

Jesus Walks on Water

Jesus did some incredible miracles, but walking on the water on the Sea of Galilee was super spectacular. We tried to replicate that miracle with modern science. We poured water and a lot of corn starch into large plastic containers. The mixture became very gooey and eventually it was thick oatmeal like consistency.

The students stepped into the goo and found that if they stepped quickly into the oobleck they did not sink. If they stepped into the mixture and stood still, eventually the oobleck allowed them to sink. Pretty simple, the oobleck is a mixture that does not allow its particles to separate quickly. They move at a slow pace when pressured quickly. If you stand for a period of time in the same place, you will give the particles time to separate and you will sink.

The Sea of Galilee is not oobleck. It is regular water, H₂O. So, for Jesus to walk on the water, in a storm, was pretty astounding. Peter and the other disciples saw him. The gospel accounts can be found in Matthew, Mark and John.

This lesson is a little different. It has a guided study for parents to complete with their children. Read through the following and adapt as necessary.

Jesus Walks On The Water ([Matthew 14:22-36](#))

Say: Right after the miracle of the fish and bread, Jesus had something new to teach His disciples. He sent the crowd away, and sent the disciples across the Sea of Galilee. Remember, the Sea of Galilee was actually a big lake.

Right away Jesus made the disciples get into the boat. He had them go on ahead of Him to the other side of the Sea of Galilee. Then He sent the crowd away. After He had sent them away, He went up on a mountainside by Himself to pray. [Remember that Jesus often sneaked away from other people to spend time alone with His heavenly Father.] When evening came, He was there alone. The boat was already a long way from land. It was being pounded by the waves because the wind was blowing against it.

Early in the morning, Jesus went out to the disciples. He walked on the lake. They saw Him walking on the lake and were terrified. "It's a ghost!" they said. And they cried out in fear.

Right away Jesus called out to them, "Be brave! It is I. Don't be afraid." - [Matthew 14:22-27](#)

Say: Jesus sent His friends across the lake when the storm winds were coming. **Ask:** Was the windstorm a surprise to Jesus? *No.* **Say:** Of course, it wasn't! Jesus sent them into this storm for a reason. He wanted to test their faith, and teach them something about Himself that they didn't know yet.

Let's pause right here for a minute. This story is told in the books of Mark and John as well as in Matthew. John tells us that the boat was over three miles out from the shore by this time ([John 6:19](#)). Mark tells us that Jesus could see the disciples from where He sat praying on the mountainside ([Mark 6:48](#)). The disciples were having a hard time rowing because a strong wind was blowing against them. Since the disciples had taken the boat, there was just one way for Jesus to cross the lake. Jesus actually walked out to them on the water! Here is another example of Jesus having power over nature. Somehow, the water held Him up. The water treated Jesus differently than it treated the disciples. The disciples were struggling just to row across the lake. But Jesus walked on top of the waves. Do you remember what the disciples said when Jesus calmed the storm in our story a few weeks ago. They said, "What kind of man is this? Even the winds and the waves obey Him!" ([Matthew 8:27](#)) Don't you wonder what it felt like to walk on water? At least one of the disciples did!

Mark says that it was so early in the morning that it was still dark out ([Mark 6:48](#)). No wonder the men were afraid at first. But as soon as they heard Jesus' voice, Peter spoke back.

Peter Walks On The Water ([Matthew 14:28-29](#))

Peter was a really unique man. He was the boldest of all the disciples. He said things that other people only thought. He was the type of person who did things that other people didn't have the nerve to do. Peter was completely drawn to Jesus. Peter wanted to follow Jesus with his whole heart.

"Lord, is it You?" Peter asked. "If it is, tell me to come to you on the water."

"Come," Jesus said.

So Peter got out of the boat. He walked on the water toward Jesus. - [Matthew 14:28-29](#)

Ask: Why did Jesus invite Peter to come out to Him, and none of the other disciples? *Because Peter asked!* **Say:** Peter is the only disciple who asked to come to Jesus. Knowing Peter, it's really no surprise that he wanted to walk out to Jesus. The other disciples may have wanted to walk out to Jesus, but none of them would have dared to ask. Peter asked to come to Jesus, waited for Jesus to call him, and then obeyed.

Application: Do you think you are more like Peter - ready to ask God to use you - or are you more like the other disciples who sat in the boat watching to see what would happen with Peter? The Bible says that it's right to ask God for opportunities ([Matthew 7:7](#)).

Optional for Older Students: Before he stepped out, Peter said, “If it’s You, tell me to come to you on the water.” Peter wanted to believe that Jesus was the Son of God. But Peter was looking for proof. He was asking Jesus to suspend him in the waves so that he would know for sure that Jesus was God. Jesus did not get angry at Peter for asking this. Jesus simply invited him to, “Come.”

Peter had enough faith to step out of the dry, sturdy boat, in the dark, as the wind was whipping up the waves. At first, Peter’s eyes were fixed on Jesus. Peter didn’t have to worry about the wind or waves because he had faith that Jesus would not let him sink. **While Peter was focused on Jesus, his faith was strong.** He could see the power that Jesus held over all things. He knew how much Jesus loved him, and that Jesus would never let him down.

Application: Your faith will be strong when you keep your eyes on Jesus. As we have learned, Jesus has power over all things. Is there anything that He can’t do? And Jesus loves you. He loves you enough to lay down His life for you. When you know Jesus, you know He is completely deserving of your trust. When you keep your focus on His power and His love for you, your faith will be strong.

Peter Sinks ([Matthew 14:30-31](#))

Say: But, before long, Peter took his eyes off Jesus. [Matthew 14:30](#) says:

But when Peter saw the wind, he was afraid. He began to sink. He cried out, “Lord! Save me!” Right away Jesus reached out His hand and caught him. “Your faith is so small!” He said. “Why did you doubt Me?” - [Matthew 14:30-31](#)

Say: When Peter looked at the wind and waves, he began to doubt if Jesus was more powerful than the storm that surrounded him ([Matthew 14:31](#)). Do you know what the Bible says about doubt? “People who doubt are like waves of the sea. The wind blows and tosses them around.” ([James 1:6b](#)) What an interesting word picture! Peter’s doubt literally caused him to be tossed around in the wind and waves. He began to sink.

Ask: Did anything about Jesus **change** that caused Peter to sink? **No!** **Ask:** What changed then? *Peter took his eyes off Jesus.* **Say:** Peter looked at the scary storm. He was overwhelmed by the things that were **more powerful than he was.** But Peter should have remembered that **nothing is more powerful than Jesus!** While he was focused on Jesus, the things around him were not a threat to him.

Say: Just imagine Peter’s distractions: the wind was howling and the waves were crashing. Peter turned his focus to the things around him and he doubted Jesus. He was gripped with fear and he began to sink. Of course, when Peter started sinking, **Jesus was right there to catch him!** Gently, Jesus told Peter that his faith was small because he doubted Jesus.

Before we judge Peter, remember, he was the only one willing to step out of the boat that morning. Many people talk about how Peter sank, but few people mention that the other disciples never left the boat.

Application: When the disciples first saw Jesus walking on the water, He told them to be brave, and not be afraid. But Peter had a mixture of faith and fear. I think that describes most of us at times. We may start out with faith. We might begin to do something that we know God wants us to do (like being nice to the kid that nobody likes). Or we might have faith that gives us peace in a difficult time (like when a family member is sick, or our parents are arguing). But then we take our eyes off of Jesus. We look at the scary situation around us. We doubt whether God actually has power over that situation, or if He cares enough to help us. We may stop doing what God wants us to do. Or we may be overwhelmed with fear. You know the kind of fear I'm talking about - the kind that makes you feel like there's a whirlwind in the pit of your stomach. But here is the truth: Lots of situations are too big or too scary for **you** to handle, but **nothing is too big for Jesus!** Don't focus on the situation you are in. **Focus on the One who has power over every situation!** What a blessing you have! The Creator of the universe, who has power over all things, is crazy about you! ([Zephaniah 3:17](#)) He WANTS to do what is best for you, and He is ABLE to do what is best for you. Focusing on that truth should give you peace. That truth should give you the confidence to step out of your boat and do what it is He wants you to do without any fear.

No one's faith is perfect. If you do stumble, if you ever have a doubt (like Peter did), talk to Jesus about it ([Mark 9:24](#)). Jesus never changes. Just like Jesus reached out His hand and grabbed Peter to keep Him safe, He is that close to you, and He will help you too.

Scripture: Jesus Walks on Water (Matthew 14:22-36; Mark 6:45-56; John 6:16-24)

Questions:

1. Do you understand doubt?
2. Do you understand faith?

Next Steps: Prepare some oobleck at home for your children to enjoy.

Making oobleck is easy. Here's a recipe:

Oobleck ingredients

- 1 part water
- 1.5 to 2 parts cornstarch
- Small amount of food coloring (optional)

Mix ingredients

- Start with the water in a bowl (or wading pool!) and add the cornstarch a bit at a time.
- Keep stirring until it has a gooey consistency. You may want to use your hands.
- When the oobleck is just right, slowly add food coloring, if you want. This can be a challenge to get it mixed properly.
- Play with it.

Things to do with oobleck

- Grab a handful and squeeze it. Let it ooze through your fingers.
- Make a puddle and quickly drag your fingers through it.
- Put it into a plastic container and shake it or quickly bump it against a table.
- Jab at the oobleck and then slowly let your finger sink in.
- Roll some oobleck into a ball. It becomes solid, but when you stop moving it, it will melt back into your hand.

Some science projects use oobleck. Experiments you can try include:

Put some oobleck on an old speaker and watch it dance:

Tips

- Store in an air-tight container. Mix occasionally.
- If you put in food coloring, you may notice a little bit of color left on your hands after washing. Don't worry. It should go away in a day or two.
- Anything put into the slime can be washed with soap and water.
- To dispose of the oobleck, mix it with a lot of hot water to make a very loose slurry. Pour a small amount into the drain while the hot water is running.
- Oobleck when dried can be easily vacuumed.

Warnings

- Don't drop oobleck on a couch, deck, or sidewalk. It's hard to get off.
- Oobleck isn't poisonous, but it tastes awful. Wash your hands after playing. Make sure children are supervised.
- Wear old clothes, as oobleck tends to get messy.
- Don't worry too much if it gets on something; it will come out with a little water.
- Lay a couple newspapers on the floor so it doesn't get all over the floor or table.
- Oobleck may solidify if it's not kept wet. If it hardens, just throw it away.
- If oobleck is left out too long, it will dry out and turn back to cornstarch.

