

LOVE IS BRAVE

PETER WALKS ON WATER TO JESUS



Bible reading



Jesus walks on the water

<http://bit.ly/3nXRlmp>

Then Jesus made his followers get into the boat. He told them to go ahead of him to the other side of the lake. Jesus stayed there to tell the people they could go home. After he said good-bye to them, he went alone up into the hills to pray. It was late, and Jesus was there alone. By this time, the boat was already far away on the lake. The boat was having trouble because of the waves, and the wind was blowing against it.

Between three and six o'clock in the morning, Jesus' followers were still in the boat. Jesus came to them. He was walking on the water. When the followers saw him walking on the water, they were afraid. They said, "It's a ghost!" and cried out in fear.

But Jesus quickly spoke to them. He said, "Have courage! It is I! Don't be afraid."

Peter said, "Lord, if that is really you, then tell me to come to you on the water."

Jesus said, "Come."

And Peter left the boat and walked on the water to Jesus. But when Peter saw the wind and the waves, he became afraid and began to sink. He shouted, "Lord, save me!"

Then Jesus reached out his hand and caught Peter. Jesus said, "Your faith is small. Why did you doubt?"

After Peter and Jesus were in the boat, the wind became calm. Then those who were in the boat worshiped Jesus and said, "Truly you are the Son of God!"

Bible video

Peter walks on water –
Saddleback Kids

<https://youtu.be/oVy9HGr3Qig>

Arrival activity

Big entrance challenge – As children arrive at the front door create a path of Lego. Who is brave enough to walk on it into the church to get to their groups? It's just for fun, don't pressure anyone to do it.

Create a bravery challenge, just for fun. Invite children to take part and test their mettle. Ideas could include:

Taste challenge. Taste things that might be new to them, e.g. unusual fruits etc or tasting unusual concoctions like pancakes with chilli powder. Be aware of allergies.

What's in the box? Have a collection of boxes with a hand hole in each, and challenge the children to put their hand in and see what they can find in each box. You could give the boxes weird and wonderful names to add to the tension, for example on a box with a toy snake the clue could read, "I slither and slime all the time".

Trust games. Have some fun testing their trust, for example with the trust fall activity. Will they fall back into the group's arms?

Big Question:

♥ When was the last time you had to be brave?

Drama

Out of the album (Peter)

Anyone got a towel? Honestly, if it weren't embarrassing enough getting a dunking in the Sea of Galilee, without some smart Alec getting a photo of it! And I tell you, that water's pretty grim! But it was just so wonderful seeing Jesus again. We'd seen him do some amazing stuff but I'll tell you, it was mindblowing to see him walking out to our boat RIGHT ON TOP OF THE WATER in the middle of a storm!!! He was like a bloomin' hovercraft or one of those beetles that skates across the top of the pond.

Anyway, I've done some stupid things in my time, but somehow it didn't feel stupid – he was my friend and my leader and I just wanted to be with him – so I climbed straight out of the boat and walked towards him when he called me. I don't like the water much – we fishermen aren't really great at swimming, believe it or not – so I had to be brave, but knowing Jesus loved me made it so much easier that I just walked across the water, just like Jesus, and didn't even think what was under my feet. Until suddenly I did, that is. I stopped looking at Jesus and looked down at my feet and that's when I panicked and started to sink. Thank goodness Jesus was there to save me – he wouldn't let me drown.

Story

[The Conductor enters and organises the children, and leaders sat with them, into rows and starts a Mexican wave. Ask the leaders beforehand to make sure the children keep the wave going, even when The Conductor gets distracted by the scene.]

The Conductor: Come on now, let's get ourselves organised! Small ones in the front. That's it, starting gently. Lovely! Let's keep it like this, just to make people regret coming out without their coats. Simmer down at the back, don't get carried away with yourself, we're working as a team.

OK, you're doing great. Now, give me a little bit more. I want foreboding but not menacing; risky but not dangerous. Keep it tight everybody, let's remind those humans who's in charge.

[The disciples move into the middle of the 'waves' miming rowing their boat.]

Oh really! Who thought this was a good idea! Couldn't they tell there was a storm coming? **[Shouting at the disciples.]** You won't catch any fish in this weather!

Well, we won't let it bother us. Things are hotting up nicely now! We're all in a good rhythm with no sign of tiring!

[Jesus enters in front of the children making waves. The disciples start to sway with the waves then mime looking out at Jesus as though they can't believe their eyes.]

Now I've seen it all! Walking on water as if it were a pleasant enough day for a stroll and a picnic in the park. Who does he think he is? The other ones can barely stand up and he's wandering through these waves as if they were nothing – and I can tell you're all really putting your backs into it now.

[Peter mimes stepping out of the boat.]

Oh, that's a bold move! So brave! He must really trust him... and love him.

[Peter starts to wobble.]

[To Peter] Oh keep your eyes on him, don't look at what we're doing – we'll only distract you!

[Jesus walks quickly to Peter and mimes helping him back into the boat.]

Jesus: **[From the boat – to the waves]** Stop! **[Leaders encourage the children to be still and sit down.]**

The Conductor: **[Walking off, shaking their head.]** Who is this man? My waves only listen to me!

Wondering questions

- ♥ I wonder why Peter took his eyes off Jesus?
- ♥ I wonder why Peter felt brave when Jesus called him?
- ♥ I wonder if you've ever had a time when you had to be really brave and what helped you?

Small group prayer



Floating people

You will need:

- Paper people shapes (you could draw round a gingerbread man cookie cutter)
- Pens
- Scissors
- A container filled with water

1. Ask children to think of people or things they would like to bring to God and then ask them to write them onto their paper person.
2. Fold the corners of the people shapes into the middle.
3. As the children place the people into the water, say, "We ask our prayers, bravely trusting in God's love."
4. Place the bottom of the prayer shapes on top of the water and watch as the arms, legs and head of the paper people gradually open out, symbolically opening out the prayer to God. The opened shape will then float on top of the water. This will take some time to happen fully so there is plenty of opportunity to watch and reflect on their prayers!



Activity/craft

Oobleck

Oobleck is neither a liquid nor a solid – it's what is called a non-Newtonian fluid. If you place your hand on it firmly, it acts as a solid but if you run your finger through it, it acts like a liquid.

What you need:

- Cornflour
- Water
- Trays
- Wet wipes
- Play people



What to do:

In our story Peter was able to walk on water to reach Jesus until he suddenly realised what he was doing, but then he started to sink.

1. Mix cornflour and water in a ratio of 3:2 to make the oobleck. Give each set of four children a tray and pour enough oobleck into the tray to cover it.
2. Encourage the children to experiment with the oobleck, seeing how much pressure is needed to keep it a solid or to turn it back to a liquid.
3. Have play people to hand for those who have a sensory challenge with the mixture and for an additional way to experiment.

STEM activity

Will it sink or will it float?

You will need a large bowl or box full of water. (Be aware of the risk of spilling water – protect surfaces and wipe up spills straight away).

Use a selection of items such as the suggestions below and explore which things float and which sink.

Peter expected to sink but was brave enough initially to trust Jesus and walk on the water when Jesus called him.

Float suggestions

Cork
Ping-pong ball
Pencil
Paper clip
Apple
Leaf

Sink suggestions

Teaspoon
Pebble
Coin
Key
Marble
Scissors

Surprises

Tennis ball
Wood
Sponge
Cup



Recipe

Cheesy feet

Make the dough before the session begins

Dough recipe:

- 50g plain flour (gluten free)
- 100g grated cheese (vegan friendly)
- ¼ tsp baking powder (gluten free)
- 25g soft butter or margarine (vegan friendly)

1. Put all the ingredients into a bowl and mix with a wooden spoon until the ingredients are all mixed together and look like breadcrumbs, then use your hands to work it into a dough.
2. Wrap the ball of dough in cling film and put it in the fridge to cool for 15 minutes (No more than 24 hours).
3. If not using a foot-shaped biscuit cutter, then prepare card templates in advance.

During the session

You will need:

- Baking parchment
- Flour for rolling (gluten free)
- Rolling pins
- Blunt knives
- Spatula
- Pencil
- Foot cutter/ template

1. Heat the oven to 200 C or Gas mark 5 and lightly grease a baking tray.
2. Provide a small ball of dough for each person.
3. Roll out the dough onto a floured surface.
4. Ensure the dough is not rolled out too thin, about ½ cm.





5. Use a foot-shaped cutter if you have one or, alternatively, use the prepared foot templates. Use a knife to cut around the templates.
6. Lift the feet carefully (using the spatula) and place them on the baking parchment.
7. Put the baking tray in the oven, remembering to use oven gloves, and cook for about 10 – 12 minutes depending on how big your feet are!
8. When they are a lovely golden colour and still slightly soft, take them out and cool them on a wire rack. They will become firmer as they cool.



Games

Splash

This is an outdoor game! You need the same number of cards as there are children in the group, a water pistol and a supply of water. Children may need a change of clothes and a towel!

Write numbers on the cards, starting with one and numbering them for as many as there are children. Children stand in a circle with one child in the centre holding the water pistol. The child in the centre picks a card out of the pack without showing anyone what it is and remembers the number on it (maybe showing it to a leader to prevent cheating).

The children then in turn call out a number that hasn't been said by anyone else. (If they repeat a number, get them to choose a different one.) As soon as someone says the number that's on the card, the child in the centre squirts them with water from the water pistol.

The child who was squirted then goes into the centre and takes over control of the water pistol and the game begins again.

Walking (lying) on water

You need an inflated airbed or lilo for each team. Participants need to get into groups of six. Five of them lie or sit on the floor and place an inflated airbed or lilo on top of them. The sixth person gets onto the airbed/lilo, lying down on it in order to avoid risk of falling off (i.e. absolutely not standing!!!).

The aim of the game is for the group to transport the person on the lilo from one side of the room to the other without touching the lilo with their hands and without dropping the person. This could be a race between teams. (The easiest way is log-rolling but don't tell them that unless they get really despondant!)

Large group prayer



You will need:

- Paper
- Pens
- Scissors

Get the children to draw around one of their feet, cut it out and write their name on the foot. (You may want to do this part of the activity in small groups.)

Ask everyone to bring their feet into the centre and spread them out with the name facing towards the floor. Encourage everyone to walk around using the feet like stepping stones.

Play some gentle music and then stop the music and ask everyone to pick up the nearest footprint to them. Say, "God bless..." and get everyone to shout out the name of the person on the foot nearest to them. You could do this as many times as you like. End with a prayer of blessing for all the children.

Talk about how we can pray for each other and encourage them to take the foot they last stood on home with them and continue to ask God to bless that person.

