

# Children's Bible Signs

## About This Book

### What does this book teach?

In short, this book teaches Scripture! Theologically, *Children's Bible Signs* is biblically based and educationally sound. Christian churches of various persuasions will find the messages foundational, positive and a comfortable fit for teaching Christ's youngest disciples. The teaching is clear, simple and faithful to God's Word. This book is designed as a companion to the *Children's Bible Signs Teacher/Parent Guide*, Volume One. The verses we have selected coincide with 12 lessons that teach the main scriptural events in Genesis, from Creation to Israel's move to Egypt.

### Who is it for?

*Children's Bible Signs* is aimed at meeting the needs of children within the preschool and early elementary range — around ages 3-6. The memory verses have been selected with young learners in mind and are brief and easy to understand.

### Why memorize Scripture?

Children have an amazing knack for memorization. In addition, what they learn in their early years is often retained for a lifetime. So when kids memorize Scripture, they tuck away in their minds and hearts valuable truths that they can access and apply anytime!

### Why use signs?

Children learn best when they are actively involved during lessons. Each memory verse incorporates elements of American Sign Language (ASL) and "Baby Sign" to aid in memorization through the use of touch, sight and sound. Sign language is a powerful tool — not only for children with expressive delays or who are unable to communicate verbally, but also for preverbal children or those just learning to talk. Studies show that use of sign can improve cognitive and emotional development, and can help young children pick up and retain information more quickly than with verbal communication alone. When you incorporate these signs with verbal repetition to help children memorize Bible verses, they engage actively with Scripture in a brand-new way.

### How can I get the most out of this book?

Each verse in this book ties directly to a Bible story from Genesis, though the memory verse itself may not be from Genesis. It's best to start by teaching the lesson so students get an understanding of the overall story. Then tap into the deeper meaning and themes by explaining the memory verse. Point out how these verses teach us about God's character, godly living, biblical events, etc.

When introducing these verses for memory, teach students the signs first. Give them plenty of practice time to mimic you and get comfortable with the motions. Then put it all together by speaking the whole verse and signing the bold-faced words at the same time. Repetition is key to memorization. Encourage students to repeat each verse often, using the signs to help them remember the wording. Finally, celebrate when students can recite and sign a verse on their own without prompts. It's a valuable accomplishment for little one to hide Scripture in their heart (see Psalm 119:11), so encourage them and reward their hard work!

### What Bible versions are used?

*Children's Bible Signs* uses the English Standard Version and the New International Version.

# Children's Bible Signs

## Teaching Tips

Teaching little ones can be challenging! But it can also be really fun. Here are a few pointers to help you get started. Following these tips will help you **get the most out of this book**; they will serve as a guide-post as you navigate each lesson. Check them out!

- **Practice makes perfect:** Take time to *get familiar* with the lesson ahead of time. That means, first of all, reading directly from the text in the Bible yourself. Take a look at the “For the Teacher” section to help in your own personal study. Then run through the written lesson a few times so you are confident summarizing it for little listeners. Of course, take time to practice the signs so you are comfortable showing them to the kids.
- **Pick and choose:** You will notice that as the lessons progress, there is a natural increase in sign vocabulary. To help you, we’ve included the signs in two categories: “New” and “Everyday.” *It’s up to you* to decide how many of the signs to include in the lessons. Also, remember that although the signs are highlighted every time they come up in the teacher’s text, it may not be necessary to repeat that sign in every instance.
- **Easy does it:** Little listeners need you to talk *slowly*. Make sure you plan 30 or more minutes to tell the story element of the lesson. You will see that as you add motions to your storytelling, the verbal part of the lesson will need to slow down. If you tell the lesson and incorporate the signs too quickly, it could confuse the students. The key is to develop a pace that allows you to tell the Bible story and add in purposeful motions that will aid in understanding. If you wonder how you can possibly fill a half hour or more with one Bible story, see the next two Teaching Tips.
- **Repeat, repeat, repeat:** Repetition is a powerful tool in aiding understanding. When you tell a part of the Bible story with added motions, the students will want to mimic you. Great! Their brains have been focusing on key words and have been associating those words with motions. Now, tell that same part *again*! This time, they will be less focused on the motions and more focused on how they fit into the larger picture of the lesson.
- **Get moving:** You may find that you have a group of wiggle-bugs on your hands. Hooray! That’s what this curriculum is meant for. Encourage the kids to get moving and practice the signs as you do them throughout the lesson. Make it *fun and engaging*.
- **Those little shining faces:** Take your cue from the kids. If you’re getting blank stares, or having to force a lot of the responses in the “Check for Understanding” section, you may need to go back over the text again. Remember, your purpose is for them to understand and retain. So, *look to them* to assess whether they have met those goals.

# A letter from our CEO, a mother of two.

The idea for this product came about because of a real, personal need in my family. When my daughter was 2, we realized that she wasn't speaking as much as we (or the pediatrician) thought she should be. I remember nervously driving to a therapy center on a cold November morning to see what the therapist recommended, which ended up being intensive speech therapy.

As the months passed, we found communication with our daughter very difficult. She could understand what we were saying, but verbalizing came very slowly for her. We needed to share God's Word with our daughter, but it seemed impossible. We were reading her the stories, but struggling to engage with her. My dreams of her saying a bedtime prayer were shattered – at least temporarily.

My sister had taken American Sign Language classes and suggested we start by learning some memory verses in sign form. We were already using signs for basic needs like "help" and "milk," so we figured, why not?

Our daughter took to it immediately – so we started expanding. We wanted to do whole lessons in sign! But we quickly found out that preparing for each story took forever. Choosing the signs, finding the signs, learning the signs, putting the signs together into a cohesive lesson – it was a lot of work. And we all know time is so limited with our busy families and lives. So we thought, if WE wanted this, perhaps other families and teachers out there could benefit from our work as well.

The *Children's Bible Signs* series is meant as a supplemental guide for including Baby Sign in your Sunday school, daily devotions at home or the preschool setting. We'll cover the most popular lessons in the Bible and help you, the teacher or parent, learn Baby Sign and teach it to your little learners.

In many cases, children who are verbally delayed understand much of what we are saying and asking; they simply struggle to communicate back. Baby Sign helps bridge that gap – and while we didn't invent these signs (many are from American Sign Language), we've put them in an easy-to-use format so you can use them while teaching God's Word to your kids.

After telling the Bible story, you can introduce the flash cards and signs for people, things and concepts the children heard in the lesson, such as the character Moses and how his mother hid him in a basket in the river. In the Teacher/Parent Lesson Guidebook, we've highlighted in bold the words that have accompanying flash cards.

And the great thing about using Baby Sign is that it doesn't have to be perfect! It's about communicating, and if the sign for "Moses" looks a bit different from our cards, that's OK! If it means "Moses" to your kids and to you, then the purpose has been achieved – they can communicate the name "Moses" to you!

We hope you find using *Children's Bible Signs* to teach and engage with your kids at home or church is as powerful and rewarding as we have.

Best,

Katie Barratt

Katie Barratt



# Jesus Stills the Storm

Matthew 8:23-27, Mark 4:35-41, Luke 8:22-25

## New Signs:

sleep, ark (boat), storm, still, obey

## Everyday Signs:

Jesus, God, disciples

## Hands-On Hook:

Gather together a large blanket and a small toy boat. Tell the students that you will be making a **storm** out of the blanket by pretending to make wind and waves. Have the students hold on to the edges of the blanket and put the **boat** in the middle. Sign and say the word **storm**, and have the students shake the blanket to make the boat tumble around. Then, sign and say **still**, and have the students immediately stop and calm their pretend **storm**. Continue to play and pretend, and give the students lots of opportunity to get familiar with these signs.

## Lesson:

### Jesus and the disciples go out on a boat

**Jesus** had spent the day teaching a large crowd of people about the kingdom of **God**. By evening, **Jesus** must have been **sleepy**. He saw all the people and told them to go to the other side of the Sea of Galilee. **Jesus** and the **disciples** left the crowd and got into a big **boat**, while other, smaller **boats** followed. **Jesus** went to the back of the **boat**, lay down and **slept**.

### A storm develops

Suddenly, a big **storm** arose! The strong wind pushed the waves so that they crashed against the **boat**. The water began to fill the **boat**! Even though they were experienced with the sea, the **disciples** were frightened. They woke **Jesus** and said, "Teacher, don't you care if we drown? Save us! We are going to die!"

### Jesus calms the storm

**Jesus** got up and spoke to the **storm**, commanding, "Quiet! Be **still**!" Then, the wind died down and the waves stopped. Everything was calm and **still**. **Jesus** asked the **disciples** why they had been afraid. He said, "Do you still have no faith?" The **disciples** were awestruck when they saw that the **storm obeyed Jesus**. They asked one another, "Who is this? Even the wind and waves **obey** him!"

## Check for Understanding:

What did **Jesus** and his **disciples** get into after they had spent the day with a crowd of people? **boat**

What did **Jesus** do when he got into the **boat**? **sleep**

While **Jesus** was **sleeping**, what began to happen with the weather? **storm**

The **boat** began to fill with water, but did the **storm** wake **Jesus** from his **sleep**? (no) Who woke him? **disciples**

What did **Jesus** say to the **storm**? “Be **still**!”

Why were the **disciples** amazed? The **storm** obeyed **Jesus**

## For the Teacher:

- The account in Matthew 8:18 indicates that when **Jesus** saw the great crowds, he gave orders to go to the other side of the Sea of Galilee. Mark 4:36 reports that **Jesus**’ disciples took him “just as he was,” after they had sent away the crowds.
- In the Bible, people often learned lessons from nature. For example, **Elijah** learned from wind, earthquake and fire that God had not abandoned him (1 Kings 19:9-18).

## Suggested Memory Verses:

“When I am afraid, I put my trust in You.” —Psalm 56:3, ESV

“Let not your hearts be troubled. Believe in God; believe also in Me.” —John 14:1, ESV

**sleep**



**ark (boat)**



**storm**



**still**



**obey**



**Jesus**





**God**



**disciples**







**sleep**



**ark (boat)**



**sleep**



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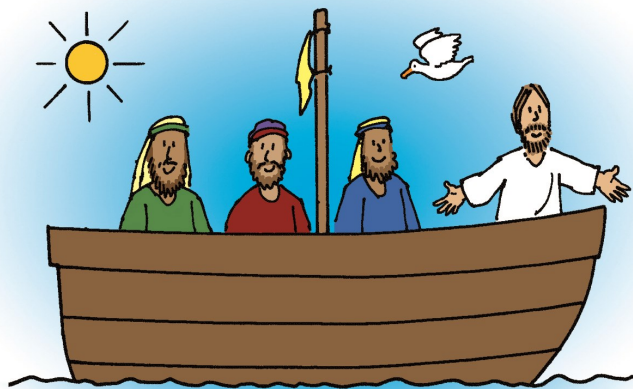
**ark (boat)**



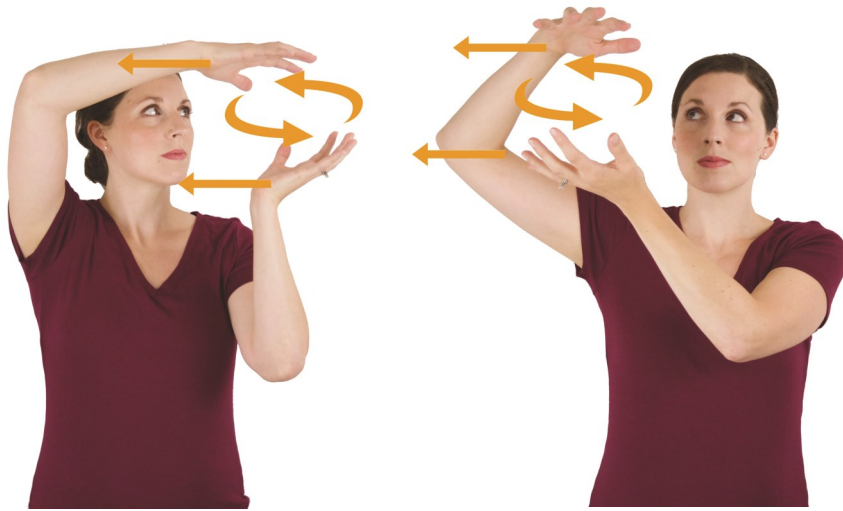
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**storm**



**still**



**storm**



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**still**



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**obey**



**Jesus**



**obey**



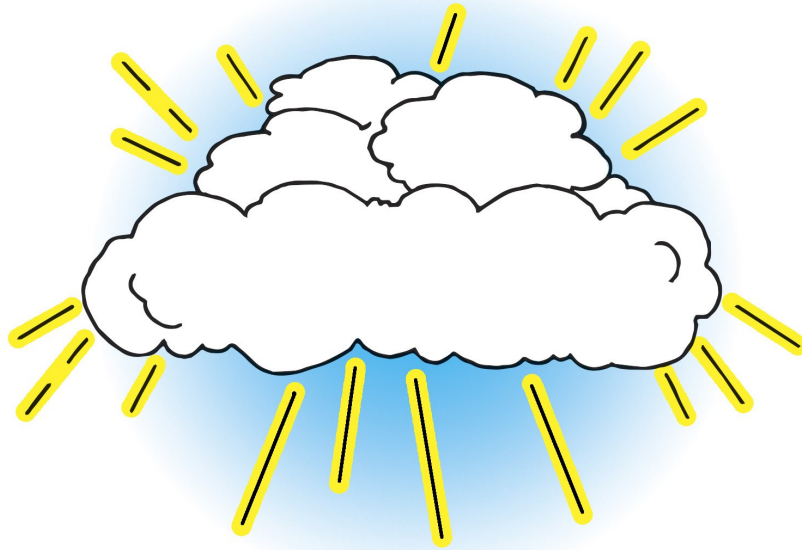
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**Jesus**



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**God**



**disciples**





**God**



ChildrensBibleSigns.com



**disciples**



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# Jesus Stills the Storm

When I am afraid, I put my trust in you (God).

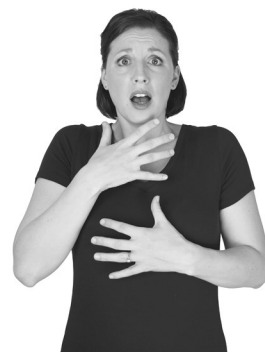
—Psalm 56:3, ESV



Circle around index finger.



**When I am**



**afraid, I put my**



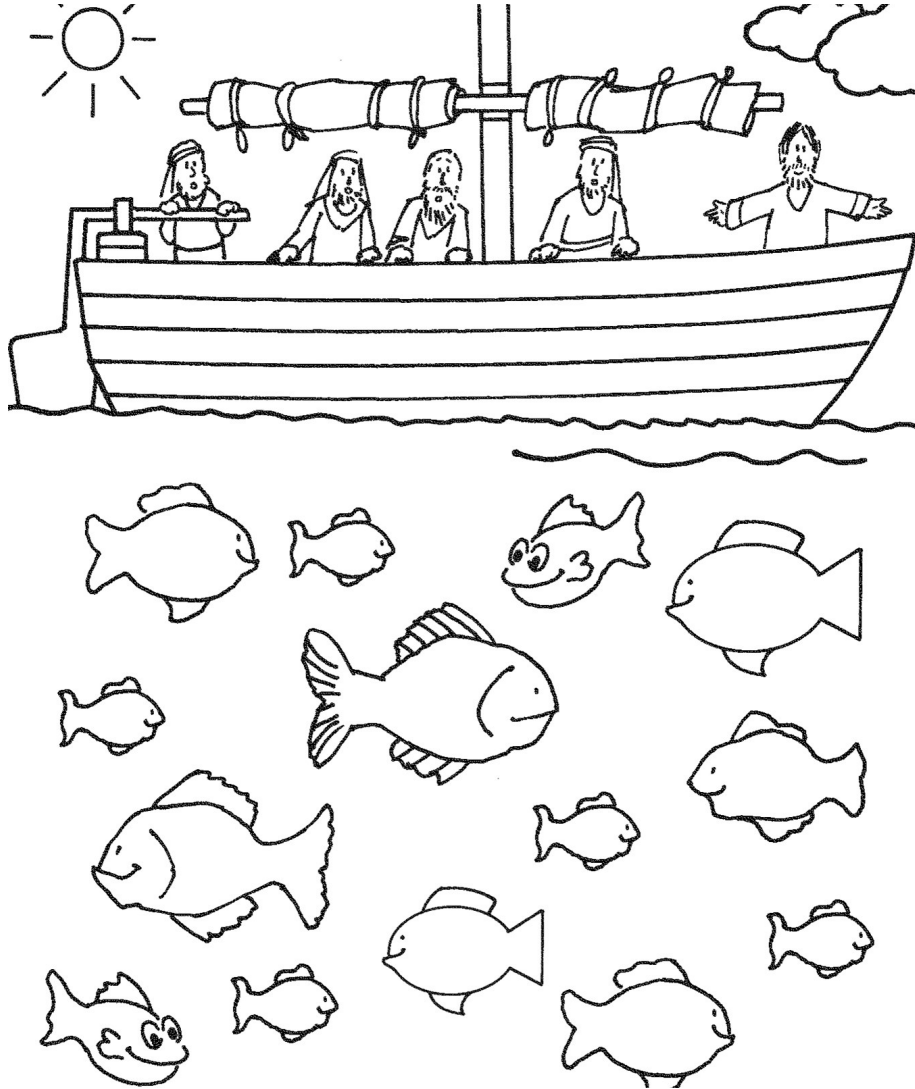
**trust (confidence)**



**in you (God).**

# Jesus Stills the Storm

Matthew 8:23-27, Mark 4:35-41, Luke 8:22-25



**Jesus and the disciples left the crowd and got into a big boat.**