards the right. The man behind him has long brown hair and a beard, wearing a green tunic. He is looking towards the right. The boat is on a dark blue sea with white-capped waves. The sky is dark blue with white clouds and a bright light source, possibly the moon, creating a shimmering effect on the water. A thick rope runs across the boat from the foreground to the background. A fishing net is visible in the foreground.

It had been a good day. Now it was time to go home. Jesus' friends waved goodbye to the people (*wave*). They waved goodbye to Jesus (*wave*). They pushed their boat out onto the calm lake.

***Flip-flap, flip-flap*** went the boat's sail in the breeze. The wind over the Sea of Galilee started to blow. Jesus' friends felt cold as they sat in their boat (*brrr*). They looked up at the dark clouds that blocked the moon. They felt little raindrops land on their hands (*tap on child's hands*). ***Drip-drop, drip-drop***. Oh, no—a storm was coming!




The boat rocked back and forth on the water. **Rock, rock** (rock with your child). **Crash** went a wave into the boat. The men were scared! (Hug child close.) **Row, row** went their oars! The men tried to keep the boat straight. But they couldn't. The storm was too big!



Jesus saw the big storm. He saw His friends from far away. He saw how tired and scared they were. Then Jesus went right to them. He didn't swim. He didn't take a boat. Jesus walked on top of the waves! *(Walk fingers across picture.)* The men in the boat were very surprised. Who was walking on the water? Jesus said, "Have courage! It is I! Don't be afraid" (Matthew 14:27, ICB).



Peter asked Jesus if he could walk on the water to meet Jesus. “Come,” Jesus said with a smile (Matthew 14:29). Peter stepped out of the boat . . . and onto the water. He didn’t sink! He looked at Jesus’ kind face as he walked closer to Him. **Step, step, step.** Peter came closer. He was walking on water!



**Peter thought about the big waves (*clap hands*). He thought about the strong wind (*blow/whistle*). He felt scared, and he looked down. He forgot to look at Jesus. Peter started to sink down, down into the water. He cried out for help! Suddenly Jesus was right beside him. He took Peter's hand and pulled him up out of the water. Together they walked over the waves to the boat. Then the water became still, and the wind was quiet again.**

**Peter forgot that Jesus was near, right there to help him. Jesus loves you and will help you be brave too.**

*(Say together)* **Jesus, please help me remember that You are always with me.**

# play

## throughout the Day

### Learn

During bathtime, play with objects that float and sink. Have your child attempt to stand on top of the water. Ask, "Can you do it?" Share how Jesus can do amazing and impossible things because He is God. We call them miracles. We can trust Him with our problems. He can make miracles happen.

**Retell** Paint a stripe of water on the pavement outside, or on a long strip of paper from a paper roll. Stand at one end of the stripe while your child stands at the other. Call them to walk on the water to you, just as Peter did. Then, with you beside them, ask them to walk with their eyes closed, as when Peter forgot to keep looking at Jesus. Be ready to hold their hand when they need you.

### Explain

Being brave doesn't mean you aren't ever afraid. It means you trust God when things are scary. It can also take bravery for a young child to try new things. Remind them that Jesus helps them to be brave.

### Sing

"Jesus Takes Care of Me" (Janet Sage, in *Little Sabbath Songs for Cradle Roll*, no. 33).

### Create

Draw and cut out a large circle as a bravery badge. Have your child color their bravery badge. Whenever you see them being brave, give them a sticker to place on their badge. Say, "Thank You, Jesus, for helping (*child's name*) be brave today."

### Pray

Jesus, I know You are always with me.  
When things are so scary  
Or I try something new,  
I remember the ways You care for me.  
Help me be brave with You.  
Amen.



# THE HEART OF THE MATTER

For You, Parents

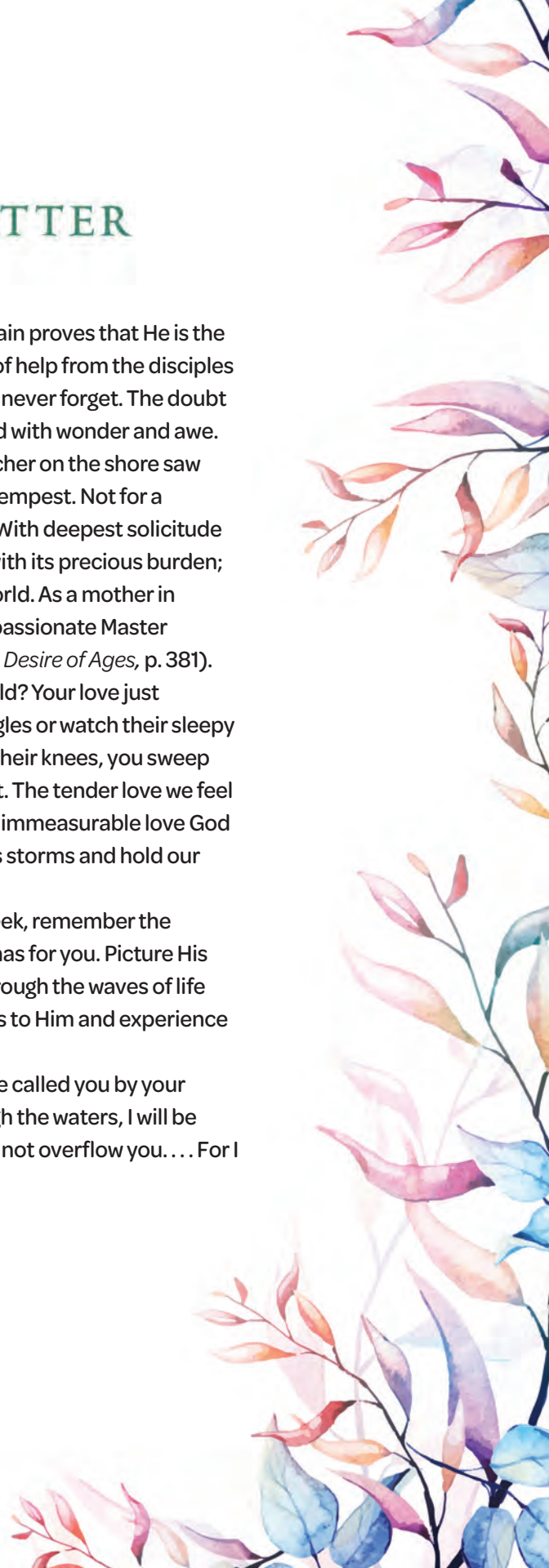
Another storm, another lesson. Jesus again proves that He is the God of love and peace. He hears the cries of help from the disciples and rescues them in a way that they would never forget. The doubt and discouragement they felt was replaced with wonder and awe.

“Jesus had not forgotten them. The Watcher on the shore saw those fear-stricken men battling with the tempest. Not for a moment did He lose sight of His disciples. With deepest solicitude His eyes followed the storm-tossed boat with its precious burden; for these men were to be the light of the world. As a mother in tender love watches her child, so the compassionate Master watched His disciples” (Ellen G. White, *The Desire of Ages*, p. 381).

How great is the love you feel for your child? Your love just explodes when you hear their precious giggles or watch their sleepy eyes close. And when they fall and scrape their knees, you sweep them into your arms and hug away the hurt. The tender love we feel for our children offers just a glimpse of the immeasurable love God has for us. He longs to protect us from life’s storms and hold our hands when we fall.

In the burdens and trials you face this week, remember the compassionate and tender love that God has for you. Picture His hand reaching out for yours as you walk through the waves of life this week. Surrender your worries and fears to Him and experience His unexplainable peace.

“Fear not, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by your name; You are Mine. When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow you. . . . For I am the Lord your God” (Isaiah 43:1-3).



**BIG IDEA:** I know Jesus will help me.

Week 11

# “Get Up, Little Girl!”



This lesson is based on Matthew 9:18-26; Mark 5:21-43; Luke 8:40-56; and *The Desire of Ages*, pp. 342-348.



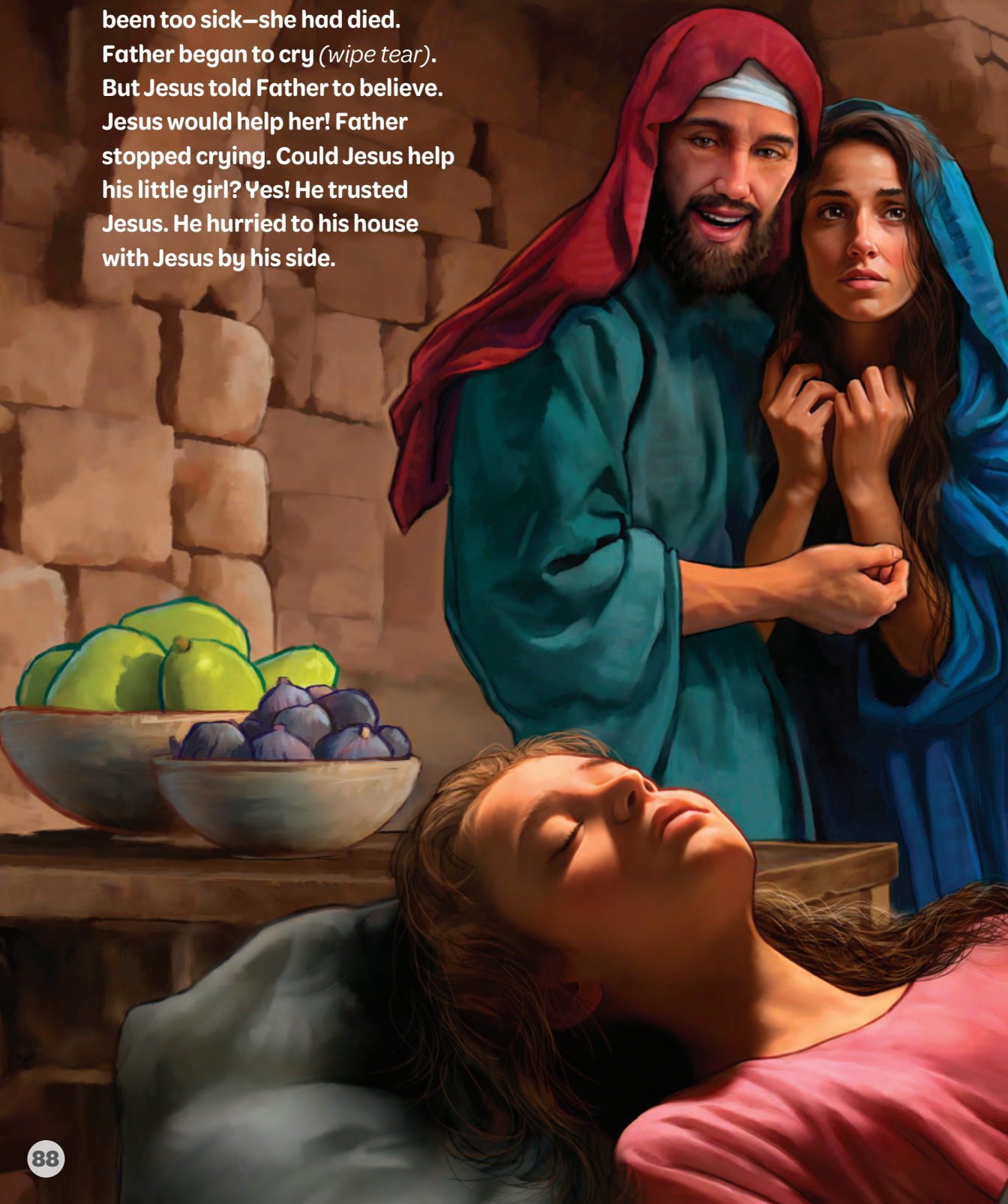
**F**ather Jairus patted his little girl's head (*pat head*). It was hot. He frowned. His little girl was very sick. She lay in bed sleeping (*sleeping hands*). She didn't hear the birds singing outside. She didn't see the light sparkle on the lake nearby. She didn't run and play with her friends. She could only rest and sleep (*sleeping hands*). Father was sad. He didn't know how to make her better. The doctors didn't know how to make her better. But Jesus could help! Father ran to find Him.

Father ran into town. **Run, run, huff-puff.** He found Jesus in the middle of a very big crowd. He bowed down at Jesus' feet. Everyone stopped and looked.

Then Father said to Jesus, "My little girl is dying [very sick]. Please come and put your hands on her. Then she will be healed and will live" (Mark 5:23, ICB). **Father knew Jesus could help! Jesus nodded and smiled. Yes, He would love to make this little girl well.**



Jesus and Father Jairus started walking home. Suddenly, a man ran to Father to tell him something. His little girl had been too sick—she had died. Father began to cry (*wipe tear*). But Jesus told Father to believe. Jesus would help her! Father stopped crying. Could Jesus help his little girl? Yes! He trusted Jesus. He hurried to his house with Jesus by his side.





At home, everyone was outside crying. But Jesus wasn't sad. Father wasn't sad. Jesus would help the little girl—just as He'd promised.

Jesus went into her room. He gently took her hand (*take child's hand*). With a kind voice Jesus said, "Little girl, I tell you to stand up!" (Mark 5:41, ICB).

The little girl opened her eyes and stood up. She began to walk around. She walked over to Father and smiled (*smile*). Then she turned to Mother for a hug (*hug*). Mother and Father were so happy! Their little girl was alive again! (*Clap your hands.*) Thank You, Jesus! It was a day they would never forget. God is so powerful. He loves to help us.

(*Say together*) Thank You, Jesus, for helping me when I need You.



# play

## throughout the Day

### Create

Help your child create a love gift for a father in their life: their father (this may be you), grandfather, uncle, or caregiver. Draw a big heart and help your child to color and decorate it. Talk about how special fathers are to us. They are special to Jesus too! Pray for this father. Then have your child give them their love gift.



### Retell

Use an old shoe box or tissue box to make a model of Jairus' little girl's bedroom and use this to retell the story. Use toy furniture if you have some, or little cloths for a bed. Place a doll or simple cardboard cut-out of the little girl on the bed. When Jesus says, "Get up," have her wake up.

### Explore

Spend time outside with your child, encouraging them to use their energy. The little girl was so sick she could only sleep. But God made her well so she could jump about. Have your child do little exercises to match their abilities while you slowly count to five. For example, jump up high, run on the spot, do a star jump. Thank God for making our bodies able to move.

### Pray

Ask your child during prayer time for things they would like Jesus' help with this week. We can know, like Father Jairus, that Jesus will help us. Model this by asking Jesus for specific help for yourself, then thank Him for what He will do. Ask your child if they would like to pray too.



THE **HEART** OF THE **MATTER**  
For You, Parents

Jairus was just like you—a loving and dedicated parent who wanted the best for his child. His love was wrapped up in his little daughter. When she became sick, there seemed to be no cure. But this father had hope. When things spiraled out of his control, he turned his panic over to Jesus and put his trust in Him. His worry dissolved into worship, and he fell at Jesus' feet. He knew that a miracle was possible, and he came to Jesus with a heart full of faith.

We too can entrust our children to our Father in heaven. He is a good, good Father. When you have those gray days—when parenting feels like a heavy load, or when the worst imaginable thing happens—trust your child to Jesus. We can fall at His feet and ask for protection, healing, and grace. Jesus is the one with whom we can leave our problems. And even if the miracle does not come this side of heaven, He offers indescribable peace, and hope for an eternal new beginning to come.

*“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort those who are in any trouble, with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God” (2 Corinthians 1:3-5).*

**BIG IDEA:** Jesus sees and loves everyone.

Week 12

# “Who *Touched* Me?”



This lesson is based on Matthew 9:18-26; Mark 5:21-43; Luke 8:40-56; and *The Desire of Ages*, pp. 342-348.

**J**esus smiled as little hands reached up to Him. He gave their hands a gentle squeeze (*squeeze hand*). He walked slowly on, through the town by the lake. As He walked, He talked. He told the people about God's big love. There were people up high (*reach up*). There were people down low (*crouch down*). There were people beside Him, row after row. There were so many people in the big, big crowd! Everyone wanted to be with Jesus.



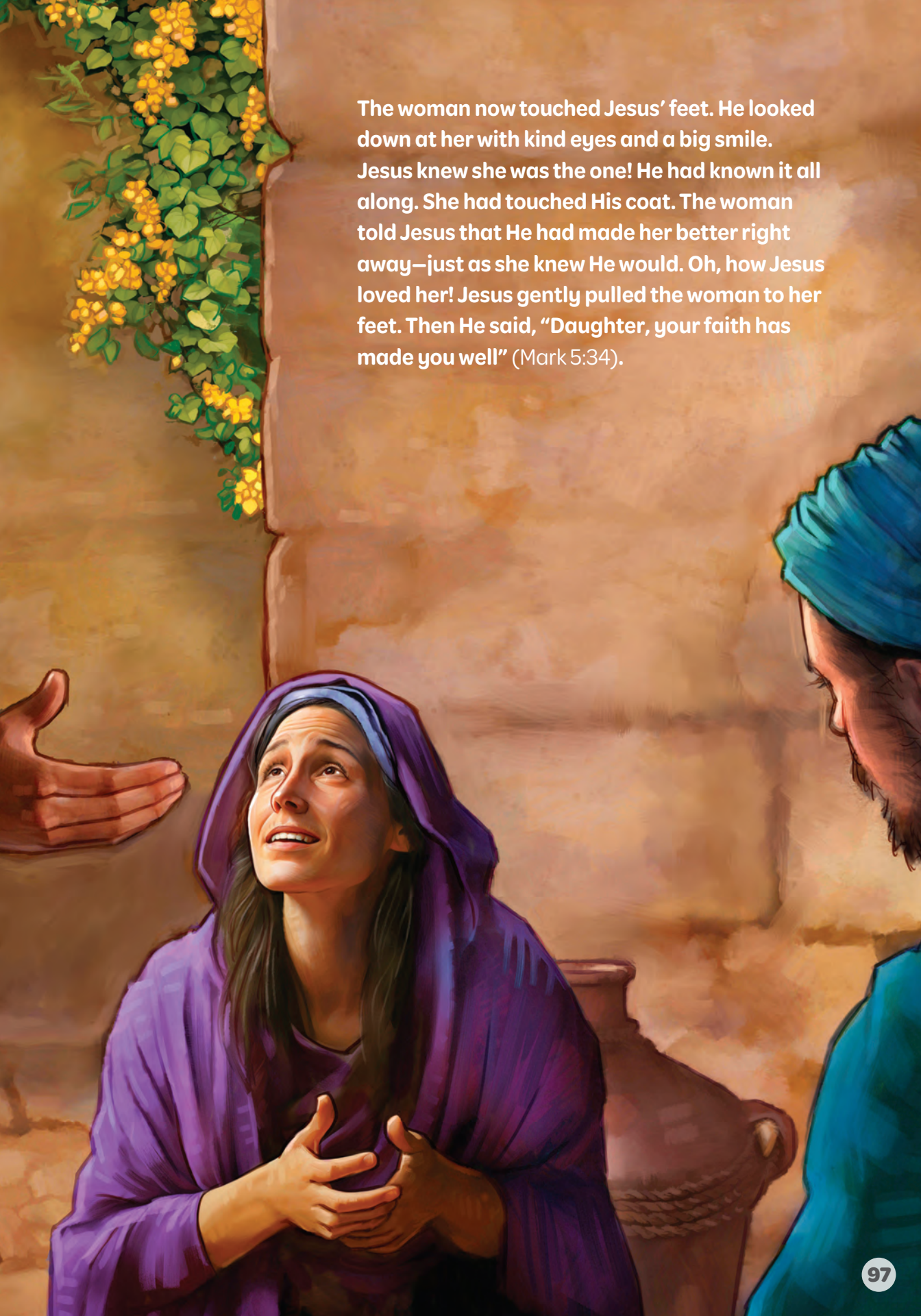


Jesus loved being with people. They pressed in close. **Squish, squash.** Elbows knocked elbows (*gently knock elbows*). Knees knocked knees (*gently knock knees*).

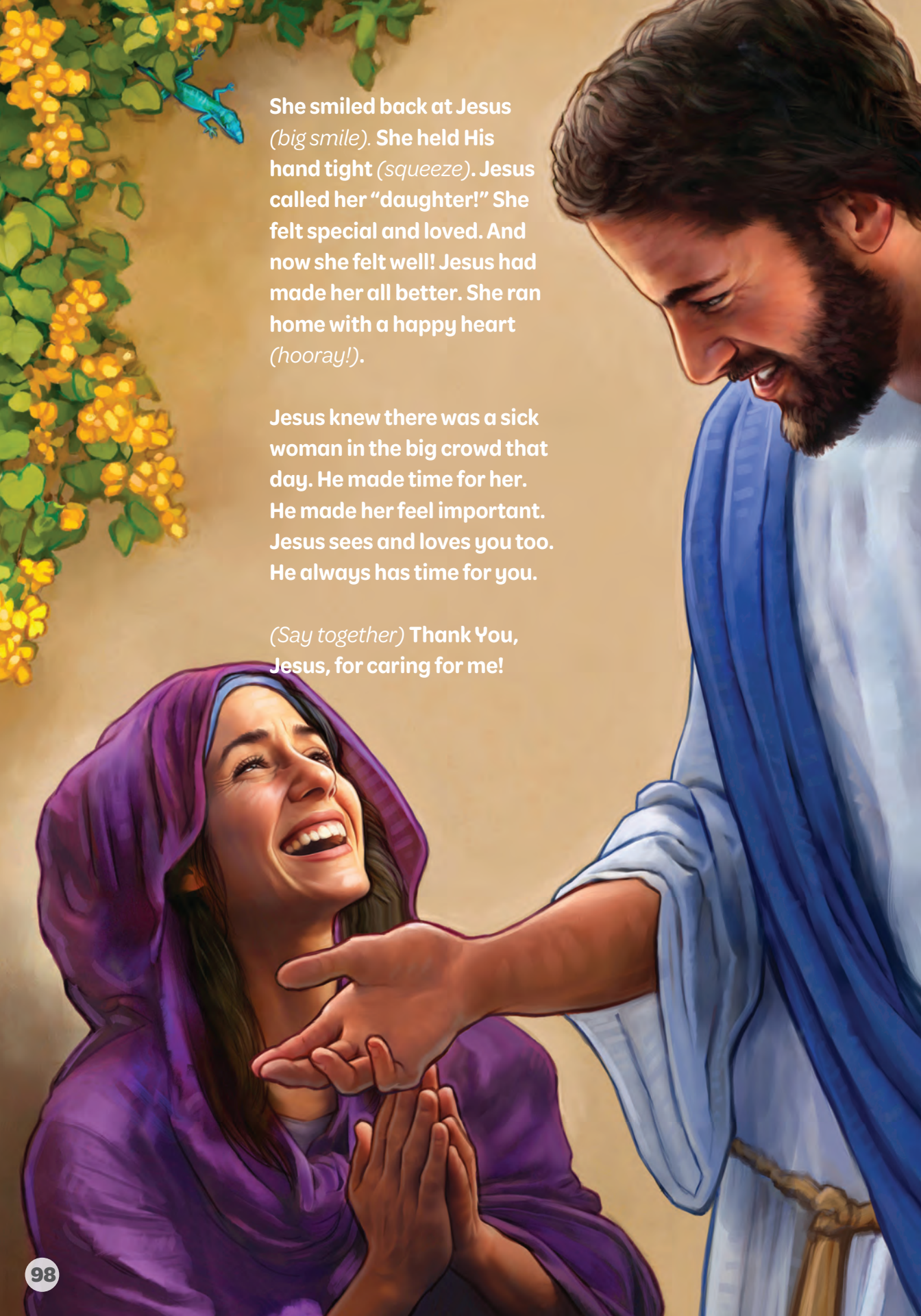
Jesus smiled and walked as He talked. Then suddenly He stopped. Jesus looked up high (*reach up*). He looked down low (*crouch down*). He looked at the people, row after row. He said, "Who touched My clothes?" (Mark 5:30). What a funny question! Lots of people were touching Jesus. But Jesus knew this touch was different. "Who touched Me?"



A woman crouched down low, near Jesus' feet. She had been sick for a long, long time. She had seen lots of doctors, but no one could make her better. She knew that Jesus could help! She had squeezed past the people, row after row. Past the people up high (*reach up*) and down low (*crouch down*). She was the one who had touched His clothes. She said to herself, "If I can even touch His coat, that will be enough to heal me" (Mark 5:28, ICB). And it was!



The woman now touched Jesus' feet. He looked down at her with kind eyes and a big smile. Jesus knew she was the one! He had known it all along. She had touched His coat. The woman told Jesus that He had made her better right away—just as she knew He would. Oh, how Jesus loved her! Jesus gently pulled the woman to her feet. Then He said, “Daughter, your faith has made you well” (Mark 5:34).

An illustration of Jesus with a beard and long hair, wearing a blue robe, looking down at a woman. The woman is wearing a purple headscarf and a purple robe, looking up at Jesus with a joyful expression. Her hands are clasped in prayer. Jesus's hand is reaching out towards her. In the top left corner, there is a green vine with yellow flowers and a small blue lizard.

She smiled back at Jesus  
(big smile). She held His  
hand tight (squeeze). Jesus  
called her “daughter!” She  
felt special and loved. And  
now she felt well! Jesus had  
made her all better. She ran  
home with a happy heart  
(hooray!).

Jesus knew there was a sick  
woman in the big crowd that  
day. He made time for her.  
He made her feel important.  
Jesus sees and loves you too.  
He always has time for you.

(Say together) **Thank You,**  
**Jesus, for caring for me!**

# play

## throughout the Day

### Create

Create a picture of the crowd from the story. Use finger paints and your child's fingerprint as the people's heads, then draw bodies. Draw Jesus and the woman in the middle of the crowd and draw a heart above them. Display your picture this week to remind your child of this lesson story.

### Explore

Use natural objects from the backyard or a park to retell the story of Jesus and the woman. Make a crowd from sticks, leaves, or stones. Get the woman to find Jesus in the "crowd." Thank Jesus for noticing and healing her.



### Play

Play a game of hide-and-seek. After a couple of rounds, cuddle your child on your lap and explain that God loves them so much. He always knows where we are, and He loves us *all the time!* Share how even though no one else noticed the sick woman, Jesus saw her and loved her! We can notice people no one else notices, and share Jesus' love with them.

### Connect

Jesus sees us and loves us. He always has time for us. We can do the same for others. Model friendliness this week in your interactions with others. Teach your child to look into people's eyes when speaking to them. Teach them to say "Hello" to neighbors and smile. Give your time to someone in need. Show others that they are noticed and loved, just as Jesus did when He was on earth.

### Pray

Show your child photos of themselves when they were born. Read Psalm 139:13, 14 and explain to your child that they are fearfully and wonderfully made! Jesus planned them in their mother's tummy. He knows their name and hears their prayers. Say a prayer, thanking God for seeing us, knowing us, and hearing our prayers.

# THE HEART OF THE MATTER

For You, Parents

In this time-poor world where it is easy to feel overlooked, left out, and lonely—Jesus notices you. He sees you in the crowd. He has all the time in the world for you because you are His beloved child. Whatever hurts and troubles you are experiencing, go to Him. Reach out your hand—full of faith—and claim the wonderful freedom that He promises.

The woman who had suffered sickness for 12 years said to herself, “If I can touch his coat, then I will be healed” (Matthew 9:21, ICB). She believed and put her faith into action. Instantly she was healed. Her faith was rewarded.

More than that—she encountered the Savior. Her Savior. “It is not enough to believe **about** Christ; we must believe *in* Him. The only faith that will benefit us is that which embraces Him as a personal Savior” (Ellen G. White, *The Desire of Ages*, p. 347).

Jesus didn’t want her to walk away unnoticed. He wanted her to know that she was loved, and that she belonged. Jesus said to her, “Be of good cheer, daughter; your faith has made you well” (Matthew 9:22). Yes, Jesus calls you His daughter, His son.

Jesus sees you in the trenches of parenthood. He sees you when you come to Him at the end of those long days and hold out your hand with the last of your strength in trust and hope. He acknowledges your faith. He encourages you, His son, His daughter.



**BIG IDEA:** Jesus loves me.

Week 13

# Deep *and* Wide



This lesson is based on Ephesians 3:18.

**C**an you see a shining star? Look for one in the dark night sky. See it twinkling, way up high. It's higher than your biggest stretch (*reach up high*). It's higher than the treetops. It's higher than the hills. A bird can fly up very high, but a star is higher still.

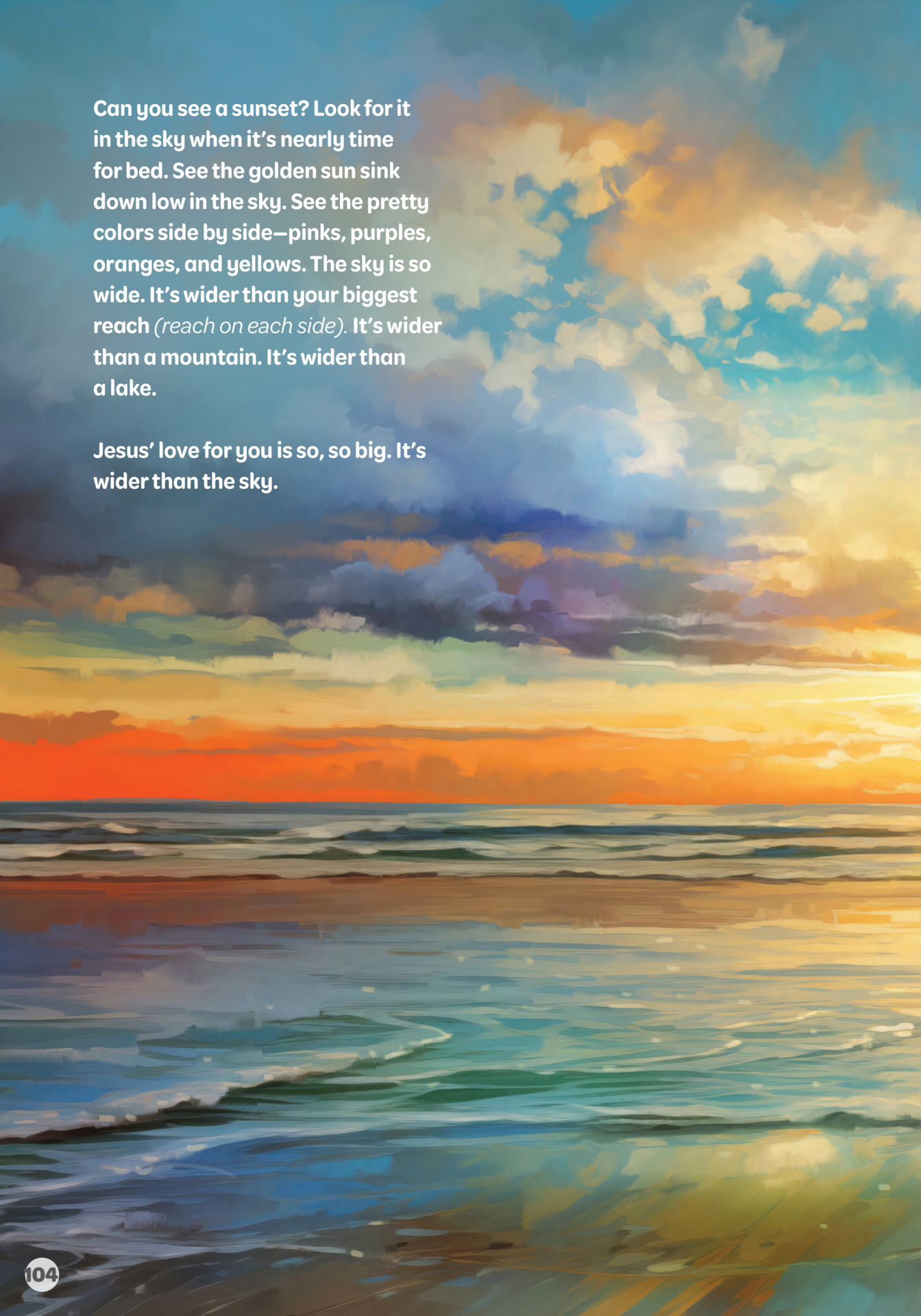
Jesus' love for you is so, so big. It's higher than the stars.



Can you see a starfish? Look for it on the bottom of a bright-blue sea. See it down deep, as deep as can be. The sea is deeper than your biggest bend down low (*reach low*). It's deeper than a swimming pool. It's deeper than the big roots of a tall tree.

Jesus' love for you is so, so big.  
It's deeper than the deepest sea.





Can you see a sunset? Look for it in the sky when it's nearly time for bed. See the golden sun sink down low in the sky. See the pretty colors side by side—pinks, purples, oranges, and yellows. The sky is so wide. It's wider than your biggest reach (*reach on each side*). It's wider than a mountain. It's wider than a lake.

Jesus' love for you is so, so big. It's wider than the sky.

Can you see the clouds? Look for them as they float across the pretty sky. The sky is so long. It's longer than your biggest reach in front and behind (*reach in front and back*). It's longer than a plane. It's longer than a train. It's longer than you can ever see.

Jesus' love for you is so, so big. It's longer than the sky.





Jesus wants to give you His big, big love! He cares for you. He listens to you. He helps you. He will be with you always.

Yes, Jesus' love for you is so, so big, (*say child's name*), the Bible tells us so. Would you like to say to Jesus, "I love You too. I want to follow You"?

# play

## throughout the Day

### Connect

Once the sun has set on a clear night, make a bed (if possible) outside with a picnic rug, blankets, and pillows. Snuggle up together and look at the stars. Look at how high the stars are. Jesus' love is even higher! Share how Jesus made all the stars and knows them all by name! How amazing that the God of the universe knows your child's name and everything about them. Sing "Jesus Loves Me" together.

### Create

Draw different facial expressions on pieces of paper. Draw a worried face and share how Jesus can turn our worried faces into calm, happy faces. Use a big marker to draw over the worried face and turn it into a happy face. Thank God together for caring for us.

### Explore

Look for things that are high, deep, wide, and long. Put like things together (wide with wide) to show their different lengths. Share how Jesus made lots of big things, but His love is the biggest!

### Role-play

Share with your child about how Jesus helps us to be kind to others. Role-play situations in which you can use kind words and actions. When you go to the playground this week, encourage your child to let others go first. When you eat, encourage your child to say "Please" and "Thank you."

### Pray

Model praying in front of your child, throughout the day, to show that Jesus always listens. If you find yourself frustrated or cross, pray and ask God to help you. If something happy happens, pray and give thanks to God.



# THE HEART OF THE MATTER

## For You, Parents

In all He did on earth Jesus showed His heart of love—a heart that overflowed with boundless love for everyone He met. His love for us is just as personal and limitless. “So Christ, the heavenly Shepherd, cares for His flock that is scattered throughout the world. He knows us all by name. He knows the very house in which we live, and the name of each inmate. He cares for each one as if there were not another in the whole world” (Ellen G. White, *The Story of Jesus*, pp. 75, 76).

Take a moment to consider these verses that express God’s love for you and your child. Place your name in the verses:

“Behold what manner of love the Father has bestowed on us, that we should be called children of God!” (1 John 3:1).

“Nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord” (Romans 8:39).

“The Lord your God in your midst, the Mighty One, will save; He will rejoice over you with gladness, He will quiet you with His love, He will rejoice over you with singing” (Zephaniah 3:17).

The Creator of the universe, who is capable of amazing miracles, cares for **you** as a loving Father. He knows **your** name, He knows **your** children, and He loves **you** with His great, enormous love! May you “be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the width and length and depth and height—to know the love of Christ which passes knowledge; that you may be filled with all the fullness of God” (Ephesians 3:18, 19).

