

WEEK 41 | SUNDAY, OCTOBER 11, 2026

Teacher Background & Preparation Sheet

For Teacher Study Only. Not Read Aloud.

LESSON IDENTIFICATION

Week: 41

Date: Sunday, October 11, 2026

Lesson Title: Jesus Shows Compassion and Power: Miracles

Focal Scripture Passage: Mark 2:1 through 12

Supporting Passages: Mark 1:21 through 34; Mark 4:35 through 41; Mark 5:21 through 43; Mark 6:30 through 44; Matthew 14:13 through 21

Bible Timeline Placement: The public ministry of Jesus in Galilee, after Jesus called His first disciples and during the period when crowds were beginning to gather around Him.

The RCC schedule places this lesson in Week 41 under the larger section, "Jesus the Savior." The assigned theme is "Jesus Shows Compassion and Power (Miracles)."

One timeline caution will help the teacher. Our curriculum is moving through the life of Jesus in a broad chronological way, but this portion of His ministry contains teachings, healings, conflicts, parables, and other miracles that overlap one another in the Gospel accounts. Some miracles happened before some parables, and others happened afterward. We should not tell children that Jesus finished teaching all His parables and then began doing miracles. This week gathers several miracles thematically so children can understand what they reveal about Jesus.

PURPOSE OF THIS LESSON

Children should leave this lesson understanding that the miracles of Jesus were not magic tricks or performances meant to impress a crowd. They were real acts of compassion and divine authority that showed people something important about who Jesus is and what God's kingdom is like.

Mark 2 gives us an especially helpful place to begin because a paralyzed man is brought to Jesus hoping for physical help, yet Jesus first addresses something even deeper. Jesus says that the man's sins are forgiven, and when the religious teachers question His authority to say such a thing, Jesus heals the man where everyone can see it.

The central words come from Jesus Himself:

"But I want you to know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins." Mark 2:10

The physical healing is visible. Forgiveness is not. Jesus performs the visible miracle to show that His claim about the invisible reality of forgiveness should be taken seriously.

Children should understand three connected truths.

First, Jesus cares when people hurt. His compassion is real and personal.

Second, Jesus has authority that ordinary human beings do not possess. Throughout the Gospels He shows authority over sickness, storms, evil spirits, hunger, and even death.

Third, our deepest problem is not merely sickness, sadness, fear, or difficulty. Our deepest problem is sin, which separates us from God. Jesus did not come merely to make difficult lives more comfortable.

He came to save sinners.

That distinction will matter greatly when we speak with children who are sick, disabled, grieving, or living with someone who is suffering. We never want a child to hear that following Jesus guarantees an easy body, an easy family, or an easy life. Our hope rests in Jesus Himself, His death and resurrection, His presence with us now, and His promise that one day He will make all things new.

BOOK AND PASSAGE BACKGROUND

Book Name

The Gospel According to Mark

Traditional Author

The ancient Christian tradition identifies the writer as John Mark, a companion of Peter and also someone connected with Paul and Barnabas in the New Testament. Mark himself was not one of the Twelve Apostles.

Early church testimony closely associates Mark's Gospel with the preaching and memories of Peter. Modern scholarship continues to discuss exactly when and where Mark wrote, so teachers should distinguish ancient tradition from things we can prove beyond question. The traditional identification with John Mark is early and substantial, but the Gospel itself does not place Mark's name within the narrative. (encyclopedia.com)

Approximate Date Written

A reasonable teaching date is the middle to later first century, probably during the AD 60s. Scholars differ over whether Mark was written somewhat earlier or closer to AD 70. The exact year is not necessary for this lesson, and we should not present a debated date as certain. (encyclopedia.com)

Original Audience

Mark appears to have written primarily for Christians from a Gentile background, meaning people who were not raised as Jews. He sometimes explains Jewish customs and translates Aramaic expressions, which suggests that at least part of his audience needed those explanations. Ancient tradition connects Mark with Rome, although the exact location of his first readers remains debated. (biblegateway.com)

Purpose of the Book

Mark introduces his account as "the good news about Jesus the Messiah, the Son of God" in Mark 1:1. His Gospel moves quickly through the words and deeds of Jesus while repeatedly forcing the reader to consider one enormous question: Who is this man?

The miracles matter because they help answer that question.

Jesus does what no ordinary teacher can do. He commands evil spirits. He speaks to storms. He heals disease. He feeds thousands. He raises the dead. He claims authority to forgive sins.

Yet Mark does not allow us to stop at Jesus the miracle worker. The Gospel moves steadily toward the cross. Jesus explains His mission in Mark 10:45 by saying that the Son of Man came to serve and to give His life as a ransom for many.

His power and His sacrifice belong together. The Jesus who has authority over sickness is the same Jesus who willingly gives Himself for sinners.

HISTORICAL AND CULTURAL CONTEXT

Capernaum

Mark 2 begins by telling us that Jesus had returned to Capernaum. Capernaum was a real settlement on the northwestern shore of the Sea of Galilee and became an important center of Jesus' Galilean ministry.

Archaeological work has uncovered remains of first century homes at Capernaum as well as evidence associated with an early synagogue beneath the later structure visible at the site today.

Archaeologists have also identified a particular first century dwelling that later Christians treated with unusual reverence and associated with Peter.

We should handle that last claim carefully. Archaeology can establish that Capernaum was a real first century community with houses fitting the world described by the Gospels. It cannot prove that a particular surviving house is certainly Peter's house, nor can it prove that the healing in Mark 2 occurred inside one particular excavated room. (biblicalarchaeology.org)

That distinction is exactly the kind of careful apologetics we want our teachers and children to learn.

The House and Roof

Homes in this part of Galilee were commonly simple stone structures, often built around a courtyard. Roofs could be made with wooden supports covered with branches, reeds, earth, clay, or similar material.

Mark tells us that the crowd around Jesus became so large that there was no room left, even outside the door. Four men carried a paralyzed man toward Jesus, but when they could not reach Him through the crowd, they opened the roof above Jesus and lowered the man down.

This would have been disruptive, but the basic description fits the kind of domestic architecture known from the region. Excavated first century dwellings at Capernaum help us picture a humble house rather than the large modern buildings children may imagine. (biblicalarchaeology.org)

Scripture does not tell us who owned this particular house, whether the roof was later repaired, exactly what tools the men used, or how long their work took. Those details may be interesting to imagine, but they should not become facts in our teaching.

Paralysis and Daily Life

A person unable to walk in the first century did not have the medical care, mobility equipment, building access, social programs, or legal protections available in many places today. Daily survival could depend heavily upon family members and friends.

We should also be careful in how we speak about disability. The man is not valuable because Jesus heals him. He is valuable because he is a human being made in God's image.

The miracle reveals Jesus' authority and kindness. It does not teach that a person with a disability is somehow less complete as a person or less loved by God.

IMMEDIATE BIBLICAL CONTEXT

What Happens Before This Passage?

Mark 1 establishes a pattern of extraordinary authority.

Jesus teaches with authority in Mark 1:21 through 28. He commands an evil spirit, and it obeys Him. He heals Simon Peter's mother in law in Mark 1:29 through 31. Later that evening, many suffering people are brought to Him.

Mark 1:39 through 45 then describes Jesus healing a man with a serious skin disease. Jesus' reputation continues to spread, making it increasingly difficult for Him to enter towns quietly.

By the time Mark 2 begins, people have heard about Jesus, and the house fills quickly when word spreads that He has returned to Capernaum.

What Happens in Mark 2:1 through 12?

Four men bring a paralyzed man to Jesus.

Because of the crowd, they lower him through the roof.

Mark 2:5 tells us, "When Jesus saw their faith, he said to the paralyzed man, 'Son, your sins are forgiven.'"

Some teachers of the law are sitting nearby. They do not say their objection aloud at first, but they question Jesus in their hearts because they understand that forgiving sin is ultimately God's authority.

Jesus knows what they are thinking.

He asks which is easier to say, that sins are forgiven or that the man should get up and walk. Anyone can speak invisible words about forgiveness while the crowd cannot immediately inspect the result. A command to a paralyzed man to walk is different because everyone can see whether the words carry authority.

Jesus then explains why He is going to heal the man. He wants them to know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins.

The man gets up, takes his mat, and walks out in front of everyone.

The crowd is amazed and praises God.

What Happens After This Passage?

Mark continues showing Jesus' authority, but opposition also begins to grow.

Jesus calls Levi, later identified as Matthew, and eats with people whom respectable religious society considered sinners. Jesus then faces questions about fasting and Sabbath practices.

By Mark 3, religious opposition has become more serious.

This is important because Jesus' miracles did not cause everyone to believe. Some people saw extraordinary works and still resisted Him.

Miracles can confront a person with truth, but a miracle does not mechanically force faith into the human heart.

WHY THIS MOMENT MATTERS IN GOD'S PLAN

Mark 2 is not merely an account about a man getting his legs back.

The greater question is whether Jesus truly possesses authority to forgive sin.

The religious teachers correctly understand that sin is ultimately committed against God and that forgiveness belongs to God. Jesus does not back away from that issue. He deliberately places His authority at the center of the event.

Then He heals the man.

The miracle therefore points beyond itself. The man's restored body is wonderful, but Jesus is showing that He has come to deal with a deeper separation between sinful people and a holy God.

Later Mark will explain how this forgiveness can be given without God simply pretending that sin does not matter. Jesus says in Mark 10:45 that He will give His life as a ransom for many.

At the cross, Jesus takes the judgment sinners deserve. He dies, and then He rises again.

The power we see in His miracles should lead us toward the greater rescue He came to accomplish.

KEY THEOLOGICAL TRUTHS APPLIED TO THIS WEEK'S LESSON

Core Truth 1: Jesus Is Compassionate and Powerful

Jesus never uses suffering people as props for a performance.

Matthew describes Jesus looking at a large crowd in Matthew 14:14 and having compassion on them before healing those who were sick. The word compassion matters because His miracles reveal not only what He can do, but something about His heart.

Power without love would be frightening.

Love without power could care but remain unable to rescue.

In Jesus we encounter both genuine compassion and complete authority.

We should help children understand that Jesus still cares when we hurt, even when He does not remove suffering immediately. His compassion should never be measured only by whether we receive the answer to prayer we hoped for.

The cross is the clearest proof that Jesus does not stand far away from human suffering. He entered our broken world and gave Himself for us.

Core Truth 2: Our Deepest Need Is Forgiveness

The people who carried the paralyzed man almost certainly wanted him to walk.

Jesus does something surprising first.

He speaks about sin.

That does not mean the man's paralysis was caused by one particular sin. Scripture does not say that, and Jesus rejects the idea that every physical condition is the direct result of a particular person's wrongdoing in John 9:1 through 3.

Instead, Jesus shows us that physical suffering is not humanity's deepest problem.

We have all sinned.

Sin means that we have thought, wanted, said, and done things contrary to God and His good ways. Sin separates us from the holy God who made us, and we cannot erase our guilt by simply trying harder afterward.

The man needed working legs, but he needed peace with God even more.

So do we.

Core Truth 3: Jesus Has Authority to Save

Mark 2:10 is the anchor:

"But I want you to know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins."

Jesus calls Himself the Son of Man, a title He uses frequently. The words also reach back to Daniel 7:13 through 14, where one like a son of man receives everlasting authority and a kingdom from God.

Jesus is not merely offering encouragement to the paralyzed man. He is claiming authority over sin itself.

That claim reaches its fullest explanation at the cross and resurrection.

Jesus is God the Son who became truly human without ceasing to be God. He lived without sin, willingly died for our sins, and rose bodily from the dead. Everyone who turns from sin and trusts in Jesus is forgiven and receives new life.

The healing in Capernaum is wonderful.

The greater miracle of grace is that guilty sinners can be brought back to God through Jesus Christ.

Core Truth 4: Jesus' Miracles Reveal His Authority

Children may hear the word miracle and think of magic.

That is not what Scripture means.

A magician tries to create an impressive appearance. Jesus does not use tricks. The Gospel writers describe real events in which Jesus exercises authority beyond ordinary human ability.

Across His ministry He shows authority in different parts of creation.

In Mark 4:35 through 41 He commands a violent storm.

In Mark 5:1 through 20 He commands evil spirits.

In Mark 5:21 through 43 He heals serious sickness and raises a girl from death.

In Mark 6:30 through 44 He feeds a huge crowd from a small amount of food.

These are not random displays. They show that the kingdom of God has drawn near in the King Himself.

They also point ahead. Jesus does not permanently remove all suffering from the world during His first coming, but His miracles give us a glimpse of the restoration God will finally complete.

One day death itself will be gone for God's people. Revelation 21:4 tells us that mourning, crying, pain, and death will not have the final word.

Core Truth 5: God Is One God in Three Persons

This week's focal passage concentrates primarily upon Jesus, God the Son.

We should not force a lengthy Trinity explanation into a passage where Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are not all equally visible. However, this lesson follows closely after the curriculum's lesson on Jesus' baptism, where Scripture clearly shows the Son being baptized, the Spirit descending, and the Father speaking from heaven in Mark 1:9 through 11.

The Bible's fuller teaching is that God is one God in three Persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

The Father is God.

The Son is God.

The Holy Spirit is God.

There are not three gods, and God is not one Person changing costumes or playing three roles.

Jesus is God the Son, truly God and truly human.

The current Alliance Statement of Faith affirms one God who eternally exists as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, and it affirms Jesus Christ as true God and true man.

No illustration involving water, eggs, clovers, the sun, or one person playing different roles should be used. Those comparisons eventually teach something untrue about God.

CHRISTIAN AND MISSIONARY ALLIANCE ALIGNMENT

This lesson connects naturally with two parts of the Fourfold Gospel in particular: Jesus our Savior and Jesus our Healer.

The Alliance continues to describe Jesus as Savior, Sanctifier, Healer, and Coming King. (cmalliance.org)

Jesus Our Savior

Mark 2 places forgiveness at the center.

Jesus has not come only to improve circumstances. He has come to reconcile sinful people to God.

His saving work reaches its climax in His sacrificial death and bodily resurrection.

Jesus Our Healer

This lesson gives a natural opportunity to teach the Alliance emphasis that Jesus remains compassionate toward suffering people and that Christians may pray boldly for healing.

The current Alliance Statement of Faith says that provision is made in Christ's redemptive work for "the healing of the whole person," and it points believers toward prayer for the sick in James 5:13 through 16.

We must teach this with both faith and humility.

We can pray because Jesus is able to heal.

We can ask because Jesus cares.

We should never promise that a particular person will certainly be physically healed during this life if only enough faith is present.

Alliance teaching itself acknowledges that healing should not be treated as something automatically assumed and that prayers for healing are not always answered in the way we expect.

A child whose parent remains sick has not failed God.

A child living with a disability has not failed God.

A family that prayed faithfully but did not receive the outcome they wanted has not necessarily done something wrong.

Our final hope is larger than immediate physical recovery. Because Jesus rose from the dead, everyone who belongs to Him has the promise of resurrection life and complete restoration in God's coming kingdom.

Jesus Our Sanctifier

Sanctification is not the main emphasis of Mark 2, so it should not be forced into the lesson.

However, the same Jesus who forgives us also changes us. Through the Holy Spirit, He teaches believers to live differently and become more like Him.

Jesus Our Coming King

Jesus' miracles are small windows into the kingdom He will one day bring in its fullness.

The sick are healed.

Chaos obeys.

Evil retreats.

Hungry people are fed.

Even death must surrender to His command.

We do not yet experience the fullness of that kingdom, but Jesus will return. Christian hope therefore rests not in the promise that every painful situation will be fixed today, but in the certainty that Jesus will finally make all things right.

RELIABILITY OF SCRIPTURE

The Account Is Rooted in a Real Historical Setting

Capernaum was not an imaginary village created for a religious account.

Archaeology has uncovered first century domestic remains there and evidence of an early synagogue beneath the later synagogue structure. The setting described in the Gospels fits what is known of Galilean village life. (biblicalarchaeology.org)

That supports the historical world of the account.

It does not prove the miracle by archaeology, and we should never pretend that it does.

The Event Appears in the Synoptic Gospels

The healing of the paralyzed man appears in Mark 2:1 through 12, Matthew 9:1 through 8, and Luke 5:17 through 26.

That means the event was preserved across the Synoptic Gospel tradition.

Teachers should avoid saying that these are certainly three completely independent eyewitness reports, because many scholars believe Matthew and Luke used Mark as one of their sources.

We do not need to exaggerate the evidence for it to be valuable.

Mark Is Early Christian Testimony About Jesus

Ancient Christian testimony closely connects Mark with Peter's preaching. Scholars debate details of authorship and date, but the Gospel belongs to the first century and presents itself as testimony about the public ministry, death, and resurrection of Jesus. (encyclopedia.com)

Manuscript Evidence

The Gospel of Mark is preserved in a substantial manuscript tradition.

One important early witness is Papyrus 45, usually called P45, a third century papyrus manuscript containing portions of the four Gospels and Acts. (manuscripts.csntm.org)

This does not mean P45 is the original copy of Mark. It is not.

It does show that Mark belonged to the circulating Gospel collection of the early church long before the medieval period.

APOLOGETICS FOUNDATION

A helpful way to prepare teachers for this lesson is to use the same three questions we want children eventually to learn.

1. What Does the Bible Really Say?

Mark says that a paralyzed man was brought to Jesus, Jesus forgave his sins, Jesus claimed authority as the Son of Man, and Jesus commanded him to rise.

The man rose.

That is what Scripture claims.

We should neither shrink the claim nor add details to it.

2. What Do We Know From History and Archaeology?

We know that Capernaum was a real first century Galilean settlement.

We know that the kind of housing described in the account fits the region.

We know that Jesus' reputation as a healer and exorcist is extremely early. Even scholars approaching Jesus through ordinary historical methods commonly recognize that His contemporaries regarded Him as an effective healer and exorcist, although historical scholars disagree over how supernatural events should be interpreted. (cambridge.org)

Even within the Gospel accounts, Jesus' opponents do not always answer His miracles by claiming that nothing happened. Sometimes they argue instead about the source or meaning of His power, as seen

in Mark 3:22.

That is worth noticing.

3. What Are We Only Guessing About?

We do not know the medical cause of the man's paralysis.

We do not know his age.

We do not know how long he had been paralyzed.

We do not know the names of the four people who carried him.

We do not know the exact house.

We do not know exactly how the roof opening was constructed or repaired afterward.

We do not know precisely what every person in the crowd thought.

A teacher does not become less trustworthy by saying, "Scripture does not tell us."

Quite the opposite.

Children learn that we respect the Bible enough not to add to it.

WHY MIRACLES ARE REASONABLE WITHIN THE CHRISTIAN WORLDVIEW

Sometimes a child may say, "People cannot just make paralyzed people walk, so how could this happen?"

The first part of that statement is correct.

Ordinary people do not have the power Jesus displays.

That is why the event is called a miracle.

The Christian claim is not that paralysis normally disappears when someone speaks. The Christian claim is that the God who created the universe entered human history in Jesus Christ.

If God exists and created the natural world, then He is not trapped inside the ordinary processes of the world He made.

The real question is therefore not merely, "Do unusual things happen?"

The greater question is, "Who is Jesus?"

Mark keeps bringing us back there.

A miracle is not evidence that nature normally works this way. A miracle is a special act of God within the world He created.

ANTICIPATED CHILD QUESTIONS

Why did Jesus forgive the man before He healed him?

Because the man had a deeper need than walking. His body mattered to Jesus, but his relationship with God mattered even more. Jesus used the healing everyone could see to show that He had authority to do what they could not see, forgive sins.

Was the man paralyzed because he sinned?

Scripture does not say that. The Bible teaches that suffering and death entered the human world because of sin, but it does not teach that every sickness or disability is punishment for one particular thing a person did. In John 9:1 through 3, Jesus specifically rejects that kind of simple blame when His disciples ask about a man who was born blind.

Does Jesus still heal people?

Yes, Jesus is still powerful, and Christians may pray for healing. Sometimes God brings healing through doctors, treatment, the body's normal healing processes, or other ordinary means. Christians also believe God is able to heal in extraordinary ways. We should thank God when healing comes while remaining truthful about what we can and cannot prove.

Why doesn't Jesus heal everybody now?

This is one of the hardest questions, and we should never pretend it has an easy answer. Jesus has not promised that every Christian will be healed of every sickness during this life. We live in a world still affected by sin and death, and even faithful Christians suffer. We may ask God for healing because He loves us and is able to heal. When the answer is not what we hoped, we can still trust His character. Our strongest hope is the resurrection. Jesus rose, and those who belong to Him will one day be raised to life in a world where death and pain are gone.

If I have enough faith, will Jesus heal me?

Faith means trusting Jesus. It is not a power we use to control Him. We can pray with faith while still saying, as Jesus did in His suffering, that we trust the Father's will. A child should never be told that continuing sickness proves weak faith.

Did the four friends' faith save the man?

Mark 2:5 says Jesus saw "their faith," which clearly includes the extraordinary trust demonstrated by those bringing the man. We should not turn that sentence into a rule saying one person can believe in place of another person and automatically cause that person to be spiritually saved. Salvation is God's grace received personally through repentance and faith in Christ. The passage shows the beauty of people bringing someone they care about to Jesus, but it does not teach salvation by someone else's faith.

How could Jesus know what the teachers were thinking?

Mark tells us that Jesus knew in His spirit what they were thinking. This contributes to Mark's larger picture of Jesus' extraordinary authority and knowledge. We should allow the text to say what it says without inventing a mechanism Scripture does not explain.

Is Jesus God?

Yes. The Bible teaches that Jesus is God the Son, who became truly human without ceasing to be God. Mark 2 is important because the teachers correctly understand that forgiving sins belongs to God, and Jesus deliberately claims authority to forgive. His miracles, teaching, sinless life, death, and resurrection together reveal who He is.

COMMON MISUNDERSTANDINGS TO CORRECT

Misunderstanding 1: Miracles are the same thing as magic.

Magic tries to manipulate or imitate power. Jesus acts with His own authority according to the will of God. His miracles reveal God's kingdom and character.

Misunderstanding 2: Jesus came mainly to make sick people healthy.

Jesus genuinely cares about physical suffering, but His mission is much larger. He came to save sinners and defeat sin and death.

Misunderstanding 3: Every sick person is sick because of a particular sin.

Scripture does not teach this. Never allow a child to blame themselves for cancer, disability, chronic illness, or another person's sickness.

Misunderstanding 4: If healing does not happen, someone lacked faith.

Do not teach this. Faithful believers throughout Scripture suffered, and faithful Christians still suffer.

Misunderstanding 5: Doctors and prayer are enemies.

Scripture never requires Christians to choose between responsible medical care and prayer. We can pray because God is Lord, and we can gratefully receive wise care because every good gift ultimately comes from Him.

Misunderstanding 6: Archaeology proves the miracle.

Archaeology can support the setting. It cannot excavate the moment when a paralyzed man stood up. Our faith does not require exaggerating what archaeological evidence can accomplish.

Misunderstanding 7: Jesus' miracles mean Christians will always escape painful circumstances.

Jesus Himself suffered and died. The apostles suffered. Christian hope is not that believers avoid every painful thing. Our hope is that nothing can separate us from Christ, death has been defeated by His resurrection, and His final kingdom will make all things right.

GOSPEL CONNECTION

The Gospel connection should grow naturally from Jesus' own words in the passage.

The paralyzed man is placed before Jesus with an obvious problem everyone can see.

Jesus identifies a deeper problem.

Sin.

That is our problem too.

God is holy and good, while every one of us has sinned. We cannot heal the separation between ourselves and God through good behavior, church attendance, kindness, or religious effort.

Jesus can forgive because of who He is and because of what He came to do.

He is God the Son.

He lived the sinless life we have not lived.

He willingly died on the cross, taking the judgment sinners deserve.

He was buried.

He rose from the dead.

Everyone who turns from sin and trusts in Jesus is forgiven, brought into God's family, and given eternal life.

The man in Mark 2 eventually died physically, even after receiving a remarkable healing that day. His healing was real, wonderful, and important, but it was not yet the final restoration.

Jesus' resurrection is what gives us that greater hope.

Because Jesus lives, death will not have the final word for those who belong to Him.

TEACHER HEART PREPARATION

This lesson can sound simple until we remember who may be sitting in the room.

One child may have diabetes.

Another may use a wheelchair.

Someone may have a parent going through cancer treatment.

A child may have prayed for a grandparent who died.

Someone else may already be wondering whether God ignored their prayer.

Those children should not leave Sunday school carrying a burden Jesus never placed upon them.

We can teach His power without pretending we control it.

We can teach His healing without shaming those who remain sick.

We can teach children to pray boldly while also teaching them that God's love is not measured by whether He gives us exactly what we asked for.

The heart of this lesson is not, "If you believe hard enough, Jesus will fix whatever hurts."

The heart is far better.

Jesus sees people others might overlook. He cares about our suffering. He has authority no sickness, storm, evil power, sin, or grave can finally overcome.

Most importantly, He did not use that power to stay safely away from our broken world.

He entered it.

He went to the cross for us.

He rose again.

That is why a teacher can stand beside both the child who has seen a remarkable answer to prayer and the child who is still waiting, and speak with the same confidence about the goodness of Jesus.

Before teaching, it would be worth praying something like this privately:

"Father, help me show these children the compassion and authority of Jesus without promising what You have not promised. Give me tenderness toward every child carrying pain I cannot see. Holy Spirit, help me speak truthfully and gently. Keep Jesus at the center so that these children leave knowing not merely that He can do miracles, but that He is the Savior they can trust. Amen."

TEACHER TAKEAWAY

Jesus' miracles show real compassion and real divine authority, but they always point beyond the immediate need toward the greater question of who Jesus is.

In Mark 2, a man comes needing to walk and discovers that Jesus also has authority to forgive.

That is where we want the children to arrive.

Jesus cares about the things that hurt us, and we can bring those things to Him. Yet He loves us too much to deal only with the problems we can see.

He came for our deepest need.

He came to save.