

Jesus Walked on Water

Bible Passage: Matthew 14:22-33

Main Point: Jesus walked on the sea.

Key Passage: John 20:31

Big Picture Question: Why did Jesus perform miracles? Jesus performed miracles to glorify God and prove He is God the Son.

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Tell the Bible story

Open your Bible to Matthew 14:22-33.

Leader • Incredible! I don't know about you, but I have never seen *anyone* walk on water. I've even tried it myself, and as soon as I put my foot down ... plop! I sink straight to the bottom of the pool.

I love this story about Jesus' miracle because Jesus wasn't trying to do some magic trick to impress His friends. Do you remember our big picture question and answer? ***Why did Jesus perform miracles? Jesus performed miracles to glorify God and prove He is God the Son.*** So when **Jesus walked on the sea**, His disciples saw that He had power over creation. They realized He was telling the truth about being God's Son, and they worshiped Him.

Now, when the disciples first saw Jesus coming toward them, they were afraid! It was three in the morning, and they were in the middle of the Sea of Galilee. They didn't know who was coming on the water; they thought it was a ghost.

Isn't it interesting what Peter did next? He wanted to make sure it was Jesus, so he asked Jesus to let him walk on the water too. Jesus said, "Come," and Peter walked toward Jesus on the water. But that didn't last long. Peter looked around and saw that the wind was strong, and he was afraid. Peter began to sink!

Peter did just what I would do if I were sinking in the sea. He cried out, "Lord, save me!" And that's exactly what Jesus did. Jesus reached out His hand and grabbed Peter, and they got into the boat.

Christ connection

Leader • Peter had doubted Jesus when he saw that the wind was strong. But Jesus proved that He can be trusted. Through God's Word, we see that Jesus' miracles, teaching, death, and resurrection showed that He is who He says He is.

We can look to Jesus in faith as our Lord and Savior. He will rescue us from our sins and give us eternal life.

Key passage

Show the key passage poster. Lead the girls to read aloud John 20:31 together. Then call for the boys to repeat the key passage.

Leader • According to our key passage, how do we have eternal life, or life in Jesus' name? (*by believing*) The Bible does not tell us about everything Jesus did [*see John 21:25*], but it tells us what we need to know to believe in Jesus as our Lord and Savior.

Write the key passage on a large sheet of paper. Leave out several of the key words. Write the missing words on separate sticky notes. Challenge kids to attach the sticky notes in the blanks to complete the key passage.

For an added challenge, prepare sticky notes with words not included in John 20:31. Kids must sort out the correct words from the word choices.

Say • In today's Bible story, **Jesus walked across the sea**. The Bible tells us about these things because they can help us believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God. Do you believe that?

Pray

Invite kids to pray

Leader • Lord Jesus, we look to You in faith. We call out, "Save us!" and You answer. Thank You for dying on the cross to rescue us from sin and death. We love You. Amen.

The Gospel: God's Plan for Me

Ask kids if they have ever heard the word *gospel*. Clarify that the word *gospel* means "good news." It is the message about Christ, the kingdom of God, and salvation. Use the following guide to share the gospel with kids.

God rules. Explain to kids that the Bible tells us God created everything, and He is in charge of everything. Invite a volunteer to read Genesis 1:1 from the Bible. Read Revelation 4:11 or Colossians 1:16-17 aloud and explain what these verses mean.

We sinned. Tell kids that since the time of Adam and Eve, everyone has chosen to disobey God. (Romans 3:23) The Bible calls this sin. Because God is holy, God cannot be around sin. Sin separates us from God and deserves God's punishment of death. (Romans 6:23)

God provided. Choose a child to read John 3:16 aloud. Say that God sent His Son, Jesus, the perfect solution to our sin problem, to rescue us from the punishment we deserve. It's something we, as sinners, could never earn on our own. Jesus alone saves us. Read and explain Ephesians 2:8-9.

Jesus gives. Share with kids that Jesus lived a perfect life, died on the cross for our sins, and rose again. Because Jesus gave up His life for us, we can be welcomed into God's family for eternity. This is the best gift ever! Read Romans 5:8; 2 Corinthians 5:21; or 1 Peter 3:18.

We respond. Tell kids that they can respond to Jesus. Read Romans 10:9-10,13. Review these aspects of our response: Believe in your heart that Jesus alone saves you through what He's already done on the cross. Repent, turning from self and sin to Jesus. Tell God and others that your faith is in Jesus.

Offer to talk with any child who is interested in responding to Jesus. Tip: Provide *I'm a Christian Now* for new Christians to take home and complete with their families.

Bible story review & Bible skills

Guide kids to open their Bibles to Matthew 14:22-33. Choose a volunteer to stand at the front of the room. Drape a beach towel around his shoulders and tell him he is “Peter.” Choose another volunteer to stand a few feet away. He will play the role of Jesus. Provide Bible times costumes for the volunteers to wear.

Form four groups of kids. Give each group paper and a pencil. Tell them that they are reporters investigating the events of today’s Bible story. Each group should think of at least two questions they can ask to “Peter” or “Jesus.”

Call on groups to ask questions one at a time. Volunteers should answer based on the Bible story. If they forget a detail, guide someone to read aloud from the Bible to find the answer. Encourage kids to be creative or dramatic while still being biblically accurate with their responses.

Assist kids with questions as needed. Suggest kids ask questions addressing the who, what, when, where, and why of the Bible story.

Sample questions for Peter:

Who did you think was walking on the water? (Read Matt. 14:26.)

What did Jesus say to you when you saw Him? (Read Matt. 14:27.)

When did you start to sink? (Read Matt. 14:30.)

Where were you when this happened? (Read Matt. 14:22,24.)

Why do you think you doubted Jesus? (Read Matt. 14:31)

What did you do when the wind stopped? (Read Matt. 14:32-33.)

Say •Great job, everyone. In our Bible story today, we learned that **Jesus walked on the sea**. That’s really cool! But remember, Jesus didn’t perform miracles just to impress His disciples.

Why did Jesus perform miracles? [Allow kids to respond.] Yes. That’s our big picture question and answer. **Jesus performed miracles to glorify God and prove He is God the Son.**

Activity choice

Option 1: Captain, may I?

Guide kids to form pairs. If you have an odd number of players, choose one kid to be the captain. Otherwise, you be the captain. The captain should stand about 10 to 20 feet away from the other players, or crew members. Guide pairs of crew members to take turns asking the captain for permission to move across the room. For example, “Captain, may I take three steps forward?”

If the captain says, “Yes, you may,” then both players may advance. If the captain says, “No, you may not,” then he should provide an alternative move: “But you may take two hops forward.”

As they play, the captain should carefully observe the crew members. If anyone is caught looking away from the captain, he and his partner must return to the start.

Say •Was it hard to keep your eyes on the captain while you played? In today’s Bible story, we are going to hear about a time one of Jesus’ disciples took his eyes off of Jesus and found himself in deep water!

Option 2: Float or sink?

Set a large tub of water on the floor and display various objects. Invite the kids to gather around you. Explain that kids will help you find out if each item sinks or floats.

Ask kids if they think an object will float or sink. Then test their prediction. Use towels to dry off objects and clean up any spills. Allow kids to group the objects based on whether they float or sink in the water.

Say •Do you think a person would float or sink in the water? You know from taking baths or swimming in a pool that people tend to sink in water. Well, today’s Bible story is about a miracle. Would you believe that Jesus walked on water? Even one of His disciples walked on water! Let’s find out more.

Option 3: Rescue tag

Invite kids to play “Rescue Tag.” Explain that the game is similar to “Freeze Tag.” Choose two players to be *It*. Designate another player as the *Rescuer*.

Clear an open area for kids to move. Instruct kids to try to avoid being tagged by *It*. If *It* tags a player, the player should sit on the floor and hold out his hands. The tagged player should shout, “Save me!”

When the *Rescuer* tags a seated player, he may rejoin the game. Note that players who are *It* may not tag the *Rescuer*.

Say • In our Bible story, **Jesus walked on the sea** and allowed Peter to walk on the water too. What did Peter say when he was afraid? (“*Lord, save me!*”) How did Jesus respond? (*Jesus reached out His hand and grabbed Peter.*)

Option 4: Paint the scene

Invite kids to paint with watercolor paints. Provide supplies and encourage them to paint a scene from today’s Bible story. Suggest the following scenes:

Jesus walked toward the disciples. (Matthew 14:25-26)

Peter started walking on the water toward Jesus. (Matthew 14:29)

Peter began to sink, and Jesus reached out to him. (Matthew 14:30-31)

As kids work, ask them questions:

The disciples were on the boat all night. When **Jesus walked on the sea**, it was dark. Have you ever been afraid of something in the dark?

Peter asked Jesus to let him come to Him on the water. Do you think Peter was afraid? How do you feel when doing something new?

Peter was afraid when he saw the waves and felt the strong wind. What can you do when you feel afraid of what’s happening around you?

Say • **Jesus walked on the sea**, and Peter looked to Him in faith. We can look to Jesus in faith every day. We can look to Him to rescue us from sin, and we can ask for His help to live in a way that honors Him.

Even when we feel afraid or doubt God, we can cry out, “Lord, save me!” Jesus will answer, and—like the disciples did—we can worship Him.

Journal and prayer

Distribute journal pages and pencils. Point out that trusting someone you know is easier than trusting a stranger. Encourage kids to write in their journals things they know to be true about Jesus.

Say • How can knowing these things about Jesus help you trust Him? What can you do to know Jesus more? (*read the Bible, pray*) **Jesus walked on the sea** in today’s Bible story. This was a miracle! **Jesus performed miracles to glorify God and prove He is God the Son.** Let’s pray.

Lead kids in prayer. Pray that kids would keep their eyes on Jesus as their Savior who rescues them from sin and death.