



# JESUS WALKS ON WATER

Matthew 14:22-33

## Memory Verse

**"Take courage! It is I. Don't be afraid." Matthew 14:27**

## Context/Background

This story comes right after Jesus learns that his cousin John the Baptist has been beheaded. He withdraws to the shores of the Sea of Galilee, needing some time alone to grieve, but a huge crowd follows him. He has compassion on them and feeds the 5000. As soon as this miracle is finished, Jesus sends his disciples out on a boat to cross the water while he goes off by himself to pray. In this story Jesus and the disciples are on the west side of the Sea of Galilee, and they are crossing from where the Jews live to where the Gentiles (non-Jews) live.

This story shows the emergence of Peter as a leader among the disciples. In Jewish tradition, water bodies were seen as the entrance to Sheol (the underworld), which is why the disciples think Jesus is a ghost.

## Summary

Jesus is on the shore to pray. He sends his disciples onto the dark lake. Early the next morning, they are a long way offshore when the wind and waves come up. Jesus appears walking on water. The disciples are scared that he might be a ghost. Jesus tells them not to be afraid, and calls Peter. Peter walks out, but then panics and starts to sink. Jesus saves him. The disciples recognise that Jesus is the son of God.

## Relevance/Application **Themes: Courage, Trust**

### Younger students:

- Jesus saves us when we are afraid.
- We can trust Jesus.
- Jesus can calm the storms of life – he is bigger than our fears.
- Jesus calls us to follow him even into the dark.
- Jesus invites us to have faith in Him.
- Jesus is more powerful than creation or our fears.

### Older students:

- Salvation comes from Jesus' work for us.
- In the midst of fear and doubt Jesus does not abandon us.
- Jesus is with us through the challenges and changes in life, even when we are moving into unfamiliar or hostile territory. (In seasons of transition Jesus invites us to faith/relationship)
- Without challenge there is no growth – sometimes we need to step out in faith and trust that God will equip us for the journey.

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- Jesus understands grieving and exhaustion. He models compassion for others and the need to spend time alone in prayer.

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## Christian Studies Framework

## Christian Beliefs Key Idea 2: The person and work of Jesus the Christ is central to Christianity

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### Catechism Connections

The Lord's Prayer seventh petition says: *deliver us from evil*. When we are in danger, we can pray to God our Father in heaven to save us. Jesus taught us the Lord's Prayer. 'Deliver us from evil' means keep us safe. Save us (deliver us) when we are sick or in danger or when we are scared of anything.

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### Discussion/Wondering Questions:

#### Early Years

- How would you feel if you were on a boat in the dark and the waves got really rough?
- What does Jesus do when Peter starts to sink?

#### Primary

- Imagine you are Peter. How would you feel when the storm started? What do you think you'd do if you saw Jesus walking on water in the middle of the sea? How would you react if Jesus asked you to walk on water?
- Why do you think Peter asked Jesus to call him out on the water too?
- How does this story demonstrate Jesus' power over nature and ability to do what we think is impossible?

#### Secondary

- Compare the different gospel accounts of this story (Matthew 14:22-33, Mark 6:45-52, John 6:16-21). How do these variations enhance our understanding of the event?
- In what ways does the story of Jesus walking on water reveal important aspects of Jesus' identity and purpose as the Son of God?
- In what area of your life might God be calling you to step out in courage?
- What kind of waves and wind are you facing in your life?
- What would happen if Peter did not ask, step out, sink?

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### Images or objects to spark discussion

- Rudder/plank
- Sounds of storm soundscape
- Lightning/
- A Ghost or painting of Jesus walking on the water



*Walking on Water, by Ivan Aivazovsky (1888) (Public Domain)*

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### Telling the Story

**Bibles:** The Beginner's Bible  
The Big Rescue Bible  
The NIV Bible

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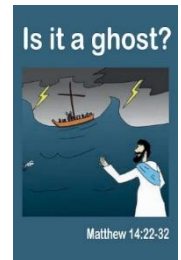
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**Creative Storytelling:** Create a video interview with students/staff: What's the scariest storm you've ever been in? When is a time that you needed courage?

### Tracts and Other Resources

Lutheran Tract Mission - [Is it a ghost? tract story and activity booklet](#)

GROW Ministries – [GROW Kids - Eleventh Sunday After Pentecost \(Proper 14\) Year A](#)



### Audio Stories/Podcasts

Bible.is - <https://www.faithcomesbyhearing.com/audio-bible-resources/bible-is>  
Audio recordings of the Bible in many different languages and several English translations. All four gospels also available in film versions, searchable by book and chapter. Excellent resource for NESB learners.

### Videos

#### Early Years/Junior Primary

[Jesus Walks on Water – Care Bear's Bible Stories](#)

#### Middle-Upper Primary

Crossroads Kids' Club Kid [God's Story: Peter Walks on Water](#)  
Saddleback Kids: [Peter Walks on Water](#)

#### Secondary:

[LUMO-Gospel of Matthew chapter 14:22-36](#)

[Jesus Walks On Water With Peter | The Chosen Clips Season 3 Episode 8](#) some additional content added and an ad appears halfway through, but very useful for older students, baptism connection.

Bethany Hamilton – soul survivor [Bethany Hamilton - White Chair Film - I Am Second](#)

[It is Well with My Soul Hymn Story with Lyrics - Story Behind the Hymn](#)

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## Invocation

We gather in the name of God the Creator, Jesus our Saviour and the Holy Spirit our Comforter. **Amen.**

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## Prayers

### Prayer

Lord, thank you for caring for us  
and providing us with all we need and much more.  
Strengthen our faith as we live our everyday lives.  
Make us bold and confident  
in trusting you  
and serving you and other people.

**Amen.**

OR

Lord Jesus, thank you for being with us. Thank you for loving us and looking after us, especially when we are afraid. Help us to remember that you are always near us to help us. **Amen.**

### Mealtime Prayer

Lord, we thank You  
for the food before us,  
the friends beside us,  
the love between us;  
And Your Presence among us.  
Amen.

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## Blessing

Go in peace. Trust the Lord as you step out boldly.

**Thanks be to God.**

OR

(Name), may the Lord Jesus take hold of you when you are scared.

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## Music

[Jesus walks on water | Christian Songs For Kids](#)

[Twos: Jesus Walks On Water \(Song\) - Crossroads Kids' Club](#)

[Who's that walking on the water - YSPC Children's Ministry](#)

[Walk on Water Kids Worship Motions - Kidz Church Central](#)

[Hillsong UNITED - Oceans \(Where Feet May Fail\)](#)

[Walk On Water \(Official Music Video\) - Elevation Rhythm](#)

[I Will Trust You In The Darkness - Emu Music](#)

It is well with my soul hymn – Horatio Spafford

[It Is Well With My Soul - Anthem Lights](#)

Contemporary arrangements including [It Is Well With My Soul \(Lyric Video\) -Emu Music](#) or [It Is Well With My Soul - Audrey Assad](#) or [It Is Well - You Make Me Brave - Kristene DiMarco](#) )

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## Activities

### Early Years:

- Craft: Create paper plate boats and cut out Jesus and the disciples figures. Let the children colour and decorate the boats and the figures. Then, help them glue Jesus onto the boat to reenact the story.
- Sensory Play: Set up a sensory bin with water beads or blue-tinted water. Add toy boats and figures of Jesus and his disciples. Allow the children to play with the elements while discussing the story.

### Primary:

- Role Play: Divide students into groups and assign roles from the story (Jesus, Peter, disciples). Have them act out the scene of Jesus walking on water and Peter attempting to walk on water.
- Science Experiment: Explore buoyancy and surface tension with a simple science experiment. Provide different objects and see which ones can float on water. Discuss the concept of faith like Peter's faith when he stepped out of the boat.
- Memory Verse Art: Choose a verse from the story (e.g., Matthew 14:27 - "Take courage! It is I. Don't be afraid.") and have students create colourful posters or cards with the verse written on them.

### Upper Primary/Secondary:

- Reflection Journal: Ask students to write a journal entry from the perspective of one of the disciples who witnessed Jesus walking on water. Encourage them to explore their feelings and thoughts during that moment.
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