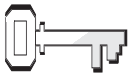


Walking on Water



References

Matthew 14:22-32;
Mark 6:45-51;
John 6:16-21;

The Desire of Ages, pp. 377–382



Memory Verse

“What is impossible
with men is
possible with God”
(Luke 18:27, NIV).

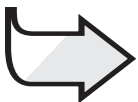


Objectives

The children will:
Know that Jesus
can do what it is
impossible for us to
do for ourselves.

Feel rescued
from sin by Jesus.

Respond by trusting that
Jesus has the power to save us.



The Message

By keeping our eyes
on Jesus we are saved.

Monthly Theme

God’s love is a gift; we don’t earn or buy it.

The Bible Lesson at a Glance

After feeding the 5,000, Jesus sends His disciples across the lake ahead of Him while He dismisses the crowd. Into the evening the disciples struggle to make headway against strong winds and heavy waves. Jesus walks out to them on the surface of the lake, which frightens the disciples. He reassures them. Peter says, “If it’s you, . . . tell me to come to you” (Matthew 14:28, NIV). Jesus says, “Come,” and Peter gets out of the boat to walk to Jesus. But he soon becomes afraid and begins to sink. Jesus reaches down and saves him.

This is a lesson about grace.

Here is an essential lesson of grace: It is impossible for humans to accomplish their own salvation. The wind, the waves, the very nature of gravity-bound humanity, all work against the possibility of saving ourselves. But Jesus reaches us through the very elements that make being saved seem impossible, and accomplishes our salvation. Our part is to admit that we are drowning without Him and to keep our eyes fixed on Jesus.

Teacher Enrichment

Peter’s “eagerness, earnestness, courage, vigor, and organizing ability apparently earned him a place of leadership among the disciples from the very beginning. He was preeminently a man of action, and his enthusiastic disposition was his outstanding character trait. He was also a man of pronounced extremes, possessing marked virtues and serious defects—seemingly contradictory traits of character that existed side by side. He was usually warmhearted, generous, bold, and daring, but again he might be selfish, boastful, impulsive, or reckless. In a moment of crisis he might prove to be weak, cowardly, and vacillating, and no one could ever be sure which side of his character and personality would prevail” (*The SDA Bible Commentary*, vol. 8, p. 868).

Fully converted after Jesus’ resurrection, Peter became one of the pillars of the early Christian church, working mostly for his fellow Jews. Tradition says that he was crucified upside down because he felt unworthy to die in the manner of Jesus. The Gospel of Mark, written by John Mark, whom Peter refers to as “my son,” records Peter’s eyewitness account of Jesus’ life. (See *The SDA Bible Commentary*, vol. 8, pp. 869, 870).

“When trouble comes upon us, how often we are like Peter!

We look upon the waves, instead of keeping our eyes fixed upon the Saviour. Our footsteps slide, and the proud waters go over our souls. Jesus did not bid Peter come to Him that he should perish; He does not call us to follow Him, and then forsake us" (*The Desire of Ages*, p. 382).

Room Decorations

See Lesson 5. Add to the floor a blue sheet in a corner as water and an outline shape of a boat made with masking tape.

Program Overview

Lesson Section	Minutes	Activities	Materials Needed
Welcome	ongoing	Greet students at door; hear pleased/troubled	none
1 Readiness Options	up to 10	A. <i>Lakes and Seas</i> B. <i>Obstacle Course</i>	world map or globe chairs, blindfolds
Any Time Prayer and Praise*	up to 10	Fellowship Songbook Mission Offering Prayer	none <i>Sing for Joy</i> <i>Children's Mission</i> gift box none
2 Bible Lesson	up to 20	Experiencing the Story Memory Verse Bible Study	blue fabric or sheet, Bible-times costumes, male adult beanbag or wadded paper ball, chalkboard or whiteboard, chalk or marker Bibles
3 Applying the Lesson	up to 15	<i>Seeing Jesus</i>	Bible
4 Sharing the Lesson	up to 15	<i>String Reminder</i>	yarn or string, scissors

*Prayer and Praise may be used at any time during the program.

TEACHING THE LESSON

Welcome

Welcome students at the door. Ask how their week has been—what they are pleased/troubled about. Listen to last week’s memory verse and encourage the children to share any experiences from last week’s lesson study. Have them begin the readiness activity of your choice.

1

Readiness Activities

Select the activity most appropriate for your situation.

You Need:

- world map or globe

A. Lakes and Seas

Have the children look at a map or globe. Ask them where different lakes or oceans are and see who can find them first. Have them find the Sea of Galilee. Then tell them these facts about it:

It is a fresh-water lake, fed and drained by the Jordan River. It is 12 miles long, and 7 miles wide. It lies about 685 feet below the level of the Mediterranean Sea, and is 130 to 148 feet deep. The low altitude of this lake is responsible for its semitropical climate. It is surrounded by high hills, and is subject to sudden and extremely violent storms. (Summarized from *The SDA Bible Commentary*, vol. 8, p. 401.)

Debriefing

Allow response time as you ask: **Have you ever been swimming in a lake? In a sea or ocean? Which ones? What would happen if you went into the water without knowing how to swim? Today our Bible story is about Peter and the Sea of Galilee. Jesus did something that is impossible for us to do, and Peter had to learn to trust Jesus or drown. The memory verse is “What is impossible with men is possible with God” (Luke 18:27, NIV). The message is:**



BY KEEPING OUR EYES ON JESUS WE ARE SAVED.

Say that with me.

You Need:

- chairs
- blindfolds

B. Obstacle Course

Arrange chairs around the room as an obstacle course. Divide the children into pairs. Have one of each pair put on a blindfold. Have the other child lead the blindfolded child around the room, with the blindfolded child holding onto the seeing child’s arm. Instruct the seeing child to reassure the blindfolded child all the time they are walking that they will be OK because the seeing child is going to take care of them. Some of the phrases to use are “Don’t worry.” “Everything’s fine.” “We’re coming up to an obstacle, but I’ll get you around it.”

Call time and switch the blindfolds. This time the seeing partner will say things like “Oh, no, we’re going to hit that chair.” “I don’t think I’m going to be able to get you around the room without you falling.” Et cetera.

Debriefing

Allow response time as you ask: **When you were blindfolded, were you afraid**

you were going to get hurt? Why? What made the difference? When your partner said they were going to take care of you, did you believe it? When your partner sounded scared and unsure, did you believe that?

When we believe our partner is going to take care of us, we have trust in them. Have you ever known someone you couldn't trust? How did that feel? Who are some people you can trust? Who can everyone trust no matter what happens?

Today our Bible story is about Peter learning to trust Jesus. We have to do that too. The memory verse is "What is impossible with men is possible with God" (Luke 18:27, NIV). The message is:



BY KEEPING OUR EYES ON JESUS WE ARE SAVED.

Say that with me.

Prayer and Praise

Any
Time



Fellowship

Report the students' joys and sorrows (pleased and troubled) as reported to you at the door (as appropriate). Allow time for sharing from last week's lesson study and review last week's memory verse. Acknowledge any birthdays, special events, or achievements. Give a special warm greeting to all visitors.



Suggested Songs

- "He's Able" (*Sing for Joy*, No. 40)
- "Wide, Wide as the Ocean" (*Sing for Joy*, No. 32)
- "Deep and Wide" (*Sing for Joy*, No. 64)
- "Amigos de Cristo" (*Sing for Joy*, No. 69)
- "Turn Your Eyes Upon Jesus" (*Sing for Joy*, No. 90)



Mission

Share a story from *Children's Mission*. Emphasize how we must keep our eyes on Jesus to be saved.



Offering

Continue collecting the offering in a gift box. Say: **Our offerings help others learn to look to Jesus for their salvation.**

You Need:
• gift box



Prayer

Continue thanking God for His gift to us—Jesus. Ask the Holy Spirit to speak to the children's hearts and to help them keep their eyes on Jesus.

2

Bible Lesson

You Need:

- blue fabric or sheet
- Bible-times costumes
- adult to portray Jesus

Experiencing the Story

Characters: Jesus, 12 disciples

Have an adult dress in a Bible-times costume to act as Jesus. Select children to be Peter, John, and Andrew (other children can be the other disciples), and help them dress in Bible-times costumes.

Have the children listen carefully and act out the disciples' trip across the Sea of Galilee. Wave the piece of blue fabric (see Room Decorations) between the "boat" and the person playing Jesus.

Read or tell the story.

"I still can't believe what happened today!" Peter shook his head, remembering how Jesus had fed the huge crowd with just a few loaves and some fish.

"Me either!" John added.

The disciples kept talking as the boat quietly sailed along. They spoke of the miracles of the day, and how they wished Jesus would let the people crown Him king. At the end of the day, Jesus had sent the disciples on ahead in the boat. Then He had sent the people home, and had gone to find a quiet place to pray.

Out on the lake, dark clouds began to gather. The wind whipped angry waves against the fishing boat. Before long, all talk was swallowed up in the noise of the storm. The experienced fishermen strained at the oars, but the storm was stronger than they were.

Looking across the water, Andrew shouted, "Look! There's someone walking on top of the water!"

The disciples were scared to see a person coming toward them walking over

the waves as if they were on solid ground!

"Don't be afraid!" a familiar voice called, "It is I, Jesus!"

The disciples were so shocked that no one spoke for a moment. Then Peter called out, "If it's really You, Lord, let me walk on the water to You!"

"Come!" Jesus beckoned toward His eager and sometimes reckless disciple. He smiled encouragement as Peter swung his leg over the side of the boat.

Looking at Jesus, Peter began walking along on top of the water. He had gone several steps when he turned his eyes away from Jesus to look back at the disciples in the boat. *Hey! Look at me! Can you believe it?* he must have thought.*

When Peter turned back toward Jesus, a huge wave came between them. Instantly, Peter's courage was gone. "Jesus!" he yelled, "Save me!" As Peter began to sink, the strong arm of Jesus reached out and grasped his outstretched hand.

"Why did you lose your faith, Peter?" asked Jesus. "You only need to keep your eyes on Me." He put His arm around the now-quiet disciple, and they climbed into the boat. The wind calmed, the waves relaxed, and the little fishing boat sailed to the other side of the lake.

Today, Jesus says to us, "Just keep your eyes on Me! I'm here to rescue you! You can't do it by yourself; but don't worry, I can save you! Just keep trusting Me."

*See *The Desire of Ages*, p. 381 (chapter 40, paragraph 16).

Debriefing

Allow response time as you ask:
What did you think when you saw Jesus? When you watched Peter go down in the water? Peter, what were

you thinking about when you started to sink?

Why do you think Peter wanted to walk on the water? Would you? Why didn't Peter keep his eyes on Jesus?

Jesus rescued Peter even though Peter got into trouble all on his own. Why did Jesus do that? What did Jesus mean when He told Peter, "Keep your eyes on Me"? How can we keep our eyes on Jesus?

Do you remember our message? Let's say it together:



BY KEEPING OUR EYES ON JESUS WE ARE SAVED.

Memory Verse

Write the memory verse on the board. "**What is impossible with men is possible with God**" (Luke 18:27, NIV).

Have the children sit in a circle.

Have one person start the memory verse by saying the first word, then toss the beanbag or paper ball to another person. That person says the next word as they toss the beanbag or ball to

You Need:

- beanbag or wadded paper ball
- chalkboard or whiteboard
- chalk or marker

someone else. Continue until the verse has been repeated at least three times. Then ask for volunteers to say the verse. Repeat as necessary until all know the verse.

Bible Study

Say: **Let's read about another terrible storm on the Sea of Galilee. Turn in your Bibles to Matthew 8:23-27.**

Adults assist as needed. Ask for volunteers to read one verse each. Explain that this storm took place earlier in Jesus' ministry.

Debriefing

Allow response time as you ask:

Why were the disciples afraid? How do you think Jesus could have slept through such a storm? (He had complete faith in His Father to save Him; He had complete peace of mind.)

What did Jesus say to calm the storm?

What did the disciples say then? Had they been keeping their eyes on Jesus or on the storm?

How can we keep our eyes upon Jesus? Let's say our message again:



BY KEEPING OUR EYES ON JESUS WE ARE SAVED.

You Need:

- Bibles

3

Applying the Lesson

You Need:

- Bible

Seeing Jesus

Say: **In our lesson today we have talked about keeping our eyes on Jesus. How do we do that? Let's think of at least three ways, three things we can do, that will help us keep our eyes on Jesus.**

Hold up your Bible and ask: **How can this help us to keep our eyes on Jesus?** (Read and study it every day; look for God's messages to us as we read it; talk with others about what we read. The Bible helps us know what Jesus wants us to do, how He wants us to live each day.)

Ask: **Who are some people who will help us keep our eyes on Jesus?** (Christian parents, pastor, teachers, friends) **How do they help us?**

Fold your hands as if ready to pray and ask: **How does prayer help us to keep our eyes on Jesus?** (Prayer helps us think about Jesus. We can tell Him when we need His help to keep from doing wrong, or from doing things that

keep us from thinking about Him and how He wants us to live.)

Debriefing

Ask: **Did you know there were so many ways to help us keep our eyes on Jesus? What do we really mean when we say we want to keep our eyes on Jesus?** (We want to be more like Him; we want to give our lives to Him to do what He wants us to do; we want to know what He wants us to do; how to serve Him and the people around us, etc.)

Which of the three ways we just talked about is easiest for you? Which is hardest? Which do you do every day?

Why is it important to keep our eyes on Jesus? (So we will be God's children; so we can help others know Him; so we will be ready when He comes; so we can live with Him forever.) **Remember our message? Let's say it together:**



BY KEEPING OUR EYES ON JESUS WE ARE SAVED.

4

Sharing the Lesson

String Reminder

Give students two lengths of yarn or string. Help each tie a string around a finger. Say: **Have you ever heard of someone tying a string around their finger to help them remember something? This string is going to help you remember to keep your eyes on Jesus and also remember to tell someone about our lesson today.**

Say: **When someone asks you about the string around your finger, tell them it is to help you remember to keep your eyes on Jesus. Tie your extra string around their finger as you tell them about Peter walking on water to meet Jesus. Tell them: This string will help you remember that by keeping our eyes on Jesus, we can be saved.**

Debriefing

Allow response time as you ask:

What if no one asks about your string? Can you find someone to share your other piece of string with? What are you going to tell them?

Remember, our message is:



**BY KEEPING OUR EYES ON
JESUS WE ARE SAVED.**

Let's say that together again.

Closing

In a brief prayer ask God to help the children remember to keep their eyes on Jesus. Thank God for doing for us what is impossible for us to do—save ourselves.

You Need:

- yarn or string
- scissors

Walking on Water

References

Matthew 14:22-32;
Mark 6:45-51; John
6:16-21; *The Desire
of Ages*,
pp. 377-382

Memory Verse

“What is impossi-
ble with men is
possible with God”
(Luke 18:27, NIV).

The Message

By keeping our
eyes on Jesus we
are saved.

Do you know how to swim? Can you stay on top of the water? Who watches over you when you go swimming? A long time ago Jesus watched Peter try to walk on water. Read on to find out what happened.

“I still can’t believe what happened today!” Peter shook his head. He was remembering how Jesus had fed the huge crowd that day. “Just a few loaves and some fish!” he exclaimed. “And Jesus made that go far enough to feed thousands of people!”

“It was amazing!” John added. “I never thought I would see something like that!”

The disciples kept talking as the boat quietly sailed along. They spoke of the miracles of the day. How they wished Jesus would let the people crown Him king! But at the end of the day, Jesus had sent the disciples away. “Go ahead,” He had said. “Go across the lake in the boat.” Then Jesus had sent the people home, and had gone to a quiet place to pray.

Out on the lake, dark clouds began to gather. The wind whipped angry waves against the fishing boat. Before long, all talk was swallowed up in the noise of the storm. The experienced

fishermen strained at the oars. They pulled harder and harder, but the storm was stronger than they were.

The storm continued raging through the

night. Even so, the disciples continued rowing and pulled far away from shore. In the middle of the night, Jesus saw their struggles. The wind pushed the waves higher and higher. And Jesus decided to go to them.

Suddenly, the disciples saw someone coming across the water toward them. They cried out in fear. “Look! It’s a ghost!” they shouted. “Someone is walking on top of the water!” It frightened them to see a person coming toward them walking over the waves as if they were on solid ground!

“Don’t be afraid!” a familiar voice called, “It is I, Jesus!”

The disciples were so shocked that no one spoke for a moment. Then Peter called out, “If it’s really You, Lord, tell me to come to You on the water!”

“Come!” Jesus beckoned toward His eager and sometimes reckless disciple. He smiled encouragement as Peter swung his leg over the side of the boat.

Looking at Jesus, Peter began walking along on top of the water. He took several steps. Then he turned his eyes away from Jesus and looked back at the disciples. He must have been thinking, *Hey! Look at me! Can you believe it?**

As he started to turn back toward Jesus, he saw the huge waves. He felt the strong winds. He became afraid, and he started to sink. Instantly, Peter’s courage was gone. “Jesus!” he shouted, “Save me!”

Even as Peter began to sink, the strong arm of Jesus reached out to him. Jesus grasped hold of his outstretched hand and lifted him up.

“Why did you lose your faith, Peter?” asked Jesus. “You only needed to keep your eyes on Me.” He put His arm around the now-quiet disciple, and they climbed into the boat. Once Jesus was in the boat, the wind calmed and the waves relaxed. And the little fishing boat sailed quietly to the other side of the lake.



Today, Jesus says to us, “Just keep your eyes on Me! I’m here to rescue you! You can’t do it by yourself, but don’t worry. I can save you! Just keep trusting Me.”

*See *The Desire of Ages*, p. 381 (chapter 40, paragraph 16).

Daily Activities

Sabbath

- If possible, go with your family to a place where you can see boats in the water. Find a quiet place and share your lesson story. Ask: Why did Jesus walk on water? Why should we keep our eyes on Jesus?
- Tell someone about the string on your finger. Tie your extra string around their finger. Then tell them why Peter needed to keep his eyes on Jesus. Say: Let this string remind you that Jesus can save you too.
- Thank Jesus for being willing to save you.

Sunday

- Read Mark 6:45-51 during family worship. What is different about this record of the Bible lesson? Who needed to trust Jesus? What happened when Jesus got into the boat?
- Make a simple eye chart like one in a doctor’s office. Take turns standing a good distance away, covering one eye at a time, and reading the letters. Do you need good eyesight to keep your eyes on Jesus? What does that really mean?
- Sing some praise songs, then thank Jesus for your eyes.

Monday

- Ask an adult about a time they (or someone they know) were in a boat in a storm. What happened?
- Find the Sea of Galilee on a Bible map. Is it bigger or smaller than the lake nearest your home?
- Make a picture of a sailboat. On the sails, write the memory verse. Use this to teach the verse to your family. Thank God for His protection.

Tuesday

- With your family, read the third record of our Bible story in John 6:16-21. How is this different from Matthew 14:22-32? Ask: Why does the Bible record this story three times? What lessons do these three texts teach us?
- Have a family member look at something on the other side of the room. Ask them to walk

straight to it without taking their eyes from it. Wave your arms as they walk. What happens? What might stop you from keeping your eyes on Jesus? What will help you? Ask Jesus to help you keep your eyes on Him.

Wednesday

- For worship, set up an obstacle course for your family. Blindfold them one at a time and lead them through it. Do they trust you? Read the following texts together: Isaiah 12:2; Psalm 37:3-5; Psalm 62:8; Proverbs 3:5. Talk about why trust is so important. Whom do you trust to guide you?
- Sing songs about trusting God; then thank Him that you can do so.

Thursday

- For worship with your family, read Psalm 91 together. What does God promise us? Ask an adult to tell about a time they couldn’t do something for themselves. Who did they ask for help? How does God feel about helping us?
- Name five things that are impossible for you to do, but not for God. Ask your family to help you write a letter to Jesus. Have each person add a sentence to thank Him for doing something they cannot do.
- Who can save us? Thank Jesus for that.

Friday

- If possible, read together *The Desire of Ages*, pages 380–382 (chapter 40, paragraphs 10-17 and 22). Then act out the story with your family.
- Play “God’s Power Helps Me.” The first person says, “God’s power helps me [choose something God helps you do, such as be unselfish].” The next person says, “God’s power helps me to be unselfish and do my chores well.” The next person says, “God’s power helps me to be unselfish, and do my chores well, and to be rescued like Peter.” See how many times you can go around the circle and repeat all that has been said.
- Sing songs about God’s power; then thank Him for it.