Leader Guide

Teachers Dig In

Dig In to the Bible

- Read: Matthew 14:22-33; Mark 6:45-52; John 6:16-21
- <u>In This Passage:</u> While the disciples are out in their boat, they see someone walking on the water toward them. They think it's a ghost, but it's Jesus! Peter gets out on the water with Jesus but starts to feel scared and sinks. Jesus saves him, and Jesus calms his fears.
- Bible Point: Jesus calms our fears.
- <u>Summary Verse:</u> "Dear children, let's not merely say that we love each other; let us show the truth by our actions" (1 John 3:18).

Dig Deeper

- <u>You'll Be Teaching:</u> *Jesus calms our fears.* Whether or not they'll admit it, most kids are afraid of something. It might be something concrete, like spiders or the dark. It might be more abstract, like a fear of failure or dying. Either way, they'll feel better knowing that when Jesus is with them, he can calm their fears.
- Think About: What are your greatest fears? How can Jesus help you with them?

Dig In to Prayer

• Pray for kids to feel a sense of calm and peace from Jesus when scary times come.

Quick Tip

• It can be scary for kids to share their emotions and personality with others and to be that vulnerable! Help kids express themselves by creating an environment that makes them feel comfortable and safe by sharing how Jesus works in your own life. You are a model of faith to kids.

This Lesson at a Glance

DBIBLE MESSAGE

Kids walk on a tape line through wind and waves.

Supplies

- Bible
- painter's tape
- crepe paper

Easy Prep

 Make a tape line on the floor, about 10 feet long. If you have more than 10 kids, make one tape line for every 8-10 kids. You'll need an adult or teen helper to station at each line.



PRAYER

Kids ask Jesus questions and listen for his answers.



JESUS CONNECTION

Kids wave papers to make a storm and then pray about their fears.

Supplies

- paper
- crayon (for Prep only)

Easy Prep

 Draw a cross on a sheet of paper, and set it in the corner of the room.

SCRIPTURE SKILLS

Kids act out things they fear.

Supplies

- Bibles
- "Hands-On Bible: Books of the Bible Poster Set" (purchase <u>here</u>)

BIBLE MEMORY

Kids color coupons to give to family members.

Supplies

- crayons
- child-safe scissors
- "Show-You-Love Coupons" handout (1 per child) (download <u>here</u>)



ACTIVITY PAGES WITH A POINT

Older kids do a jumble; younger kids color a picture of the Bible story.

Supplies

"Jesus Walks on Water" Activity Page (1 per reader) (download here)

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•	"Jesus Walks on Water" Coloring Page (1 per non-reader) (download	
	<u>here</u>)	
•	pencils	

- crayons
- three-hole punch and binders (optional)



Kids react to "scary" scenarios.

*Marked supplies can be reused from Core Bible Discovery

Let's keep kids safe! You can help by using supplies as instructed for only ages 3+, purchasing child-safe items, and being aware of allergy concerns.



BIBLE MESSAGE

Jesus Walks on Water (Matthew 14:22-33; Mark 6:45-52; John 6:16-21)

[10 min]

Supplies

- Bible
- painter's tape
- crepe paper

Easy Prep

• Make a tape line on the floor, about 10 feet long. If you have more than 10 kids, make one tape line for every 8-10 kids. You'll need an adult or teen helper to station at each line.

Discuss

Say: Today we'll learn that <u>Jesus calms our fears</u>. So let's talk about some scary choices!

Ask: • Would you rather swim through a lake full of alligators or hike through a savanna full of lions? Why did you make that choice? Have kids turn to a partner to share. Then ask a few kids to share with everyone. You might also do a show of hands to see who chose each option.

Say: Well, I don't know about you, but I think either of those options would be really, really scary! I hope I never have to make that choice!

Fortunately, I probably won't. But we all have to face things we fear sometimes. Let's explore our Bible story to see how <u>Jesus calms our fears</u>.

Walk on Tape

Open your Bible to Matthew 14, and show kids the words.

Say: Our story takes place on a boat. So I'll need one of you to be in the boat and the rest of you to be the waves around the boat.

Have one child stand at one end of the tape line (in the boat), while the others line up 1 or 2 feet away from the line on either side.

Say: So who was in the boat? It was some of Jesus' friends, called his disciples. But Jesus wasn't with them—he went up to the hills to pray.

When Jesus was done praying, he decided to go join the disciples. But how would he get there? Let's find out.

Read Matthew 14:24-26.

Ask: • How would you feel if you were out on a windy lake in the middle of the night and saw someone walking toward you?

Say: Well, the disciples were really scared! But Jesus calmed them down, saying, "Take courage. I am here!"

One of Jesus' friends, Peter, wanted proof that it was really Jesus. Read Matthew 14:28-29.

To the child in the "boat," say: Let's try this out, Peter!

- Stand at the opposite end of the tape line from the child in the boat.
- Invite "Peter" to walk toward you without stepping off the tape line.
- As the child walks, everyone else can wave crepe paper wildly to be windy waves.

• Give everyone a chance to walk across the line.

Ask: • What was it like to try to stay on the tape line with everyone distracting you?

Say: Let's see how things went for Peter.

Read Matthew 14:30-31.

Say: Peter got scared by all the wind and the waves around him. He took his eyes off Jesus and began to sink. But <u>Jesus calms our fears</u>. Jesus reached out and saved him. Then they got back in the boat, and Jesus stopped the wind. And all his friends knew he really was God's Son.

Let's try walking on our tape "water" again. This time, you'll keep your eyes on me!

- Have kids get back in position.
- This time, make sure kids are looking right at you as they cross.
- Everyone else will wave their arms and call out scary things, such as snakes, spiders, and pop quizzes.
- If a child starts to veer off the line, step forward and take their hand to guide them.

Ask: • What was different about this when you kept your focus on me? Say: Scary things will happen in life. Jesus doesn't always stop those scary things from happening. But when we keep our eyes on Jesus, he *can* help us feel better, just as he did for Peter. Jesus calms our fears.



PRAYER Listening Prayer

Ask and Listen

Say: Today we're learning that <u>Jesus calms our fears</u>. When we're afraid, we can always pray and talk with Jesus about what's going on.

When we pray, we're having a conversation with Jesus. Sometimes people spend most of their time talking to Jesus. But just like when you have a conversation with a friend, you can talk *and* listen.

Sometimes it can seem harder to hear Jesus than to hear our friends. So let's make sure we're not distracted. Get into a position that feels comfortable to you. You shouldn't be touching anyone else. Pause.

Now close your eyes. If you think you'll want to open them, turn and face away from people. That way nothing will distract you as you listen to Jesus. Pause.

Great! Now we'll ask Jesus two questions. After I say one question, I'll pause. You can silently ask Jesus that question and then listen for his answer.

Here's the first question: Jesus, what's something I'm scared of? Allow a minute or two for kids to listen.

Jesus, what do you want to tell me about that fear? Allow a minute or two for kids to listen.

Ask: • If you heard from Jesus, what's something he brought to your mind?

Say: It's okay if you didn't hear from Jesus today. You can keep asking and listening to him throughout your week. The more we practice listening to Jesus, the more we'll hear him speak to us. And this is so important for you to remember: Jesus calms our fears.



JESUS CONNECTION Peace of Paper

[10 min]

Supplies

- paper
- crayon (for Prep only)

Easy Prep

• Draw a cross on a sheet of paper, and set it in the corner of the room.

Make a Storm

Say: Jesus' friends got into some trouble when they found themselves caught out on a windy, wavy sea.

Ask: • Call out some of the things they were probably afraid of.

Say: The disciples had fears, but we do, too. Sometimes we're so afraid that we shake. I imagine Jesus' friends felt like that in the middle of the storm—especially Peter when he tried walking on the water. Maybe *he* shook with fear. Try something with me. Hand each person a sheet of paper.

Think of something you're afraid of—something that makes you shake with fear. Maybe you shake on the inside—your heart feels worried and nervous. Or maybe you really do shake, like when a loud thunderclap booms. Your paper will represent that fear. Pause for a few seconds while kids think about a fear.

In a minute, you'll shake that paper as a reminder of how we may shake or shiver with fear. When you hear me call out Jesus' words from the Bible, set your paper down.

- Lead kids in shaking their papers for about 30 seconds.
- Call out: "Don't be afraid. Take courage. I am here!"
- Lead kids in setting their papers in front of them.
- Pause in the silence.

Bring Fears to Jesus

Say: In our Bible story, Jesus didn't make the wind and waves end right away. In fact, when Peter walked with him on the water, the storm was still raging. Look at that paper in front of you. I didn't take it away. Jesus calms our fears, but he doesn't always take away the things we're afraid of.

Ask: • Why do you think Jesus *doesn't* always take away things we fear? This is a thinking question—one without a right or wrong answer. If you have more than 10 kids in your class, have kids talk together with two people nearby, then take reports about what groups talked about. This encourages lots of kids to process and share.

• What do you think Jesus' friends discovered in the middle of that scary windstorm? Have kids share in groups of three, then take a report from each group.

Say: Jesus calms our fears. He doesn't always take them away, though. Maybe Jesus wants us to (repeat some of the thoughts kids had from the previous question). But even when we're scared, Jesus does promise to always be with us—the same way he was with the disciples. That means we can always talk to

him about our fears.

Hold up the paper with the cross on it. Say: Let's say this paper represents Jesus. Let's bring our fears to Jesus. As you walk to the paper and set your fear down on top of it, talk silently with Jesus about what you're scared about.

Allow a quiet, reflective time for kids to bring their fears to Jesus. When everyone has placed their fear on the cross, pick up the stack. Pull the cross from the bottom and place it on top.

Say: Jesus is bigger than our fears. We piled them on top of him, but Jesus has overcome all the scary things in this world! <u>Jesus calms our fears</u>, so let's always bring them to him.



SCRIPTURE SKILLS Don't Be Afraid

[10 min]

Supplies

- Bibles
- "Hands-On Bible: Books of the Bible Poster Set" (purchase here)

<u>Tips</u>

- It may take a while for kids to find the Bible verse. That's okay! This activity is primarily about building Bible navigation skills.
- If you have a lot of non-readers, have some picture Bibles on hand for them to flip through as older kids look up verses. They won't look for anything specific, but they can look at the pictures to practice paging through Bibles.
- If you have a large group, have each adult or teen helper gather a small group for the activity.

Explore Matthew 14:27

Say: Jesus' friends were afraid when they saw Jesus walking on the water during a storm. But Jesus calms our fears. Let's see what Jesus said to his friends to calm *their* fears.

Make sure kids all have Bibles. Younger kids can sit with older kids so they can observe the skills of using their Bibles even before being able to read.

Say: Our Bible verse comes from today's story in the book of Matthew, chapter 14, verse 27. Let's find the book of Matthew. That's in the New Testament—which is the later part of the Bible. Open your Bible kind of near the back. Allow time.

- Point to the book of Matthew on the poster so kids can see the name and what books come before and after it.
- Mention that the chapter numbers are the big numbers, and help kids find the big 14 in Matthew.
- Mention that the verse numbers are the small numbers, and help kids find the small 27 in Matthew 14.
- When everyone has found the verse, ask someone to read Matthew 14:27 aloud.

Say: Jesus calmed his friends' fears. Jesus calms our fears, too.

Act Out Fears

Say: Being on a boat in a storm and seeing someone walking on the water must've been scary for Jesus' friends. Let's think about some things that scare us. We'll make it into a game!

- Ask for a willing child to act out something he or she fears in front of the group.
- Encourage kids to guess the fear being acted out.
- When kids guess the fear correctly, lead everyone in repeating Jesus' words: "Don't be afraid. Take courage. Jesus is here!"
- Continue having kids take turns acting out their fears as time allows.

Ask: • When you're scared, what helps you feel better?

Say: Jesus' friends were afraid when they thought they saw a ghost. But they found comfort when they realized Jesus was with them! Peter got scared when he was walking on water, but Jesus held his hand and helped him stay safe.

Ask: • How can Jesus bring us comfort when we're scared?

Say: We get scared just like Jesus' friends did. And one thing that can help us feel better is knowing that Jesus is with us, and <u>Jesus calms our fears</u>. When you're scared, just imagine Jesus taking your hand like he took Peter's and saying, "Don't be afraid. Take courage. I am here!"



[10 min]

Supplies

- crayons
- child-safe scissors
- "Show-You-Love Coupons" handout (1 per child) (download here)

Hear the Bible Verse

Say: Jesus calms our fears. When we store verses from the Bible in our hearts, God can bring his words to mind when we're afraid. The words we know from the Bible can bring us comfort! And they can remind us to show love and comfort to others. Let's learn a verse now.

First John 3:18 says, "Dear children, let's not merely say that we love each other; let us show the truth by our actions."

Talk About It

Say: This Bible verse is telling us that love is more than saying "I love you." When we love people, our actions show it!

Ask: • How did Jesus' actions show love in today's Bible story?

Say: Jesus showed love when he comforted his friends, helped Peter, and calmed the wind. Now, let's think about what loving actions we can do.

Ask: • Think about where you live. What actions show your love for the people you live with?

Say: When we give hugs, we can bring comfort like Jesus did. When we clean up our toys, fold laundry, or set the table, we're helping our family like Jesus helped his friends. Those are all great ways to show our family members that we love them.

Color Coupons

Say: Let's make coupons for our family members. Choose who you'll give each coupon to, and write that person's name on the coupon. If you can't write, ask for help. Be sure to color the coupons, too. Your family members can give you their coupons when they need to see God's love in action!

- Distribute a handout to each child, and set out crayons to share.
- Be ready to help young children spell family members' names. (Note: It's totally fine if kids want to give all the coupons to one person.)
- When finished, ask kids to say the verse with you, changing "by our actions" to the actions on each coupon. For example, you might lead kids in saying, "Dear children, let's not merely say that we love each other; let's show the truth by *giving hugs*."
- Continue through each coupon, and then say the verse again the correct way.

Say: In our Bible story, Jesus' actions calmed his friends' fears. And our actions can show God's love when people need it the most. I'm so glad that Jesus calms our fears and gives us people we can share his love with.



ACTIVITY PAGES WITH A POINT **Jumbled Up With Fear**

Supplies

- "Jesus Walks on Water" Activity Page (1 per reader) (download here) •
- "Jesus Walks on Water" Coloring Page (1 per non-reader) (download here) •
- pencils •
- crayons •
- three-hole punch and binders (optional)

Tip

WARNING! Don't just print and distribute! Here's why.

Older Kids: Do an Activity Page

Sav: Peter got scared when he tried to walk on water and focused on the wind and waves instead of on Jesus. Sometimes we get scared, too.

Ask: • Describe how it feels when you're scared. What happens in your stomach, mind, and heart?

Say: Feeling scared and worried can make us feel all jumbled up inside. But when we keep our eyes on Jesus, Jesus calms our fears. Let's calm some fears by uniumbling them.

Distribute the activity pages and pencils. Kids will unscramble the words. Ask: • Which of the things on this list scares you the most? Why?

• Tell about a time you felt scared, but someone helped you feel better. What did they do?

Say: Peter felt scared when he tried walking on the water and saw wind and waves. But Jesus calms our fears. He took Peter by the hand and stopped him from sinking. When our fears make us feel all jumbled up inside, Jesus calms our fears.

ANSWER KEY: PAIN, DEATH, LOSING, STORMS, CHANGE, DANGER, FAILURE, BULLIES

Younger Kids: Color a Coloring Page

Distribute the coloring pages and crayons. Say: Peter got scared, but Jesus helped him. Jesus calms our fears, too! Let's color Peter trying to walk on water with Jesus.

Allow time for kids to color.

When kids finish coloring, three-hole-punch their pages and put them into binders, if desired.

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Act Out Scenarios

Say: <u>Jesus calms our fears</u>. Let's take three big, deep, calming breaths. Lead kids in three big breaths—in through the nose and out through the mouth.

Say: It's good that you know how to calm down because you'll need to react to some very scary things that are about to happen!

- Have kids stand, spread out, and then act out their reaction to each scenario you present from the list below.
- Between rounds, have kids take three big breaths to calm down. Remind them that no matter what happens, <u>Jesus calms our fears</u>.
- Scary scenarios suggestions:
 - An elephant stampede—run!
 - o A hamster attack—run again!
 - A kangaroo wants to kickbox—fight back!
 - The floor tilts—somersault down the hill!
 - Logs roll off a truck—jump over them!
 - o A skunk lets loose—spin fast to repel the stink!
 - Bears show up-bear crawl so you blend in!
 - You walk into a spider web-shake it off!
 - The floor is lava—keep jumping to avoid a hot foot!
- Let the game keep going as long as needed to fill time until parents begin to arrive. If you run out of "scary" scenarios, let kids help you think of more silly ideas!