

JESUS WALKED ON WATER

Matthew 14:22-33

In Matthew's Gospel, this story of Jesus miraculously walking on the water immediately follows the feeding of the crowds. Jesus had just fed more than 5,000 people with only a small amount of bread and fish. The disciples were still dumbfounded as to what had just occurred, but Jesus wanted the men to know that He could do anything. Jesus had met a physical need for the crowds, but He further met their spiritual need as He shared about the kingdom of God.

After a long day of teaching, Jesus had told the disciples to get into a boat and head across the lake. Jesus stayed behind for several reasons. The first was so He could dismiss the crowds and send them home. Just as a preacher greets congregants as they leave, Jesus wanted to send the crowds away filled both physically and spiritually. Secondly, Jesus wanted to spend some time with the Father in prayer. Jesus went alone by Himself to pray. Lastly, Jesus wanted to make sure the disciples had gone a significant distance from the shore so He could also show His power over nature.

The Sea of Galilee is well known for very sudden, very violent storms. While the storm in this account may not have been the most atrocious storm, Matthew does tell us that the wind was against the men. It was at this point, somewhere around 3 a.m., that Jesus approached the boat walking on the water. The disciples saw Jesus and mistook Him for a ghost. With all of that input, it is no wonder the Bible describes their demeanor as "terrified."

Jesus identified Himself, and Peter immediately asked to be allowed to join the Lord on the water. Jesus invited Peter out of the boat. While Peter trusted Jesus and focused his eyes on Him, he walked as Jesus did. When Peter's mind was distracted, he sank and needed rescue. Jesus reached out and rescued Peter, and He will do the same for us.



SESSION FOCUS

BIBLE PASSAGE: Matthew 14:22-33

MEMORY VERSE: 1 John 4:9

BIBLE VERSE: 2 Corinthians 5:7

TEXT TRUTH: Jesus is the Son of God.

BIBLE SKILLS SPOTLIGHT: Knows the Bible tells that God sent Jesus to earth because He loves all people. Becomes familiar with the contents of specific books, such as: The Gospels tell about Jesus. Locates many books in the Bible without assistance.

BIBLE STUDY

(35 MINUTES)

- Jump In:** Bible Timeline for Kids, “Church Carving” (Slide)
- Examine the Text:** painter’s tape, Bibles, “Text Truth 3” (Slide), Family Cards
- Play the Video:** Explore the Bible on Location video
- Memory Verse:** “1 John 4:9” (Poster Pack), music
- Prayer:** “Foot” (Printable), copy paper, colored pencils, scissors

APPLY THE TRUTH

(20 MINUTES)

- Explorer Guides:** Bibles, Explorer Guides, pens
- Review:** play dough, plastic knives or sharpened pencils, “Allergy Alert” (Printables)
- Tech Connect** (Optional): a device with the LifeWay Kids app

ACTIVITIES

(20 MINUTES)

- Bible Skills:** blue hair gel, sandwich size ziplock bags, duct tape, “Bible Book Cards” (Printable), Bibles
- Move:** 2 large cardboard circles
- Make:** pool noodles, smoothie straws, colorful paper, kids’ scissors, glue, tape
- Explore:** none

Leaders, grow on the go! Listen to session-by-session training every week on Ministry Grid, Apple Podcasts, Spotify, LifeWay’s Digital Pass, or visit goexplorethebible.com/kids-training.

JESUS WALKED ON WATER

Matthew 14:22-33

After Jesus fed over 5,000 people, Jesus made the disciples get into a boat and go across the Sea of Galilee ahead of Him. After the crowds left, Jesus went up the mountain and prayed a long time into the middle of the night.

Later while the disciples were sailing across the sea, a storm came. The waves beat against the boat. The wind blew fiercely.

In the very early morning as it stormed, Jesus came walking on the sea to the disciples. When the disciples saw Him they were very, very scared. “It’s a ghost!” they yelled in fear.

“Have courage. Don’t be afraid.” Jesus told the disciples.

“If it’s You, Lord,” Peter said, “tell me to walk to You on the water.”

“Come.” Jesus said to Peter.

Peter climbed out of the boat and began walking on the water toward Jesus. But when Peter saw the power of the wind, he became afraid, and began to sink. “Lord, save me.” Peter cried to Jesus.

Jesus reached out and grabbed Peter’s hand. “You have little faith. Why do you doubt Me?” Jesus asked Peter.

When they reached the boat and climbed in, the wind stopped. The disciples worshiped Jesus and said, “You are the Son of God.”

CHRIST IN CONTEXT:

In the Book of Matthew, Jesus is the fulfillment of Old Testament promises. He is the King that God’s people had been waiting for. As Matthew told the story of Jesus’ life, death, and resurrection, he described Jesus as King and Messiah. Jesus reigns over all and He has power over everything—even death.

DON’T FORGET TO SEND HOME THESE FAMILY RESOURCES EACH WEEK:

- “Explore the Bible at Home” (Printables)
- Explore the Bible: Kids Family Cards

BIBLE STUDY (35 MINUTES)

TOOLS:

- Jump In: *Bible Timeline for Kids*, “Church Carving” (Slide)
- Examine the Text: painter’s tape, Bibles, “Text Truth 3” (Slide), Family Cards
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TIP:

- If you need to keep kids spaced apart, use tape to make each kid their own “boat” to sit in.

Need an Opening Activity? Choose one of the activities in the *Activities* section and adapt it to introduce the session.

JUMP IN

- Welcome boys and girls at the door. Ask about their week and share a highlight from your week.
- Begin: “We have been studying from the Book of Matthew. Let’s look at our timeline and see if we can find Matthew on it. We learned earlier that the Book of Matthew was written by one of Jesus’ close friends. Who can find Matthew among Jesus’ 12 Disciples? Today, our story is going to tell us about another one of Jesus’ disciples. Who can find Peter on our timeline? Jesus performed many miracles in His ministry. Let’s find the word *miracles* on our timeline. Who can read our definition of the word? A miracle is something amazing that only God can do. **Jesus is the Son of God.** Jesus performed many miracles, proving He is God’s Son.”
- Display the “Church Carving.”
- Continue: “Today, we are going to learn about a time that Jesus walked on water. I don’t know about you, but I’ve never walked on water! That’s something only God can do, which makes it a miracle! Our object today is a church carving of this event. This carving is located at the cave church in Egypt called “Saint Samaan the Tanner.” Let’s learn more!”

EXAMINE THE TEXT

- Before group, make an outline of a boat with painter’s tape or flip over a table to be the boat. Ask your boys and girls to join you in the boat with their Bibles. (You may need to make more than one boat to accommodate your group.)

- Say: “Let’s find the Book of Matthew! Remember it is found in the New Testament. Now find Matthew 14. When you find our Scripture, help a friend nearby.”
- Ask your kids to listen for key words, such as *wind*, *scared* or *fear*, *courage*. Ask boys and girls to listen to the Scripture and make a storm noise when they hear *wind*, make a scared face for *scared* or *fear*, and make muscle arms for *courage*. Make up your own motions as you are sharing the Bible story.
- Tell the Bible story in your own words. A Bible story page has been provided for you to use as a guide.
- Ask a volunteer to read Matthew 14:25-26.
- Ask: “Why were Jesus’ disciples scared? Don’t you think you would be scared if you saw someone walking toward you on the water? I’d scream!”
- Ask a volunteer to read Matthew 14:27. Ask: “What did Jesus say to make them not be scared? He told them ‘Hey guys, calm down, it’s just Me! Don’t be scared!’”

- Ask volunteers to read Matthew 14:28-30. “Peter wanted to walk on the water, too! He came out and he was doing great until the wind scared him. He began to fall! Peter screamed out to Jesus to save him! Do you ever have bad days or even bad weeks? Sometimes in our lives, we go through tough times. We are scared and afraid. We call out to God to save us! God wants us to remember that He loves us.”
- Continue: “Jesus saved Peter and as soon as they got into the boat the storm stopped. Jesus will be with us through our tough times.”
- Display the Text Truth.
- Conclude: **“Jesus is the Son of God.”**
- Distribute the Family Cards.
- Encourage your boys and girls to talk about the questions on the back of the card with their family this week. Remind your kids that when they see the object, the “Church Carving,” they can be reminded that **Jesus is the Son of God**. Remind them that God is always with us and helps us have courage in any storms that come in our lives!

PLAY THE VIDEO

- Play the Session 3 video.
- Ask: “What amazing location did Joel visit? Did Joel find a special way to walk on water? Who walked on water in today’s Bible story?”

MEMORY VERSE

- Bonus Verse Option: The Memory Verse activity each week is focused on the monthly Memory Verse, 1 John 4:9. If your kids quickly memorize the Memory Verse, you may opt to challenge them to learn an additional weekly Bonus Verse. This week's Bonus Verse is 2 Corinthians 5:7.*

- Display “1 John 4:9” on a focal wall. Say the verse in slow, short segments and ask your kids to repeat after you.
- Ask your kids to get into the boat you made during Examine the Text. Play music and ask the group to say the verse as fast as they can before they must “go overboard!” When the music stops, instruct your children to hop out into the water and say the verse again! Invite your kids to get back into the boat and say the verse as quickly as possible as you play and stop the music. Continue play. Repeat the verse as a group to end the activity.

PRAYER

- Give each kid a “Foot” and a colored pencil. Ask your boys and girls to write down a prayer request and display them in a central location. Children can cut out the foot before displaying it on the wall. Close by allowing children to share their prayer requests. Pray aloud when children are ready.

APPLY THE TRUTH (20 MINUTES)

TOOLS:

- Explorer Guides: Bibles, Explorer Guides, pens
- Review: play dough, plastic knives or sharpened pencils, “Allergy Alert” (Printables)
- Tech Connect (Optional): a device with the LifeWay Kids app

EXPLORER GUIDES

- Distribute Explorer Guides and help kids find today’s pages, “Jesus Walked on Water.”
- Invite a kid to read “Watery Miracles.”
- Direct kids to examine the “Galilean Fishing Boat.”
- Help kids recall the Bible story as they solve the “Walking on Water Maze.”
- Select a volunteer to read about today’s object, the “Church Carving.”
- Conclude by guiding kids to complete the activity, “Distraction Drawing.”

REVIEW

- Distribute play dough to each child along with a plastic knife or sharpened pencil.
- Ask your boys and girls to carve out a part of the Bible story from today. Allow your boys and girls to share their creations and review the Bible story.

TECH CONNECT (OPTIONAL)

- Prior to Small Group, download the LifeWay Kids app. Use the activity labeled “Explorer Plus” in the Explore the Bible: Kids section of the app.