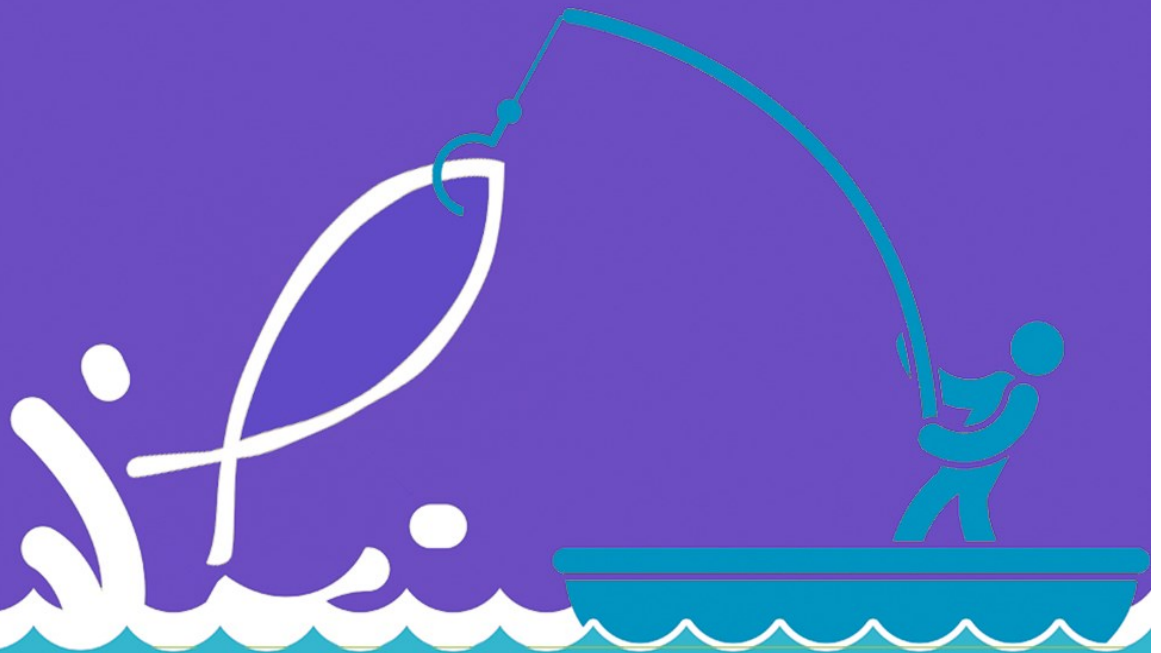


**VBS**  
2018

**Tuesday**



**FOLLOW ME!**

**Lessons from the Life of Peter**

**1st-5th Grade**

# Walking on Water

The Objective is the key concept for this weeks lesson. It should be the main focus of the study

These are the key verses that you will find helpful in teaching your study this week. The “Main passage” is the basis of the study, where the other verse support the objective of the lesson.

There is a memory verse for the students that relates to every study. If a student can memorize the verse for the following week you may give them a prize from the “reward box” found on your cart.

An introductory activity or question that will settle the class, draw their attention to the study and prepare their hearts for God’s Word

**Objective** To define faith and explain the need to place our faith in Jesus, not just for help in circumstances, but also in saving us from our sin.

## Key Verses

Matthew 14:22-33—Main Teaching Passage

Ephesians 2:8-9

2 Corinthians 5:7

## Memory Verse - Psalm 121:1-2

“I will lift up my eyes to the hills - From whence comes my help? My help comes from the LORD, Who made heaven and earth.”

## Hook

Review yesterday’s memory verse, Matthew 16:24.

Ask the class to raise their hand if they like swim. Ask if they have ever seen anyone jump into a pool or a lake and instead of falling into the water, they bounced across the top and started running instead? Of course not. No one can walk on water.

Now read Matthew 14:22-33. Ask the class to put themselves in Peter’s position. How would they feel if Jesus called them to walk out onto a stormy sea? Would they be afraid?

What does the Bible say? This is where we will read a passage or series of passages that teach on the subject of the day.

# BOOK

After teaching a great multitude and then feeding 5,000 men plus women and children in a truly miraculous way, Jesus sent His disciples by boat to the other side of the lake so that He could be alone with the Father. Jesus went up to the mountain to pray while the disciples began to row across the lake.

As they came to the middle of the lake, the farthest point from shore, the wind became fierce and the waves grew larger, battering the boat. Very early in the morning during the fourth watch (3-6am), Jesus came to the disciples, walking on top of the water. The disciples were afraid. They could not see that it was Jesus in the dark and in the storm, so they believed that He was a ghost.

Jesus spoke to them, telling them to be comforted and not afraid. Peter, still not certain that it was Jesus, told the Lord to call him out onto the water if it was really Him. Jesus did so, and when Peter climbed out of the boat, he too began to walk on the water toward Jesus. However, when Peter took his eyes off the Lord and was distracted by the wind and the waves, fearing the circumstances around him, Peter sank into the water. He cried out, "Lord, save me," and of course Jesus did. He caught Peter by the hand and lifted him into the boat.

Jesus looked at His disciples and questioned them. He asked, "O you of little faith, why did you doubt?" At this, the water calmed and the wind died down. We are told that the disciples were amazed and came before Jesus worshipping Him, saying, "Truly You are the Son of God."

# LOOK

Yesterday we talked about obedience. We saw in the story of Jesus calling His disciples that Jesus was worthy of our trust, and because we can trust Him, that helps us to follow Him. In today's Bible story, we see Jesus asking Peter to do something that wasn't just difficult, it was impossible. People cannot walk on water, but that's exactly what Jesus told Peter to do. Now to be fair, Peter is the one who first suggested this crazy demonstration of faith. We see in the Bible that there are often times when Peter doesn't know when to speak and when to be quiet, and sometimes his mouth gets him in trouble. When Jesus spoke to the disciples and told them not to be afraid, it was Peter who called out to Jesus and said, "Lord, if it is You, command me to come to You on the water."

As Peter stepped out of the boat, trusting that Jesus would not ask him to do something that he would not be able to do, Peter began to walk on the water as if it were dry ground. By placing his trust in Jesus, Peter did something that would be impossible without God's help.

The interpretation/exegesis of the passage. What does this passage mean? How does this passage apply to my life?

# LOOK (Continued)

Trusting in Jesus to do something that we don't think we can actually do is called faith. Faith is a very important word in the Bible. We are told that Christians live by faith, not by sight (2 Corinthians 5:7), and that it is actually through trusting Jesus that we live the right way, love our neighbors, and love our God. We are told that it is by faith that we are saved, not by anything that we do (Ephesians 2:8-9).

This is also like today's Bible story. When Peter took his eyes off of Jesus and saw the waves and the strong wind, his faith wavered. Peter stopped trusting that Jesus was with him in that storm and he began to sink. Then Peter did something amazing: he cried out to Jesus, "Lord save me!" Peter knew that there was nothing he could do to get back into the boat and to safety. The waves were too big, the wind was too strong. The only thing that could save Peter was Jesus.

You and I are like Peter. We are not lost at sea, but rather lost in our sin. There is nothing that we can do that save ourselves and get back to safety. Like Peter, we need to trust in Jesus to save us and lift us back up. We need to have faith that Jesus can do something impossible in our lives.

We have learned that Jesus is deserving of our trust and our obedience. Now we are learning that when things around us become really difficult, or we might even think impossible, that we can have faith in Jesus to help us in our circumstances and also save us from our sins. We need to lift our eyes up from our troubles and look to Jesus.

What is my response to this passage of Scripture? How should my life change according to what this passage teaches me? What are the practical things I can do throughout the week to make this true in my life?

# TOOK

As a class, memorize Psalm 121:1-2.

Review the lesson by asking the following questions: Why did Jesus ask Peter to come out on the water? What did the disciples do when Peter and Jesus got in the boat? How should we be like Peter in this story?

**Pray:** Ask the Lord to help us to keep our eyes on Him in all situations. Ask Him to help us to live by faith and not by sight, remembering that our help comes from Him.

**Parent Question:** How did Peter demonstrate faith in today's story?

# FURTHER STUDY

## Commentary on Matthew 14:22-33 by David Guzik

C. Jesus walks on the water and comforts His disciples.

1. ([Mat 14:22-24](#)) Another storm on the Sea of Galilee.

**Immediately Jesus made His disciples get into the boat and go before Him to the other side, while He sent the multitudes away. And when He had sent the multitudes away, He went up on the mountain by Himself to pray. Now when evening came, He was alone there. But the boat was now in the middle of the sea, tossed by the waves, for the wind was contrary.**

a. **Immediately Jesus made His disciples get into the boat:** Jesus felt it was important for He and His followers to leave the area quickly. Perhaps this was to avoid the multitudes clinging to Him as a potential source of constant bread. Therefore, Jesus *compelled* (**made**) the disciples get into the boat.

i. Actually, there were several reasons why Jesus did this. He did this because He wanted to be alone to pray; because He wanted to escape the crowd and get some rest; and because He wanted the crowd to disperse so as to avoid a messianic uproar ([John 6:15](#)).

ii. [John 6:14-15](#) tells us that the crowd responded to the miraculous feeding with a rush of messianic expectation. If the disciples shared this enthusiasm – perhaps sensing that *now was the time* to openly promote Jesus as Messiah the King – then it was more important than ever for Jesus to get the disciples away from the excited crowd.

b. **He went up on the mountain by Himself to pray:** Jesus was jealous for time spent alone with His Father. In the midst of His great ministry to others, He did not – He could not – neglect prayer.

i. “Secret prayer fats the soul, as secret morsels feed the body.” (Trapp)

ii. “Whilst the disciples were periling, and well-nigh perishing, Christ was praying for them: so he still is for us, at the right hand of the Majesty on high.” (Trapp)

c. **The boat was now in the middle of the sea, tossed by the waves, for the wind was contrary:** The Sea of Galilee is well known for its sudden storms, and during this storm Jesus wasn’t in the boat with the disciples.

2. ([Mat 14:25-27](#)) Jesus comes to both help and comfort His disciples.

**Now in the fourth watch of the night Jesus went to them, walking on the sea. And when the disciples saw Him walking on the sea, they were troubled, saying, “It is a ghost!” And they cried out for fear. But immediately Jesus spoke to them, saying, “Be of good cheer! It is I; do not be afraid.”**

a. **In the fourth watch of the night:** This was somewhere between 3 a.m. and 6 a.m. According to Mark ([Mark 6:47-52](#)), Jesus came to the disciples when the boat was in the middle of the sea and after they had exhausted themselves rowing against the waves and windy storm.

b. **Jesus went to them, walking on the sea:** This walk on the water must have been quite a shock to the disciples; they were indeed **troubled** and **they cried out for fear**.

c. **Be of good cheer! It is I; do not be afraid:** Jesus didn't come to the disciples to trouble them or make them afraid. Therefore, He **immediately** spoke to them these comforting words.

i. There are two good reasons to put away fear. One reason may be that the problem is not nearly as bad as one had thought; perhaps you are afraid because you exaggerate the danger. The other reason is that even though the problem may be real, there is an even greater solution and help at hand.

3. ([Mat 14:28-33](#)) Peter's bold move and subsequent lack of faith.

**And Peter answered Him and said, "Lord, if it is You, command me to come to You on the water." So He said, "Come." And when Peter had come down out of the boat, he walked on the water to go to Jesus. But when he saw that the wind was boisterous, he was afraid; and beginning to sink he cried out, saying, "Lord, save me!" And immediately Jesus stretched out His hand and caught him, and said to him, "O you of little faith, why did you doubt?" And when they got into the boat, the wind ceased. Then those who were in the boat came and worshiped Him, saying, "Truly You are the Son of God."**

a. **Lord, if it is You, command me to come to You on the water:** We have no idea what prompted Peter to ask such a question, but his faith in Jesus was remarkable. He really responded to Jesus' invitation and got out of the boat.

i. "Peter's protasis ('if it's you') is a real condition, almost 'since it's you.' The request is bold, but the disciples had been trained for some time and given power to do exactly the sort of miracles Jesus was doing ([Matthew 10:1](#)). What is more natural than for a fisherman who knew and respected the dangers of Galilee to want to follow Jesus in this new demonstration of supernatural power?" (Carson)

b. **He walked on the water to go to Jesus. But when he saw that the wind was boisterous, he was afraid; and beginning to sink:** This is a wonderful picture of walking in faith, showing that Peter was able to do the miraculous as long as he looked to Jesus. When **he saw that the wind was boisterous**, he was troubled by fear and began to **sink**.

i. "Peter walked on the *water* but feared the *wind*: such is human nature, often achieving great things, and at fault in little things." (Bruce)

c. **Beginning to sink he cried out, saying, "Lord, save me":** Even when Peter failed, Jesus was there to save him. Peter knew who to call out to at the moment of crisis. Jesus then brought Peter back to the boat.

i. "What a sight! Jesus and Peter, hand in hand, walking upon the sea!" (Spurgeon)

d. **O you of little faith:** Once Jesus rescued Peter, He spoke to Peter about his **little faith**. This **little faith** led to the doubt and distraction that made Peter sink under the wind and the waves.

i. "It was not the violence of the winds, nor the raging of the waves, which endangered his life, but his *littleness of faith*." (Clarke)

ii. "THERE is only one word in the original for the phrase, 'O thou of little faith.' The Lord Jesus virtually addresses Peter by the name of 'Little-faith,' in one word." (Spurgeon)

iii. Peter here shows us the weakness of **little faith**.

· Little faith is often found in places where we might expect great faith.

- Little faith is far too eager for signs.
  - Little faith is apt to have too high an opinion of its own power.
  - Little faith is too much affected by its surroundings.
  - Little faith is too quick to exaggerate the peril.
- iv. Yet Peter also shows us some of the strengths of **little faith**.

- Little faith is true faith.
- Little faith will obey the word of Jesus.
- Little faith struggles to come to Jesus.
- Little faith will accomplish great things for a time.
- Little faith will pray when it is in trouble.
- Little faith is safe, because Jesus is near.

v. "You do believe, and if you believe, why doubt? If faith, why *little* faith? If you doubt, why believe? And if you believe, why doubt?" (Spurgeon)

e. **Why did you doubt:** Jesus only asked this question once Peter was safe and in the boat again. Yet at that point it was an entirely reasonable question to ask. Why *did* Peter doubt?

i. "*Doubt* is literally 'be divided in two'; true faith is single-mindedly focused on Jesus." (France)

ii. "If you believe a thing you want evidence, and before you doubt a thing you ought to have evidence too. To believe without evidence is to be credulous, and to doubt without evidence is to be foolish. We should have ground for our doubts as well as a basis for our faith." (Spurgeon)

iii. We can say that in theory, there might be reasons for doubting Jesus and His promises.

- If on former occasions, you have found God unfaithful to His promise.
- If some old follower of Jesus has solemnly told you that God can not be trusted.
- If your problem is a new one and so extremely difficult that it is certain that God cannot help you.
- If God has abolished His promises, and made them no longer valid.
- If God has changed.

iv. "Our doubts are unreasonable: '*Wherefore didst thou doubt?*' If there be reason for little faith, there is evidently reason for great confidence. If it be right to trust Jesus at all, why not trust him altogether?" (Spurgeon)

v. It is useful for us to confront our doubts.

- Was there good reason for your doubt?
- Was there any good excuse for it?
- Did any good come from your doubt?

f. **Those who were in the boat came and worshiped Him:** They moved quickly from fearing the storm to worshipping Jesus. This was a logical reaction considering the power Jesus showed in walking on the water, and the love He showed in taking care of a sinking Peter.

i. "This is the first time we meet with so plain and open an acknowledgement of his being *the Son of God*." (Poole)