

Vacation Church School

Life of Christ #3

Peter Walks on Water

“...Be of good cheer it is I be not afraid.” Matthew 14:27

Scripture Reference: Matthew 14:21-33

Goals: By the end of the lesson the student will:

1. Know the story is from the Bible
2. Remember the name Peter
3. Relate the events of the story
4. Know Peter acted on faith and Jesus saved him when his faith was weak.

Introduction:

Materials Needed:

- Dishpan filled with water
- Several objects, some that will sink and some that will float

1. Set out dishpan and the items. Pick up one of the floating items. Discuss with the children that they all know a little bit about science and some things float and some sink.
2. Have the children take turns choosing an item and then predicting if it will float or sink. Then have them try it.
3. Reinforce that they probably noticed the heavier things sank while the lighter things floated. Ask them what would happen with a person. If they were in water would they float or sink? They could float on their back or stomach but what if they were standing up?
4. Tell them they are going to learn about that very thing happening in the Bible. This miracle happened to Jesus' disciple Peter.

Lesson:

Materials Needed:

- Copy of the story
- Optional materials: Pictures of Jesus and disciples, Jesus watching the storm, Jesus walking on water, disciples watching Jesus walk on water, Jesus calling out to Peter, Peter walking on water beginning to sink, Jesus helping Peter

Peter Walks on Water

Peter and the other disciples had helped Jesus that day. It had been a long day. Already tired and needing a rest, Jesus and the disciples had tried to find a quiet place. But they had been followed by the people who wanted to be with Jesus. Five thousand people had spent the day listening to Him preach and coming to Him with their afflictions. He was very tired.

“Go ahead of me in the ship to the other side of the lake,” Jesus told Peter and the other disciples. “I will send the multitude away.” After He had sent the great crowd home a weary Jesus walked up the

mountain to rest and talk to God. Peter and the other disciples were in a boat, well on their way to the shore on the opposite side of the lake.

Jesus watched as a storm descended on the Sea of Galilee. He was not afraid of the waves whipped up by the storm's gusts. Jesus knew the power of God was with Him. He began to walk across the water toward the boat where Peter and the other disciples were. The disciples saw Jesus from a distance. They were afraid. They knew no ordinary person could walk on water. "It is a spirit!" they cried.

As he drew closer to the boat Jesus called out. "Be of good cheer, it is I, be not afraid." "It looks like Jesus", Peter thought. "If it is you, master," Peter cried "call me to come to you on the water." "Come," Jesus said. In a moment of great faith Peter got out of the boat. He stepped onto the water. He did not sink! Peter began to walk toward Jesus. Then something happened. Peter took his eyes off Jesus and saw the waves lapping at his feet. He got scared. "I can't stay up in these great waves!" he thought. Peter began to sink beneath the water. "Lord, save me!" he shouted. Immediately Jesus reached out his hand and caught Peter. "Oh thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?" Jesus said.

Jesus helped Peter back to the boat and the winds quieted and the waves settled. Then Peter and all of the disciples said, "Truly you are the Son of God." At first Peter reacted without thinking. He just had faith. When he took his eyes off Jesus and saw the wind and the waves he was afraid. Whenever you are afraid don't be distracted by the storms of life. Sometimes getting help with your problems might seem as impossible as walking on water. With God nothing is impossible. Keep your eyes on Jesus and remember He will be with you to help you.

Story Craft: Storm Mural or Storm Pictures

Materials Needed:

- Large sheet of butcher paper for mural, or sheets of construction paper for storm pictures, 1 per child
- Crayons, markers, colored pencils
- Optional materials: dry black tempura paint and ice cubes

Mural:

1. Spread large sheet of butcher paper out on the floor. Have children draw the scene of Jesus walking on the water and Peter coming to meet him. Have them each draw different parts of the picture: boat, Peter, clouds, etc
2. Optional: to make storm clouds sprinkle black powdered tempura paint on top of the picture and have kids take turns swirling ice cubes through it to show storm clouds and wind.

Storm Pictures:

1. Pass out construction paper to each child. Have them draw the scene of Jesus walking on water with Peter coming to meet him.
2. Optional: to make storm clouds sprinkle black powdered tempura paint on top of the picture and have kids swirl ice cubes through it to show storm clouds and wind.

Review Activity:

Materials Needed:

- Four pillows or chairs
- 3x5 note cards with game questions written on them
- Optional materials: prizes

Bible Baseball

1. You may want to play this outside. Set up pillows or chairs for the bases and home plate. If the class has more than 4 students divide into teams. If there are only 2-3 students have each child play as a team and try to get to home base first.
2. Explain the rules: Each team gets three at bats each turn. Each at bat is answering a question from the story. Have them choose a card and answer the question. Each correct answer is a base run. Even if players get all three answers right, after three questions, play switches to the next team. If a player misses a question the other team gets a chance to get a player on base by answering that question correctly. It is ok for more than one player to be on the same base at the same time. If two or three teams make it to home plate without any strikeouts, even if one team gets there first, the game will be considered a tie.
3. Have the children on each team take turns choosing questions and answering them until the game is completed.

Example questions:

1. How many people had Jesus preached to that day?
2. How did Jesus Feel after the long day?
3. What did Jesus tell his disciples to do?
4. What did Jesus do after his disciples left?
5. When did Jesus feel ready to return to the disciples?
6. What was the weather like on the lake?
7. What did the disciples think when they saw Jesus coming toward them walking on the water?
8. What did Jesus say to Peter?
9. What did Peter do when Jesus spoke to him?
10. What did Peter have when he first stepped out of the boat?
11. What happened when Peter took his eyes off Jesus and looked at the waves?
12. What did Peter say to Jesus when he started to sink?
13. What did Jesus do when Peter called out to him asking for help?
14. What did Jesus do to help Peter?
15. What did Jesus say to Peter when he started to sink?
16. What did Peter and the other disciples say to Jesus when they were back in the boat?
17. Who should we keep our eyes on when we have trouble in our lives?
18. What did Peter say to Jesus when he saw him on the water?

Answers:

1. 5,000
2. Tired
3. Go ahead across the lake in the boat
4. Went to a mountain to pray
5. Later in the evening
6. Stormy
7. They thought it was a spirit
8. Come
9. He got out of the boat and walked toward Jesus on the water
10. Faith
11. He began to sink
12. Save me!
13. He stretched out his hand and lifted Peter
14. Helped him get back in the boat
15. Oh ye of little faith why did you doubt?
16. Truly you are the Son of God
17. Jesus
18. If it is you tell me to come to you on the water