



EXPLORE THE BIBLE.

Session 5: Shapes

Suggested Week of Use: July 2, 2023

Core Passage: Jeremiah 18:1-12

News Story Summary

Passengers aboard a cruise ship called Carnival Sunshine were terrified recently when the ship encountered a powerful storm on its way back from the Bahamas to its port in Charleston, South Carolina. Videos posted by passengers showed water in the hallways and items scattered across public areas. One passenger said a wave broke a window in his cabin, allowing water to come in. Another began shooting video of the storm; but, as it worsened, he was afraid to open the door to shoot more. He also reported hearing the ceiling and walls creaking and vibrating. He said he and his family stayed in their cabin and prayed. Passengers even discussed how long they could survive in the ocean with life jackets if the ship should sink.

When Carnival Sunshine finally docked in Charleston, passengers were described as “white as ghosts.” Criticism of the cruise line soon began, with questions of why the ship was allowed to sail into a storm with such strong winds. Some suggested the ship should have stayed in the Bahamas until it was safer to leave or tried to sail around the storm.

For more about this story, search “Cruise ship battered by rough weather.”

Focus Attention

To supplement the Engage activities, write *Things got out of control* on the board. Invite volunteers to share times when they were in a situation that spun out of control and how they responded. Say: *We like to be in control of our circumstances, but many times that’s not possible.* Share the news story about the cruise ship caught in a violent storm. Emphasize that these passengers had no control and had to trust that the ship’s crew understood what was best. Ask: *How would you have felt in their situation? What would you have done?* Share that in this session God reminded Jeremiah that He is always in control because He is our Creator and Sustainer. Say: *As His people, we need to remember that we are in His hands to be shaped as He sees fit.*

Summarize and Challenge

To supplement the Challenge activities, direct adults to recall the cruise ship passengers’ experiences. If possible, play the sounds of winds and rain in a storm. Encourage the group to close their eyes and imagine being on the ship that is being tossed about by the wind and waves. Say: *Sometimes in life, we feel like we’re tossed around by circumstances beyond our control. While you have your eyes closed, pray silently that you will rely on God and that He will help you see how He is shaping you through these circumstances.*