

JESUS WALKED ON WATER

SCRIPTURE REFERENCE: MATTHEW 14:22-36



Jesus, truly the Son of God, is worthy of our worship.

The STORY

Pray with children to start class.

Teaching Points for Class Discussion:

Jesus is our example in prayer. Prior to facing Satan, who tempted Jesus, Jesus fasted and prayed. After leaving a crowd who desired to make Him king, Jesus prayed. His retreat to pray is an example of his determination to obey the Father's plan and not yield to the desires of those who would want to make Him King for their own selfish purpose. In Hebrews we learn that Jesus was tempted just like us in every way, but He did not sin (Hebrews 4:15). Jesus' example should guide us in our fight against the sins that tempt us. Jesus prayed. We have no greater weapon than prayer and fellowship with God. God's plan for our lives is always better than some other plan that may arise to tempt us.

Jesus walked on water and saved Peter – Peter opened his mouth and said, "Lord, if it is You, command me to come to You on the water." Jesus told him to come. To Peter's credit, he got out of the boat and started to walk toward Jesus. As soon as Peter became afraid and doubted, he began to sink and called out to the Lord to save him. Jesus, without hesitation, reached out and caught him. Jesus stands ready to catch us as well. We simply need to call out to Jesus with the very same words Peter did: "Lord, save me!"

Jesus continued to heal those who were sick – Once reaching shore, Jesus continued to heal the sick. Even those who touched him were healed. Mark records that wherever Jesus went, people brought the sick, and all who touched Jesus were healed (Mark 6:56).

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WHERE IS THE GOSPEL?

Please use the following comments connecting today's lesson to the Gospel to help inform your understanding and serve you by aiding your preparation for class. Remember, we want to do more than present disconnected Bible stories and lessons to our young children. We want them to understand how each story in the Bible plays a part in God's greater plan of redemption.

Jesus was no ordinary man. He was more than a great teacher. Jesus was, and is, God. When the disciples on the boat saw Jesus walk on the stormy waves, they worshipped Him as God. Little did they know that this same Jesus, who had power over the wind and the waves, who could walk on water and heal all the sicknesses of those who came to Him, would soon die on the cross for their sins.

In this story, Peter cried out, "Lord, save me." His words were more profound than he could realize. In our lives, the storm is one of our own sin. We are separated from God and need to cry out with those same words: "Lord, save me." Just like with Peter, the Lord extends His hand to save and deliver us safely to the shore of heaven.

ON THE ROAD TO EMMANUS

Read the following Bible passage from the Old Testament. Use the following questions to help the children understand how this passage points to Christ in the New Testament.

Bible Passage: Isaiah 53:4

Connecting the passage to Christ:

Matthew connected this passage to Christ in Matthew 8:17. Jesus fulfilled this prophecy in the way He healed those with diseases. Physical healing, like spiritual healing, is possible because of the mercy and grace of God.

Questions for reflection:

- Look up Matthew 8:14-17. Did Jesus only heal to fulfill the prophecy? (No. The prophecy describes the care and character of God as one who is compassionate and loving. God is a healing God. That is who He is.)
- Why did Isaiah say that he was "stricken by God"? (Those who were crucified were cursed by God. In Jesus' case, Jesus was stricken with God's wrath for our sin.)

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SWORD BIBLE MEMORY

BE A DOER OF THE WORD

Take time during the class to review the SWORD Bible Memory verses with the class. Provide the opportunity for each child to recite the verses to an adult worker.

ACTIVITIES & OBJECT LESSONS

Use the following activities for practical application and discovery of this lesson. For the younger children, review the preschool questions and use them to help the children relate to the passage. For older children, ask them why they think this passage is in the Bible for us today. How is it supposed to affect our lives?

PRAY FOR THE SICK

Supplies:

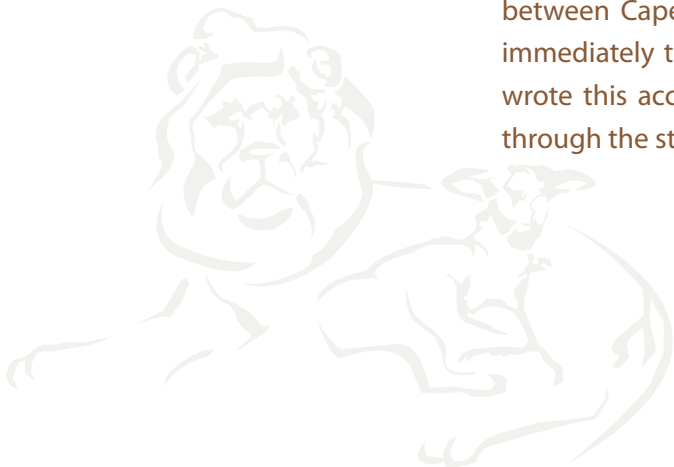
- white board

Read Matthew 14:34-35 and talk about Jesus' willingness to heal. Have the class help you list those they know who are sick. Then break the class down into groups with a parent or helper in each group to lead them in praying through the list. Encourage all the children to pray for at least one person. When you finish ask the children the following questions:

- How did reading the story build your faith to pray?
- If we don't see someone we pray for get healed, what should we do? (We should keep on praying. We need to be persistent in bringing them before Jesus just as the men who lowered the man down through a hole in the roof.)

A SECOND MIRACLE

Some people believe that John 6:21 is another miracle. Verse 19 says they had rowed three to three-and-a-half miles when Jesus arrived. The distance between Capernaum and Tiberias is a little over six miles. So, if they were immediately transported to shore, it would have been a miracle. John, who wrote this account, would have been on that boat. Have the children read through the story and try to find the "second miracle".



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WALKING ON WATER

Supplies:

- a large roasting pan
- two small sewing needles
- some tissue paper
- a small glass
- a bucket to carry water

Use this exercise as a fun way to introduce the story.

Prior to class lightly grease a large roasting pan and fill it with water about 1" deep. Allow it to freeze outside if it is winter or place it level in a freezer. Just before class, pop out the ice and place it in a cooler. Bring the roasting pan, needles, and small glass in to class.

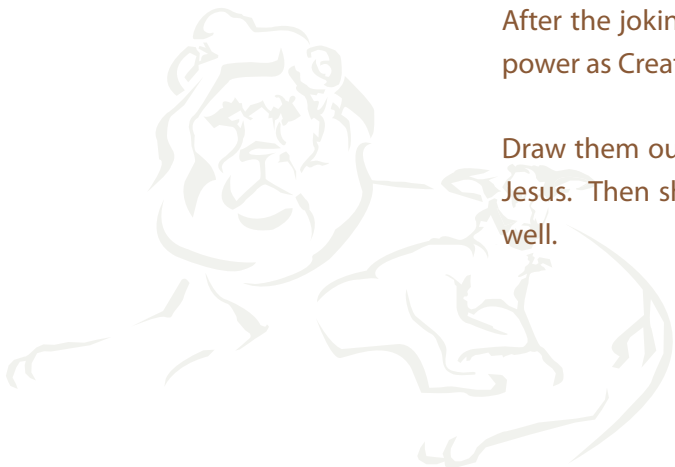
Place the glass on a table and fill it with water and have the class gather around. Tell them you know a trick that will make things that usually sink in water float. Begin by showing them how a sewing needle will sink when placed randomly in the water. Then tell them you will make it float. The key is not to break the surface tension of the water. Rip off a small piece of tissue and drop it flat on the surface of the water inside the glass. Then lay one of the needles on top of the tissue. Carefully sink the tissue with the second needle until it drops to the bottom. If you are careful, the needle will remain floating on the surface of the water!

Then read to them the story of Jesus walking on the water. After you are finished reading the story, fill up the roasting pan with water, hold up a large piece of tissue and ask for a volunteer who is not afraid to get their shoes wet. Explain that you have figured out how to allow a person to walk on water. (Hide the ice up to this point. You want their focus to be on the roaster full of water to fool them.

Talk it up and then, after your volunteer comes forward, reach into the cooler, lay down the ice, and ask them to stand on it. Then have them take little baby steps. Once again, like a circus ring master, talk up your achievement.

After the joking has died down, talk to them seriously about Jesus incredible power as Creator and Lord over all the earth.

Draw them out about Peter's faith crisis and the words he used to call out to Jesus. Then share the Gospel and connect our need to be saved by Jesus as well.



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THE KEY IS IN THE WORD

Supplies:

- A large clear storage bin filled half-way with water

Ask the class for three volunteers.

Explain to the class that you believe that you have the secret to Jesus walking on water. The "key" to the whole thing is the word he used. So, have the volunteers take off their shoes and socks and line up. Have them repeat the words of Peter "Tell me to come to you on the water." Have your first volunteer say those words and then in a deep voice slowly say the word, "Come." Then have them try. Of course they will sink. Scratch your head and then realize that Jesus didn't use a deep voice, he probably used his normal voice and try the whole thing again with your second volunteer using a normal voice. Finally, act confused saying that you are sure the key to the whole thing is the word. Then remember that there was stormy weather with wind blowing so Jesus must have had to shout to be heard. Shout out the word "come" with your third and final volunteer. When they also sink reason with the class out loud that you must not be correct. The "words" Jesus used must not be the key. Then ask them what they think the key was. The key, was not the words but the one who spoke the words, Jesus. Use this as an introduction to talking about Jesus being God and then review Peter's words, "Lord, save me." Peter's words are the same words we all need to cry out to Jesus.

PRAYER

Pick several children to pray based on the day's scripture passages.

IN CLASS PROJECT

AN ACTIVITY

Supplies:

pencil and paper

Draw a picture of Peter sinking and the Lord reaching out His hand to save him.



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FOR THE OLDER GRADES

DRAWING OUT THEIR DOUBTS

Supplies:

white board and markers

Take time after reading the passage to make a list of the doubts that can affect us today. Draw out the children about ways they have personally doubted. Make a list of both of these on the white board. Then divide the class up into teams of five or six and have them find at least one scripture that could help a person with a particular doubt.

Gather the class back together and have each group read the scripture they suggest as you review each listed doubt. If there are any that stump the class, offer your own answer. If you are also stumped, assign them to ask their parents and to come prepared next class with an answer. Draw out others yourself, and come prepared to review the answer the following week.

A LITTLE BIT MORE

The Sea of Galilee- This sea is sometimes called the Lake of Ganesaret (Luke 5:1), or the Sea of Tiberias (John 6:1). It has a shape similar to the continent of Africa. It is about 13 miles long and 8 miles wide. Tiberias and Capernaum are both cities located on the shore of the sea. Tiberias is on the western shore and Capernaum is along the northern shore of the sea. The sea was surrounded by mountains and is known for its storms which form when cold air from the mountains flows down onto the warmer water.

