Preschool–Grade 6

Jesus Walks on Water

Sunday School Lesson for Preschool (Ages 3–5), 20–30 minutes

Main point: When I am afraid, I can call on Jesus.
Bible passage: Matthew 14:22–33. Read it yourself before class.
Memory verse: "Be of good cheer; it is I; be not afraid." *Matthew 14:27 (KJV)*. The old words **be of good cheer** mean cheer up.
You need: a Bible, masking tape, crayons, and one take-home sheet for each child.
Before class: put a bookmark in your Bible at Matthew 14. Put a line of masking tape on the floor. That is the "water."

1. Opening game: Walk to Me (5 minutes)

Stand at the end of the tape line. Say "Come!" and one child walks along the tape to you, looking at your face the whole way. Clap for each child. Then everyone walks the line together like a train. Say: "Good walking! Today we will hear a true story about a man who walked on top of the water to Jesus."

2. Bible story (5 minutes)

Hold up your Bible open to Matthew 14. Say: "This story is true. It is in God's Word." Read each line slowly and do the motion. When you see **Say it with me**, the kids say the line back to you.

Jesus' friends got into a ship (Matthew 14:22). *(Sit down and row.)*
Jesus went up a mountain to pray (14:23). *(Fold your hands.)*
It was dark. The wind blew hard. Whoosh! (14:24) *(Blow and sway.)*
The waves went up and down (14:24). *(Move your hands like waves.)*
Jesus came to them, walking on the water (14:25). *(Walk in place.)*
His friends were scared (14:26). *(Make a scared face.)*
Jesus said, "Be not afraid" (14:27). *(Put your hand on your heart.)*
Say it with me: "It is Jesus!"

The story continues:
Peter said, "Tell me to come to You." Jesus said, "Come" (14:28–29). *(Wave "come here.")*
Peter got out of the ship. He walked on the water (14:29)! *(Walk in place, slowly.)*
Peter saw the strong wind. He was scared (14:30). *(Make a scared face.)*
Peter started to sink, down, down (14:30). *(Crouch down low.)*
Peter called, "Lord, save me" (14:30). *(Put your hands up high.)*
Right away Jesus reached out His hand and caught him (14:31). *(Reach out and catch.)*
Say it with me: "Jesus saves me!"
The wind stopped. Everyone worshiped Jesus (14:32–33). *(Lift your hands up.)*

3. Questions to ask (3 minutes)

1. Who walked on the water? *(Jesus, and then Peter too! Matthew 14:25, 14:29)*
2. What did Peter say when he started to sink? *("Lord, save me," 14:30)*
3. What did Jesus do? *(He reached out His hand and caught Peter right away, 14:31)*

4. Memory verse (3 minutes)

Say: "Jesus said, 'Be of good cheer; it is I; be not afraid.' That means cheer up, it's Me, don't be scared." Teach the motions: a big smile for "be of good cheer," point up for "it is I," and shake your head with a brave face for "be not afraid." Say it with the motions three times: in a normal voice, in a whisper, and in a happy loud voice. Then say "Matthew 14:27" and clap two times.

5. What this means for us (3 minutes)

Say: "Jesus saved Peter, and Jesus loves you! Everyone has done wrong things. That is called sin (Romans 3:23). Jesus is God. He came to earth as a man (1 Timothy 3:16). Jesus died for our sins. He was buried. Then He rose again (1 Corinthians 15:3–4)! The Bible tells us what to do (Acts 2:38). We repent: we tell God we are sorry, and we stop doing wrong. We are baptized in Jesus' name, down under the water, and our sins are washed away. And God gives us the Holy Ghost. That is God's own Spirit in us. When people are filled with the Holy Ghost, they speak in other tongues, words God gives them (Acts 2:4)."
Pray with the kids, and encourage them to talk with their parents and pastor about being baptized in Jesus' name and filled with the Holy Ghost. Never pressure a child.

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6. Activity: Peter on the Water (5–10 minutes)

Give each child a take-home sheet. In the drawing box, help them draw big blue waves across the bottom and Peter standing on top of the water. While they color, ask: "What did Peter say when he started to sink? Who can you call when you are scared?" Kids who finish early can walk the tape line again.

7. Prayer

Say each line, and the kids say it after you:
"Thank You, Jesus, for being with me.
When I am scared, I will call on You.
In Jesus' name, amen."

Tips for little ones: keep the story moving and let every child do the motions. If they get wiggly, do the wind and the sinking motions again. Send the take-home sheet home so parents can tell the story again this week.

If a child is afraid of storms or the dark: say gently, "Jesus' friends were scared in the dark too. Jesus came to them and said, 'Be not afraid.' You can always pray to Jesus."

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