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# Jesus Walks on Water

*Scripture: Matthew 14:22-33*

**Theme: Jesus is God , He does what only God can do**

*1st-3rd Grade (Ages 6-8)*

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Free curriculum for small and rural churches

## Lesson Overview

Lesson Overview: Jesus Walks on Water This lesson explores how Jesus performed a miracle, walking on water, that shows us He is God. Early elementary kids will learn that only God can do what seems impossible, like turning water into food or walking on water. It's a great time to remind them that Jesus is always with them, just like He calmed the storm in the lake, and He will help them overcome fear too. Key Points for Teaching: 1. Jesus is strong and brave , Even when the disciples were scared, Jesus gave them courage. 2. God doesn't ask us to do impossible things alone , He gives us His power and love to help us face challenges. 3. Prayer is a way to talk to Jesus , Just like the disciples called out, we can ask Him to help us too. Simple Application: After the story, ask the kids: "When did you feel scared like Peter did? What can you do to remember Jesus is always with you?" Praise them for sharing, and encourage them to trust in Jesus' power. End with a short prayer, like: "Jesus, thank You for being with us. Help us to be brave like You!" This keeps it engaging, clear, and heart-focused while reinforcing the theme that Jesus is God and does what only He can! Optional reflection: children can draw a picture of Jesus helping their friends, then share one way they can help someone else this week. This extra activity supports the lesson's theme and gives teachers a simple, lowprep option for extending the discussion.

## Bible Story

### Jesus Walks on Water

One evening, after Jesus taught so many people, He and His disciples got into a boat to cross the Sea of Galilee. As the boat sailed away, Jesus left them and went up on a mountain to pray. The sky grew dark, and the wind blew hard, making the waves very rough. The disciples were frightened and struggling to row against the strong currents.

Suddenly, about midway across the sea, they spotted Jesus walking toward them on the water! At first, they were terrified, what if He was a ghost? But then they realized it was Jesus Himself. Peter, one of Jesus' disciples, called

out, "Lord, if it's You, tell me to come walk on the water!" Jesus said, "Come." Peter stepped out of the boat and began walking on the water toward Jesus.

But just as Peter started to get farther from the boat, he began to sink. He shouted, "Lord, save me!" Jesus reached out, grabbed Peter, and pulled him into the boat. When they arrived safely, the disciples were amazed. They had seen Jesus do something they never thought possible, walking on water!

This story teaches us that God is powerful and never too far away. Even when we feel scared or alone, Jesus can help us. Just like Peter, we can trust Jesus to keep us safe, no matter how big the challenges are. And like the disciples, we can be amazed by God's amazing love and strength!

Why This Story Matters: Jesus walked on water to show us that He can do anything for us. Just like He calmed the waves, He can calm our fears and give us strength to face our own "sea" of trouble. When we feel worried, we can remember: Jesus is always with us!

## Key Verse

### Matthew 14:31 , 'You of little faith,' He said, 'why did you doubt?'

The Bible Verse: "Why Did You Doubt?" Jesus was on a boat with His friends one day, and a big, scary storm started raging around them. The waves were very high, and the boat looked like it might sink! Peter, one of Jesus' followers, was afraid too, so he called out to Jesus, "Master, help me!" Jesus reached out His hand, and Peter started walking on the water toward Him. But just as Peter took his first step, something inside him said, "Maybe this isn't real!" Instead of trusting Jesus completely, Peter started looking around at the wind and the waves and thought, "I'm going to fall!" His fear made him hesitate, and soon he was sinking. He cried out, "Save me!" and Jesus grabbed him and pulled him back to safety. Jesus looked at Peter and gently said, "You of little faith, why did you doubt?" These words show us that Jesus knows when we're afraid and when we're not trusting Him enough. Sometimes, even when we're scared, God wants us to take one small step of faith and trust Him, just like Peter did when he left the boat. But just like Peter, we can get nervous and doubt if God will really help us. The good news is that Jesus loves us and wants us to be brave and believe in Him, even when things seem impossible. God doesn't want us to be afraid all the time, He wants us to be brave! When we feel scared, like Peter did, we can pray and ask Jesus to help us trust Him more. Maybe we're afraid of the dark, afraid of heights, or afraid of losing something important. Whatever makes us feel nervous, we can remember that God is always there to protect us. One way we can show our faith is by trying one little thing we've been afraid of, like asking a grown-up to help us cross a busy street or thanking God for something He's already done for us. When we doubt, Jesus doesn't get angry, He forgives us. He wants us to keep trying to trust Him, just like Peter did. Sometimes, when we're brave and follow God's example, we'll see that He's stronger than our fears! Next time you feel scared, remember: Jesus loves you, and He's always with you, ready to help. Give Him a hug in your heart and say, "I trust You!" Even if you don't feel brave right away, God will help you grow stronger in faith, one step at a time. Simple Application for You: If today you feel a little scared or nervous about something, try this: 1. Pray: Say, "Jesus, help me trust You today!" 2. Look for a small way to be brave: Maybe stand up for a friend, share something nice with your family, or ask a question at church. 3. Remember: Jesus has already saved you from many big and little dangers. He's got you covered! You don't have to be perfect, just try to trust Him a little more each day!

## Activities

### Activity 1:

Kids create small paper boats and "race" them across a tray of water to learn how Jesus calmed the storm, even in chaotic times.

1. Design the Boats: Give each child a boat template (or let them draw a simple boat shape). Ask them to decorate it with crayons, writing their

## Activity 2:

Kids write or draw their fears in "storm clouds" and then "pray" them onto a paper "sky" to see how God calms them.

1. Create the Sky: Tape the poster paper to a wall or table. Draw a simple sky line with a crayon.
2. Draw the Storm: Ask kids to imagine storms in their lives. Have them draw or write their fears (e.g., "I'm scared of falling", "Mom/Dad is mad at me") on sticky notes and glue them to the "stormy" part of the sky.
3. Jesus' Calm: Explain that Jesus walked on water because He knows how to calm storms. Let them draw or write how God can help them. Example: "God promises to protect me!"
4. Prayer Time: Have them take a note and place it under a "sun" (draw a circle) to show God's love. Say, "Just like Jesus said, 'Do not be afraid,' we can trust God in our storms." End with a group prayer.
5. Both activities reinforce the lesson with creative, interactive, and prayerful moments while keeping supplies simple! Would you like adjustments for time or materials?

## Discussion Questions

- Here are four open-ended discussion questions for early elementary children (ages 6, 8) about Jesus walking on water (Matthew 14:22, 33). These questions invite them to explore the story, reflect on its meaning, and connect it to their own lives in simple ways:
  - 1. What happened when Jesus walked on the water?
  - How do you think the disciples felt when they saw Jesus walking toward them in the middle of the storm?
  - What might have been scary or exciting about that moment?
  - If you were one of the disciples, what would you have done if you thought Jesus was a ghost or a spirit?
  - Why do you think Jesus wanted to prove to them that he was still with them?
  - (Application: How can we trust in Jesus even when life feels scary or uncertain? How can we "walk on water" in our own lives when things are tough?)
  - 2. Why do you think the disciples were afraid to call out to Jesus?
    - In the story, Peter tried to walk on water but got scared and started sinking. What made Peter (and the other disciples) afraid?
    - What are some things that make you feel afraid? (Maybe something that's big or new or even something from the Bible, like fearing God.)
    - Why do you think Jesus was so brave to walk on the water? What would it have taken for him to do that?
    - If you were Peter, would you have called out to Jesus too? Why or why not?
    - (Application: How can we learn to trust Jesus even when we feel afraid? What does it mean to "walk on water" like Peter, even if we stumble?)
  - 3. What does it mean to trust Jesus in hard times, like the disciples were in the storm?
    - In the story, the disciples were in a big storm on a boat. What kinds of "storms" or tough times have you been in? (Maybe when you were afraid, when something didn't go your way, or when you felt alone.)
    - How did the disciples try to handle their fear? What did they wish they could do?
    - Jesus wasn't in the boat with them, that's why they were scared! What would have helped them more than anything?
    - How can we trust Jesus the way the disciples trusted him? What does that look like in our lives?
    - (Application: How can we pray for strength to trust Jesus when life feels stormy? What can we do to remind ourselves that he's always with us?)

- 4. Why did Jesus call Peter to walk on water? What does that teach us about leadership?
- In the story, Jesus asked Peter to walk on water. Why do you think he did that?
- Peter was the disciple who was closest to Jesus. Do you think Jesus trusted Peter enough to ask him to do something brave? Why or why not?
- What if Jesus had just said, "I'll help you," instead of asking you to walk? How might that have felt different?
- Jesus is our Leader, how can we be brave leaders, like Peter, by trusting him and doing what he asks?
- Have you ever had a leader (like a teacher or a parent) ask you to do something that felt scary? How did you feel? What helped you trust them?
- (Application: How can we show others that we trust Jesus by doing brave things in his name? What does it mean to be a leader who trusts God?)

## Prayer Focus

*Prayer Focus: Jesus Is Stronger Than Fear Dear Heavenly Father, Thank You for making Jesus strong and brave. You gave Him the power to walk on water, even when it felt scary for Peter to try. Help us today to trust in Jesus, just like Peter did when he took a step toward Him. Remind us that no matter how big our fears are, Jesus loves us and can help us when we need Him. Lord Jesus, You are our rock and our light. When Peter felt afraid and started to sink, You reached out and held him. Teach us to follow You with our whole hearts, just like Peter did when he walked on water. Help us to believe that You can take care of us, even when things seem impossible. Heavenly Father, You want us to learn to trust You every day. Just like Jesus walked on the water, remind us that You can help us cross our fears, big or small. When we feel nervous, like Peter did, give us the courage to ask You for help and to believe in Your love for us. Thank You for being with us always! Dear Jesus, Thank You for being our strength and our guide. Help us to remember that You can do more than we can ask or imagine. When we pray and ask for help, remind us that You are listening and that You want us to trust in You. May our hearts always be open to Your love and kindness. Amen. Simple Application for the Class: "Let's imagine we're Peter today. When Jesus calls us to step out of our boat (maybe into a big question or a scary feeling), we'll take one small step and trust Him. If we feel afraid, we'll remember that Jesus is there holding our hand!"*

### >> Missions Spotlight

Among the lake-dwelling peoples of Southeast Asia, like the Intha people of Myanmar's Inle Lake, who live on the water, the story of Jesus walking on water is astonishing. Missionaries share that the God who walks on water also walks with us through every trial.

### -> To the Cross

Peter walked on water when he looked at Jesus. When he looked at the waves, he sank. At the cross, Jesus bore the weight of all our sins, waves of evil that would drown us. Because He conquered sin, we can 'walk above' the waves of life through faith.