



Unit 8 | Session 4

GOD'S MIRACLES PROVE WHO HE IS

Mark 16

CHRIST CONNECTION:

Jesus died on the cross for our sins, but He didn't stay dead. God was pleased with Jesus' sacrifice and miraculously raised Jesus from the dead to prove He is the Son of God and salvation is found in Him.

BIG PICTURE QUESTION:

What is a miracle? A miracle is something God does that usually cannot be done so that we can know He is all-powerful.

KEY PASSAGE:

Psalm 77:14

SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINE:

Fellowship



FOR THE SESSION



LEADER Bible Study

In previous sessions, we saw the importance of fellowship among the Israelites as they navigated the first foray into the promised land. As Joshua led the people, it was crucial that they be unified by the covenant that God made with their forefathers. This covenant dictated how they related to God and to one another. It set them apart as they lived among other nations. With the advent of Jesus Christ and His ministry on earth came a new covenant—one that would transcend creed, tribe, and tongue and empower believers from all walks of life to live in fellowship with one another.

God not only empowers us to live in fellowship with one another, but He provided the perfect example of fellowship in Jesus Christ. God the Son incarnate came to the world and dwelt among His people. He perfectly pursues relationship with us, while we are undeserving. (See Rom. 5:8.)

There were countless moments throughout Christ’s earthly ministry when He spent unhurried time with His friends, oftentimes over a meal. Even after Jesus died and was resurrected, He chose to spend time making a meal for His disciples, notably restoring Peter to ministry as they shared an early breakfast. Though Peter had betrayed Jesus days before this encounter, there was still a seat for Peter around the

fire. In His sinlessness, Jesus didn’t hold a grudge or shame Peter for his failure. Rather, He restored Peter by extending the gift of fellowship. Jesus said, “Come and eat!” and the disciples “knew He was the Lord” (John 21:12). Jesus extends to us this same invitation today.

We can experience the beauty and gift of Christian fellowship with God and one another because Jesus Christ lived without sin, died, and was raised to life. The Holy Spirit now indwells and empowers all who would believe and trust in Him.

Help your kids to see that without Jesus Christ, fellowship with God and each other would be impossible. Pray that they would understand and believe in the gospel of Jesus Christ, whose perfect sacrifice made a way for us to receive the beautiful and astounding gift of fellowship with God the Father and with one another.

Fellowship is the bond of common purpose and devotion that binds Christians to one another and to Christ.



PREPARE

FOR THE SESSION



PLAN the Session

- Pray, asking God to prepare your heart to teach and the hearts of kids to receive His Word.
- Read the *Leader Bible Study* and review the session plan.
- Decide which *Welcome* activities to prepare for the unit.
- Familiarize yourself with the *Learn* section enough to teach naturally.
- Organize discipleship groups, including a plan for new kids.
- Print a copy of the *Live* section for each discipleship group leader.

GATHER Supplies

Keep the following items available at all times: Bibles, pens or pencils, markers, crayons, colored pencils, scissors, glue or tape, paper, index cards, basket or bin.



WELCOME

Option 1: Key passage beach ball toss

- beach ball

Option 2: Key passage relay

- poster board



LEARN

Group activity: Friendship interview

- ask a close friend to come as a guest
- pictures of you and your friend



LOVE

Option 1: Fellowship bracelets

- wooden beads
- heart beads
- alphabet beads
- elastic beading cord

Option 2: Flowering fellowship

- terracotta pots
- paint pens
- floral foam
- artificial flowers



LIVE

Get everyone talking

- toy microphone or item to represent a microphone (optional)
- inflatable beach ball (optional)
- permanent marker (optional)

Discuss Learn time

- poster board or large sheet of paper (optional)
- blindfold (optional)



WELCOME Kids (5-10 minutes)

Choose one or all of these activities to engage kids as they arrive. You may choose to prepare all activities to repeat throughout the unit or prepare a different activity to use each week.

OPTION 1: KEY PASSAGE BEACH BALL TOSS

Gather kids in a circle and ask for one volunteer to hold the beach ball. Tell the kids the volunteer will say one word of the key passage (Psalm 77:14) and then toss the ball to a new person who will state what comes next. Kids can work together to build up to the entire Scripture. Make it more difficult by changing speeds, switching to “keep it up” rather than pass, and so forth.

OPTION 2: KEY PASSAGE RELAY

Attach two poster boards to a wall. Form two teams of kids. Direct each team to make relay lines on the opposite side of the room from the boards. Explain that each team will have a marker. The goal is to be the first team to write out the key passage (Psalm 77:14) one word at a time on their posters. Teams will work together in the relay to take their markers down to the posters, write a word, and then bring the markers back to the next person in line, who will then run and write the next word. Continue play until one team has correctly written the verse on their poster.

OPTION 3: FELLOWSHIP

Explain to kids that you’ll work on different aspects of fellowship like unity, sharing, and working together by playing a game known to some as “Ships and Sailors.” In this game, kids listen to the leader who shouts out commands. If they listen correctly, they stay in the game. Last few standing win the round.

Explain the following actions to play the game:

- Port—Run to one end of room.
- Bow—Run to opposite end of room.
- Chow Time—Kids pair up and pretend to eat a meal together.
- [Number] in a Life Boat—Call out various numbers of kids who must get in a group and pretend to paddle a boat
- Scrub the Deck—Kids pretend to mop the floor.

Gather the kids in the center of the room and begin calling out the commands. Encourage kids to work together as they follow instructions throughout the game.



LEARN how to fellowship (15–20 minutes)

1 REVIEW SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINES

What do we call practices, or repeated actions, that we do to help us grow in love of God and in godliness? [Allow responses.]

SAY “ That’s right, we call them spiritual disciplines. These aren’t things we do so that God will love us or love us more. He showed His love for us in giving His Son, Jesus. We just learned about the miracle of Christ’s resurrection this Easter! We know that spiritual disciplines are practices that help us to love God and His ways. ”

Who remembers the spiritual discipline we’ve learned about the past few sessions? [Allow responses.]

SAY “ Fellowship! The practice of fellowship is an intentional, deep way of sharing of life together in Christian community. This isn’t something that happens on accident. We are brought into Christian community by Christ Himself, and then we practice the discipline of fellowship to continually turn our eyes toward Him. We have fellowship because of Jesus. Let’s hop into a game as we learn more about fellowship today. ”

2 GROUP GAME: LOOK UP, LOOK DOWN

Gather all kids in the center of the room and form a large circle. Kids can stand one to two feet apart. Once the circle is set, ask all the kids to look down. When you shout: “Look up,” the players have to look up and immediately look at another person in the circle. If the person they are looking at looks at them at the same time, they scream together and leave the circle. The remaining players stand in their places and continue to stare at the person they have been looking at until the moderator says: “Look down.” The game continues until there are no more than two to three players left in the circle. Play multiple rounds as time allows.

SAY “ In this game, we could only focus our attention on one person at a time. Our eyes were locked in and focused on a single person. God looks and sees every single one of us. Isn’t that amazing? It is not an accident that we are all here; our lives are part of His greater plan. ”

Do you know who was part of His greater plan? [Allow responses.]

SAY “ Jesus was not an afterthought or backup plan that God came up with once people sinned. No, Jesus was part of God’s plan all along. The work of Christ brings people back into fellowship with God. ”



3 REVIEW THE DISCIPLINE OF FELLOWSHIP

Who can remind us of what fellowship means? [Allow responses.]

Can anyone give us a definition of the opposite of fellowship? [Allow responses.]

SAY “ Fellowship brings people together to share in all things. Like we learned about the Acts church last week, practicing fellowship means sharing life together and coming together to encourage one another in the faith. None of this would be possible without Jesus! Because of His miraculous work, we can be invited into relationship with Him and with His people. ”

4 FOLLOW UP ON WEEKLY CHALLENGE

Who took on the challenge this past week? Would anyone like to share about your experience in practicing fellowship with you family? [Allow responses.]

SAY “ Praying and sharing a meal together are great demonstrations of God’s love. The greatest demonstration of God’s love was Him sending His one and only Son, Jesus, to take the punishment for our sin. ”

5 READ THE BIBLE

Challenge kids to look up John 21:1-14. Read the passage aloud or invite a kid to read as the group follows along in their copy of God’s Word.

SAY “ This story comes to us after Jesus was crucified and resurrected. He went to be with His friends, the disciples. The guys were out early fishing, which was not unusual for them. When they had no luck and their nets were empty, they heard a voice from the shore instructing them to cast the nets on the other side. When they listened, their nets overflowed with fish and they could hardly haul them in. ”

Who was it that called out to them? [Allow responses.]

What did they do when they recognized their friend was on shore? [Allow responses.]

SAY “ Jesus came to the disciples. He gave them advice, invited them in, talked with them, and shared a meal with them. He was not rude or standoffish. Jesus was welcoming and wanted to spend time with His disciples. Because of Jesus, the men were brought together and they had what they needed. ”



6 GROUP ACTIVITY: FRIENDSHIP INTERVIEW

Invite one of your close friends to join you for this time. Prepare pictures to show and share of your memories together with this friend. Together, share memories and fun old pictures of your time spent together.

Ask kids to tell you about their best friends. What do they enjoy doing together? How do they like to spend their time? What do they do that brings them together?

SAY “ Explain to kids that no matter what, Jesus is closer than even the closest friend. Jesus stood on the beach and called out to His friend, Peter, who had betrayed Him just days before. Even in this, Jesus looked to have fellowship with His friend. Jesus practiced forgiveness, generosity, and kindness in this story. He is the one true example of fellowship. ”

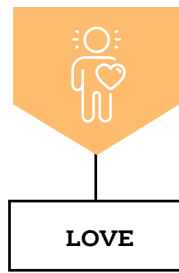
7 CHRIST CONNECTION

We have fellowship because of Jesus Christ. We can look to Him as our perfect example.

8 CLOSE IN PRAYER

Use the scripted prayer below or pray in your own words.

SAY “ Lord, thank You for the One who gives us fellowship, Jesus Christ. Jesus is who we can look to in all things. Lead us in Your Spirit to share with others the way You do. Amen. ”



LOVE God by practicing fellowship (10-15 minutes)

Lead kids to choose one of these two options as a way to practice the spiritual discipline of fellowship.

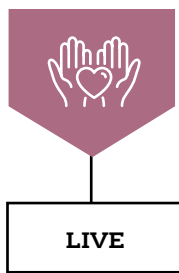
OPTION 1: FELLOWSHIP BRACELETS

Spend time as a group fellowshiping with one another as you make bracelets to share with friends, neighbors, and family. Provide wooden beads, heart beads, and alphabet beads for kids to use. Encourage the kids to string the beads on elastic beading cord in their own designs. Invite them to use the alphabet beads to spell *Jesus loves you* replacing the word *loves* with a heart bead.

OPTION 2: FLOWERING FELLOWSHIP

Cut small pieces of floral foam to place into the bottom of small terracotta pots. Give each kid a pot and direct her to use paint pens to decorate the pot. Encourage the kids to print positive messages on the pots. Show the kids how to insert an artificial flower into the floral foam.

Lead the kids to discuss who they may know that they can give their flowers to. If you have a list of people who are homebound or an assisted living facility nearby, discuss taking the flowers to share with the people who live there.



LIVE for God through discipleship (20-30 minutes)

Form groups ideally of no more than five kids and one adult leader. Prioritize forming groups according to gender first, then age. Adult leaders should never be alone with kids.

1 EMPHASIZE GOSPEL SAFETY

Explain that discipleship time is a sacred time because we share the deep things in our hearts with one another. All must work together to create a safe place. Consider these three rules:

1. Listen when someone is talking.
2. Only comment when the person sharing invites you to do so.
3. In general, what is shared in the group should stay in the group. Only speak to a trusted adult if it would help the person who shared.

Note: Be sure to follow local laws and ministry policies concerning any report or suspicion of abuse or neglect.

2 GET EVERYONE TALKING

Choose one of the options below to encourage kids to engage with one another.

OPTION 1: SHARE HIGHS AND LOWS

Sit in a circle. Tell something that was a high point and something that was a low point of your week. Model honesty and vulnerability in an age-appropriate way. Then go around the circle, inviting each kid to share her high and low.

OPTION 2: PASS THE MIC

Use a toy microphone or another item to represent a microphone. Ask a question, such as: “What is your favorite color and why?” “What is something you do most Saturdays?” or “If you could be an animal, which one would you choose?” Ask and answer the question yourself and then pass the microphone to a kid to invite him to answer. After answering, that kid will pass the microphone to another kid and so forth.

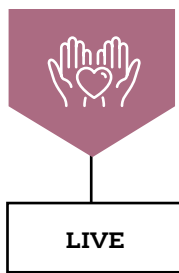
OPTION 3: TOSS A BEACH BALL

Before the session, inflate a beach ball. Use a permanent marker to write a question in each section of a ball. Toss the ball to a kid. Invite her to answer the question in the section that her left thumb touches. Continue tossing the ball until each kid has had a turn.

3 DISCUSS LEARN TIME

Choose an option below to engage kids with the following questions.

1. What is something you learned today?
2. How does Christ’s invitation to the disciples at breakfast change how you think about Him?
3. How do you think God is calling you to respond to what you learned?



OPTION 1: PICK A CARD

Write each question on an index card. Fan the cards in your hand where kids cannot see the questions. Invite a kid to pick a card and answer the question.

OPTION 2: DRAW A QUESTION

Write each question on a slip of paper. Fold the papers and place them in a basket or bin. Invite kids to take turns drawing a question and answering it.

OPTION 3: PIN THE FINGER ON THE QUESTION

Write the questions on poster board and display them on a wall. Invite a kid to wear a blindfold or close his eyes. Spin him around three times and guide him to touch the poster board. Remove the blindfold. Lead him to answer the question his finger landed closest to.

4 WALK IN THE LIGHT

Read 1 John 1:7. Explain that this is a time for honesty with one another as we answer the questions: How has it been hard for you to obey God this week? Where are you struggling? Guide kids not to offer advice or try to fix the problem but simply to pray.

Answer the question or confess sin in an age-appropriate way to model confession. Ask a volunteer to pray for you. Do not force a kid to share or pray. Choose one of the following ways to lead kids to walk in the light.

- Form a circle. Go around the circle, giving each kid an opportunity to share what she is struggling with. Ask a volunteer to pray for her.
- Form pairs. Guide each pair to take turns sharing and praying for each other.
- Give each kid a sheet of paper. Allow kids to write or draw their answers to the questions. Mix up the papers and distribute one to each kid to pray for silently.

5 COMPETE TO SHOW HONOR

Read Romans 12:10. Invite kids to “outdo” one another in showing each other honor. Begin by telling a kid you want to honor him. Say a specific way you see God at work in his life. Be prepared to help kids share meaningful encouragement to one another. Choose one of the following ways to lead kids in competing to show honor.

- Allow kids to take turns honoring one another as they choose.
- Choose one kid to honor for the day. Allow the others to take turns honoring that kid.
- Guide each kid to write her name at the top of a sheet of paper. Lead kids to pass their papers to the kid next to them. That kid must write or draw a way to honor the kid whose name is on the paper. Continue passing the papers after a given amount of time until each kid’s paper is returned to them.

6 WEEKLY CHALLENGE

Challenge kids to memorize Psalm 77:14 and tell a friend about one of God’s miracles.