

# "That You May Believe"

## Gospel of John

### Week 13

**Main Idea – Nature is under God's control. Jesus has control over nature.**

The goal of this week's lesson is to demonstrate from Scripture that Nature is under God's control as the Creator of the universe. God is not limited by the physical laws of the creation, and He can choose to operate outside of them to accomplish His perfect purposes. Even though some OT Saints (Joshua), have been able to control nature, the power to do it has always come from God. This week's lesson culminates in the Person of the Lord Jesus, who as eternal God, has the power to control nature. When we behold Jesus controlling nature, it is another evidence that He is the God of all creation.

## Sunday School — Jonah 1

### Preparation

Materials:

- "What does it control?" Images
- Two levels of word searches to emphasize the main point
- Jonah Thrown Overboard Coloring Page

Set-up:

- Print out materials.

### Bible Verse (5-10 minutes)

1 John 5:11-12, John 14:6 (ESV) – "And this is the testimony, that God gave us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. Whoever has the Son has life; whoever does not have the Son of God does not have life...Jesus said, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me."

Memorization — Have the students repeat the Bible verse with hand motions 2-3 times.

Song — Have the students sing "The Life" (Seeds Family Worship, ESV) at least once.

NOTE — Start the Bible Verse section at the beginning without waiting for students who may arrive late. This will preserve the allotted times for other sections.

## Lesson (20-25 minutes)

Main Idea – **Nature** is under God’s **control**.

Pray

### Introduction (5 minutes)

Opening Activity — “What does it control?” In this game, you will attempt to match a controller with the image that it controls.

|                |      |                 |          |
|----------------|------|-----------------|----------|
| Light Switch   | Lamp | Rudder          | Boat     |
| TV Remote      | TV   | Handlebars      | Bike     |
| Steering Wheel | Car  | Elevator button | Elevator |

Today, we are going to talk about another controller and the incredible control that He possesses.

### Body (15 minutes)

Main Point — Nature is under God’s control. There are many places in the Bible that teach that nature is under God’s control. **Can you give an example from the Bible of a time when God demonstrated His control over nature?**

This morning, we will look at the life of Jonah to see this truth for ourselves. Because this is a familiar story, I will ask you questions (in bold below) and call on those whose hand is raised for the answer.

The book of Jonah begins with God giving Jonah a command. **What did God command Jonah to do?** He commanded Jonah to go to Nineveh and proclaim God’s judgment against them — Read Jonah 1:1-2.

**How does Jonah respond to God’s command?** He boards a ship and goes in the opposite direction — Read Jonah 1:3.

**What happens after Jonah flees from God?** God causes a violent storm to threaten the ship by sending a powerful wind over the sea — Read Jonah 1:4

**What is our main point?** Nature is under God’s control! Here, we see the first sign (proof) that nature is under God’s control. Nature does not control itself, but God does. The wind didn’t have a choice to blow over the sea. The waves didn’t have a choice to start raging. We believe that nature is under God’s control because of His power to control the creation and all its elements.

**How do the sailors react to all this?** They are terrified and seek the answer to why this is happening — Read Jonah 1:5-5-8

**How does Jonah answer the captain's question?** He worships the Creator God — Read Jonah 1:9. Here, we have a true statement from Jonah that affirms our main point. God is Creator, and as the Creator, He has the power to control nature.

**What is the solution to the raging storm?** Throwing Jonah into the sea — Read Jonah 1:10-16. Notice something important about this story. Before the sailors throw Jonah into the sea, they are without hope. We have already seen that they cried out to all of their false gods, but the storm became more violent. But at the end of the story, they change their approach, and cry out to the God of all creation. And after they throw Jonah into the sea, the storm stops raging at once. Having witnessed and experienced the Lord's great power, they offered sacrifices to the Lord and vowed to serve Him!

**What is the last thing to happen to Jonah?** The Lord appoints a great fish to swallow him, preserving his life — Read Jonah 1:17. Here we see another important reminder that nature is under God's control. Not only does God control the creation, He also controls its creatures! The fish obeys the Lord and swallows Jonah to preserve his life. Amazing!

### **Conclusion (5 minutes)**

Nature is under God's control. Therefore, God can control the creation and its creatures to accomplish His purposes. And when people properly behold the awesome power of God over creation, the correct response is to worship Him!

This would not be the last time that God used His control over nature to accomplish His purposes and preserve the life of His people. Hundreds of years later, God would come as a man — The Lord Jesus Christ — and once again demonstrate that He has control over nature to accomplish His purposes. While the sailors in Jonah's day couldn't see God, the disciples on the boat were able to see Jesus — who is the creator God — powerfully controlling nature.

But even more important than Jesus' power over creation was His willingness to die as a sacrifice for the sins of all who believe in Him. Similar to the sailors who vowed to worship God and offered sacrifices to Him, the Scripture calls you to observe the mighty power of God over creation, trust in Jesus' sacrifice for your sin to avoid the Lord's judgment, and vow to serve Him all the days of your life.

Pray

## **Lesson Activities (20-25 minutes)**

Secret word — Tarshish

# **Children's Church — John 6:16-21**

## **Preparation**

Materials:

- "What do they control" Images

- Two levels of word searches to emphasize the main point
- Jesus walks on water coloring page

Set-up:

- Print out materials

## Bible Verse (5-10 minutes)

1 John 5:11-12, John 14:6 (ESV) – “And this is the testimony, that God gave us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. Whoever has the Son has life; whoever does not have the Son of God does not have life...Jesus said, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.”

Memorization — Have the students repeat the Bible verse with hand motions 2-3 times.

Song — Have the students sing “The Life” (Seeds Family Worship, ESV) at least once.

NOTE — Starting with the Bible verse in Children’s Church will help the children get some movement in before the lesson starts.

## Lesson (20-25 minutes)

Main Idea – Jesus has **control** over **nature**.

Pray

### Introduction (5 minutes)

This morning, we learned from the story of Jonah that Nature is under God’s control. We saw that God has control over the creation, causing the wind and waves to rage and be still at His command. We also say that God has control over the creatures of creation, causing a large fish to swallow Jonah and preserve His life.

Today, we will continue to talk about God’s control over nature so that we might see His awesome power and submit ourselves to Him. But first, we are going to start with an activity.

Opening Activity — In Sunday school, we played, ‘What does it control’ — looking at various objects and what they control. This game is titled, “What do they control”, where you will attempt to match a person who controls something with the image that they control.

|                    |                |           |           |
|--------------------|----------------|-----------|-----------|
| Surgeon            | Surgical tools | Coach     | Playbook  |
| Firefighter        | Firehose       | Pilot     | Airplane  |
| Crane Operator     | Crane          | Captain   | Boat      |
| Traffic Controller | Traffic        | Conductor | Orchestra |

Today, we are going to learn about another controller and the elements under their control.

## Body (15 minutes)

Main Point — Jesus has control over nature. In today's short passage, we see the glory of the Lord Jesus as the One who has control over the laws of nature. Let's look at the passage:

The Ship — Read John 6:16-17

**Why are the disciples at the shore?** They are waiting for Jesus. As it starts to get dark, and there is no sign of Jesus, they decide to board their boat and head across the sea without Him. It seems like the logical thing to do. If they wait too long, they won't be able to make it across the sea!

The Storm — Read John 6:18

**What happened to the disciples?** They got caught in a storm. A wind swept across the sea and it grew very rough on the waters.

**For those who were in Sunday school, what did we learn about winds that cause the sea to become stormy?** The winds are controlled by God — the Creator who controls nature for His purposes. Now, the text here doesn't say that God directly caused the winds to make the sea rough for the disciples. But the Bible teaches us that if something happens in nature, God is involved because nature is under His control.

When the waters get rough, the disciples are in need of help from God. Let's go to our next point.

The Savior — Read John 6:19

**From the story, what do you think caused the disciples to be terrified?** The story reveals the disciples were terrified when they saw Jesus walking on water — something that had never been done before in the history of the world. They may have been scared of the dark. They may have been scared of the storm. But they were terrified of the Lord Jesus as He walked toward them.

All throughout the Bible, when people come face to face with the amazing power of God, they are terrified. Here, the disciples see Jesus in a way they have never seen Him before — walking on water and defying the laws of gravity. It is impossible for a man to walk on water without God's help. But walking on water is possible for Jesus because He has control over nature and all its elements — water, wind, etc.

How will the disciple's situation and fear be resolved? Let's go to our final point.

The Solution — Read John 6:20-21

**What is the command that Jesus gives the disciples?** Don't be afraid! Jesus' presence is no longer a source of fear, but a source of comfort for the disciples. As a result, they are eager to get Jesus into the boat with them! If the One who can walk on water is in your boat, there is nothing that the creation can do to you because He is the One who controls nature.

But something else amazing happens. Jesus is not only the solution to the disciple's fear. Jesus is also the solution to their travel problem. After Jesus steps into the boat, the boat is supernaturally transported to their final destination. As the One who has control over nature, Jesus can not only walk on water, but also cause a ship to miraculously teleport to the shore! What an incredible experience!

### **Conclusion (5 minutes)**

Jesus has control over nature. When we see His awesome power over nature — walking on water and causing a ship and all its passengers to be supernaturally transported to a different location — it should cause us to fear God. To respect His power as the One who controls all things.

If you want to survive the storms of life, to avoid destruction, you need the help of a supernatural friend — Jesus Christ, the Savior of the world. If you place your faith in Him, you will have no need to fear the circumstances of life, and you will find eternal life for your souls.

Pray

### **Lesson Activities (20-25 minutes)**

Secret word — Disciples