Preschool–Grade 6

Jesus Walks on Water

Sunday School Lesson for Kindergarten to 2nd Grade, 45 minutes

Main point: When we are afraid, we keep looking to Jesus and trust Him. He is always there to save us.
Bible passage: Matthew 14:22–33. Read it before class.
Memory verse: "But straightway Jesus spake unto them, saying, Be of good cheer; it is I; be not afraid." *Matthew 14:27 (KJV)*
You need: a Bible, 6 sheets of blue paper, a marker, tape, masking tape, crayons, and one take-home sheet for each child.
Before class: write the memory verse on the 6 blue sheets (see part 4). Put a long line of masking tape on the floor across the room. Put bookmarks in your Bible at Matthew 14:27 and 14:30.

1. Opening game: Eyes on Me (5 minutes)

Stand at one end of the tape line. One child at a time walks along the line toward you, one foot in front of the other, looking only at you. The other kids are "the wind": they wave their arms and whoosh, but they may not touch. Then let the child try it looking at the wind-makers instead. Ask: *Was it easier to stay on the line when you looked at me, or when you looked at the wind?* Say: "Today we will hear a true story about a man who walked on the water while he looked at Jesus."

2. Bible story: Jesus Walks on Water (10 minutes)

Hold up your Bible open to Matthew 14, so the kids can see the story comes from God's Word. Tell it in your own words:

One day Jesus fed a huge crowd with five loaves and two fishes (Matthew 14:19–21). Then Jesus told His disciples to get into a **ship**, a boat, and go across the sea ahead of Him (14:22). Jesus sent the people home, and He went up into a mountain by Himself to pray. When evening came, He was there alone (14:23).

Out on the sea, the ship was in trouble. The waves tossed it up and down, and the wind was **contrary**. That means the wind blew against them, the wrong way (14:24). It got later and later in the night.

Then, in the **fourth watch of the night**, the last part of the night before morning, Jesus went out to them, **walking on the sea** (14:25)! When the disciples saw Him walking on the water, they were troubled. They did not know it was Jesus. They said, "It is a spirit," and they cried out because they were afraid (14:26).

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The story continues: Right away Jesus talked to them. **Read Matthew 14:27 from your Bible:** "Be of good cheer; it is I; be not afraid." Say: "That means: Cheer up! It's Me, Jesus. Don't be afraid."

Peter said, "Lord, if it be thou, bid me come unto thee on the water." That means, "Lord, if it is really You, tell me to come to You on the water." Jesus said, "Come." So Peter climbed down out of the ship, and he **walked on the water** to go to Jesus (14:28–29)!

But then Peter saw how strong the wind was, and he was afraid. He began to **sink** down into the water. He cried, "Lord, save me" (14:30). **Immediately**, right away, Jesus stretched out His hand and caught him (14:31). Jesus said, "O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?" That means, "Why did you doubt Me?"

When they came into the ship, the wind stopped (14:32). Then everyone in the ship worshiped Jesus. They said, "Of a truth thou art the Son of God" (14:33). That means, "You really are the Son of God!"

3. Questions to ask (5 minutes)

1. Where did Jesus go after He sent the people home? *(Up into a mountain to pray, Matthew 14:23)*
2. What was the wind doing to the ship? *(It was contrary: it blew against them, 14:24)*
3. What did the disciples think when they saw Jesus walking on the sea? *(They thought it was a spirit, and they cried out for fear, 14:26)*
4. What happened when Peter saw the strong wind? *(He was afraid and began to sink, 14:30)*
5. What did Jesus do when Peter cried, "Lord, save me"? *(Right away He stretched out His hand and caught him, 14:31)*

4. Memory verse: Stepping on the Waves (5 minutes)

Tape the 6 blue sheets on the floor in a line, like waves: *But straightway / Jesus spake unto them, / saying, Be of good cheer; / it is I; / be not afraid. / Matthew 14:27.* Explain the old words: **straightway** means right away, **spake** means spoke, **be of good cheer** means cheer up, and **it is I** means "it's Me." Kids take turns stepping from sheet to sheet, reading as they go, while everyone says it together. Then turn one sheet over and say it again. Keep turning sheets over until the kids can say the whole verse by themselves.

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5. What this means for us (5 minutes)

Say: "When Peter was sinking, he called out to Jesus, and Jesus saved him right away. God loves you very much. But everyone has done wrong things. The Bible calls that sin: 'For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God' (Romans 3:23, KJV). That means none of us is as good as God. Jesus is God who came to earth as a man (1 Timothy 3:16). Jesus died for our sins, He was buried, and He rose again (1 Corinthians 15:3–4)! The Bible tells us how to obey the gospel, the good news about Jesus: 'Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.' (Acts 2:38, KJV) To **repent** means we are sorry for our sin and we turn away from it. We are **baptized**, buried all the way under the water, in Jesus' name, so our sins are washed away (Romans 6:4; Acts 22:16). **Remission** means God takes our sins away. And God fills us with the **Holy Ghost**, His own Spirit, and we speak in other tongues, words God gives us, just like the believers did in the Bible (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.
This week: when you feel afraid, pray, "Jesus, help me," and remember that He hears you.

6. Activity (10–15 minutes)

Choose one: the **Jesus walks on water word search** (vbshq.com/puzzles/walking-on-water-word-search), crossword (vbshq.com/puzzles/walking-on-water-crossword), maze (vbshq.com/puzzles/walking-on-water-maze) or worksheet (vbshq.com/worksheets/walking-on-water-worksheet), the coloring page or craft (vbshq.com/bible-stories/walking-on-water), or **Walk, Wind, Sink:** call out a word, and the kids act it. "Walk!" They walk in place. "Wind!" They sway and whoosh. "Sink!" They crouch down low. When you say "Lord, save me!", they jump up and stand tall. Play it faster and faster.

7. Prayer

"Dear God, thank You that You are always with us. When we are afraid, help us look to Jesus and trust Him. Thank You for loving us and coming to save us in Jesus. In Jesus' name, amen."

If a child says they are afraid of storms or the dark: answer gently. The disciples were afraid too, in the dark, on a stormy sea, and the first thing Jesus said was "Be of good cheer; it is I; be not afraid" (Matthew 14:27). We can always call on Him, just like Peter did.

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