

LESSON 5

JESUS WALKS ON WATER

LESSON AT A GLANCE

WONDER TRUTH: Jesus Is the Son of God

SCRIPTURE: Matthew 14

GOD'S BIG STORY: Jesus walks on water across the Sea of Galilee toward His disciples and calls Peter to join Him, showing that He really is the Son of God!

WORD OF WONDER: How great God is! We'll never completely understand him. —Job 36:26a

CURIOSITY 15 minutes • Large Group or Small Group

Hands-on activities to spark curiosity and get kids thinking about the wonder of God

- Welcome Question: What kind of surface would you like to walk on most?
- Curiosity Questions
- Elementary Multisensory Activity: Walk It Out!
- Preteen Interactive Game: Possible or Impossible?
- Declaring God's Wonder



BELIEF 25–35 minutes • Large Group

An interactive dive into Scripture that guides kids into knowing God, exploring His big story, and marveling at His wonder

- Prayer of Invitation and Worship
- God's Big Story: Hear It, Watch It, Experience It!
- Connecting the Wonder Truth
- In Awe of God's Wonder

FAITH 15 minutes • Small Group

An intentional conversation that helps kids see the wonder of God's story and how it connects to their own

- Word of Wonder Activity
- Discussion Questions for Elementary Kids and Preteens
- Small Group Prayer Time

IDENTITY 10 minutes • Large Group or Small Group

An interactive worship response activity that creates space for God to remind kids that they are known, loved, led, and their lives can tell of God's wonder

- Elementary Responding in Worship: Floating Hearts
- Preteen Responding in Worship: Imaginative Prayer
- Blessing Your Kids

Wonder@HomeTM

Designed for families to engage in the wonder of God together at home. This resource includes a video, worship playlists, activities, and more!

INVITATION

We invite you to pause, listen, and shift your gaze toward the Father ...

LESSON AT A GLANCE

WONDER TRUTH: Jesus Is the Son of God

SCRIPTURE: Matthew 14

WORD OF WONDER: Job 36:26a

It was irrational. The disciples had no mental framework for what they were seeing. Yet there He was—Jesus, walking atop the wind-tossed waters. It's no wonder they assumed the figure before them was a ghost. It's no wonder they were terrified.

Read Matthew 14:22–36 slowly. What do you notice about Jesus? When do you think the disciples became fearful? Would you have become fearful when you spotted someone walking on the water, or would you have also felt fear—the kind that mingles with awe and leaves you without words—as Jesus stepped into the boat and the wind died down?

Until this point, the disciples had no mental framework for understanding the fullness of who Jesus is. So, when they watched Him walk calmly on the waves, they were terrified. And the only rational conclusion they could draw was that this Jesus truly must be the Son of God.

Spend a few minutes quietly reflecting on Jesus. Imagine His face looking at you as He steps into the boat. What is it about Jesus that leaves you in awe? What is it about Jesus that makes you say with His disciples, “Truly you are the Son of God” (Matthew 14:33 NIV)?

—Sharron Jackson

Ministry Volunteer and Curriculum Developer

Wonder Ink Development Team

DID YOU KNOW?

FOUNDATION BUILDING BLOCKS

WHO?

In this passage, the disciples refer to Jesus as the “Son of God” for the first time. In Exodus 4:22, God refers to Israel as “my firstborn son” (NIV), but this title used for Jesus is more formal, designating His deity.

WHAT?

Once again, Jesus shows His power over a storm, this time by walking calmly on top of the water rather than speaking to tame the waters. For the disciples, this establishes their understanding of Jesus as the Son of God, who has power over the sea.

WHERE?

Jesus sent the disciples ahead on the boat, going to the other side of the Sea of Galilee. They were headed in the direction of Capernaum and Bethsaida and far from shore when the waves began pounding the boat. Jesus walked on the lake to meet them there.

WHEN?

Jesus walked on water immediately after He fed the 5,000, and just previous to that, His friend and relative John the Baptist was killed at the command of Herod Antipas. These events took place about midway through Jesus’ three-year ministry.

CONNECTING TO GOD'S BIG STORY:

While it's common to focus on Peter's actions, the most amazing thing about this story is Jesus' walking on water. The disciples had witnessed Jesus heal people, cast out demons, and feed 5,000 people. But it was seeing Him walk on water that prompted them to conclude, “You really are the Son of God!” (Matthew 14:33).

LESSON 5 ELEMENTARY & PRETEEN

Large Group or Small Group

Spark curiosity and get kids thinking about the wonder of God.

LESSON AT A GLANCE

WONDER TRUTH: Jesus Is the Son of God

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Series Bumper and Countdown Videos

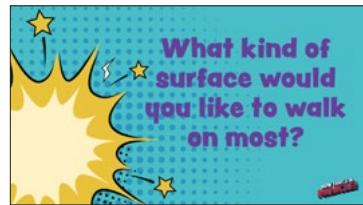
Choose between the [Now That's a Miracle! Series Bumper Video](#) and [Countdown Videos](#) to introduce the kids to the series.

Welcome Question

SUPPLIES: paper, coloring utensils, whiteboard (optional), dry-erase marker (optional)

Wonder Ink RESOURCES: Water Welcome Question Slide

Before kids arrive, display the Water Welcome Question Slide or write the following question on a whiteboard: "What kind of surface would you like to walk on most?" Set out paper and colored pencils.



As kids arrive ...

Welcome kids as they arrive by greeting them by name. Invite kids to think about the Welcome Question and read it aloud for younger kids. Encourage kids to respond by sharing with their neighbors or by drawing pictures. Help them get started by sharing a few ideas. For example, maybe they would like to walk on water, clouds, gelatin, lava, the surface of the moon, etc.

At your start time ...

Warmly greet the group and invite kids to find someone whose answer to the Welcome Question is similar to theirs. Call on several to share their pictures and answers to the Welcome Question: **What kind of surface would you like to walk on most?**

Today we're going to hear about a time when Jesus showed who He was by walking on something unexpected! But first, it's time to be curious!

Curiosity Questions

Ask the following “I’m curious” questions. Say “I’m curious ...” before each question and give kids a chance to think about and answer each one.

I’m curious ...

- **What do you think would have been the most amazing of Jesus’ miracles to see in person?**
- **If you saw Jesus face to face, how would you know it’s Him?**

Leader Tip: Some kids may not be very familiar with Jesus’ miracles. Give them ideas by telling them about a few of His miracles, such as calming a storm, feeding 5,000 people, or healing a man who was blind.

Elementary Multisensory Activity: Walk It Out!

SUPPLIES: eggs in cartons (2 cartons, 12 eggs per carton), balloons (2–3), cookie sheet, clear plastic containers (2, large enough to step into with both feet), sand or rocks, water, towels (4), plastic tarp or thick towel (optional)

Wonder Ink RESOURCES: Walk It Out! Slide, Water Wonder Truth Slide

Allergy Caution: Be aware of any food allergies or sensitivities among your kids and volunteers before doing this activity! Keep in mind eggs and latex are common allergens.

Before the activity, set up four stations at the front of the room:

Station 1: Set two full egg cartons open side by side. (Consider placing a plastic tarp or thick towel under the cartons to minimize cleanup in case eggs break.)

Station 2: Blow up 2–3 balloons 75 percent full of air. Put them under a cookie sheet.

Station 3: Partially fill a clear plastic container with sand or rocks.

Station 4: Partially fill a clear plastic container with water.

Leader Tip: When choosing volunteers to try walking on the various surfaces, select kids you think are mature and up for the challenge. They will need to take off their shoes and socks and follow instructions well. Have an adult volunteer help the kid step onto the eggs.

Make It Inclusive: Some kids may be uncomfortable touching different textures with their feet or able to easily take off their shoes. Consider allowing all the kids to take a turn touching the surfaces with their hands before anyone attempts to walk on them.

Gather the kids and display the Walk It Out! Slide. **There are four stations here. One has eggs, one has balloons, another has sand (or rocks), and the last one has water. I’m curious: Which of these do you think you could walk on?** Allow kids to share their thoughts freely. **Who would like to try?** Choose four kids to come to the front and take off their shoes and socks. Ask the first kid to step carefully onto the eggs with one foot on each carton. Her weight should be evenly distributed over all the eggs. Ask the next to step carefully onto the cookie sheet with both feet. If his weight is evenly distributed, the balloons shouldn’t pop.

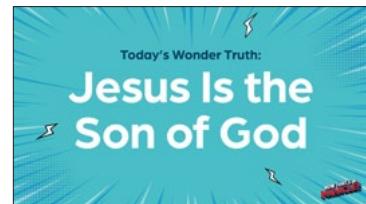
**Walk
It Out!**

Invite the third to step onto the rocks or sand, again making sure to evenly distribute her weight onto both feet. Last, ask the fourth to step carefully onto the water.

After a few seconds, ask all four kids to carefully step off their surface. Have towels available to wipe or dry their feet. Talk as a group about the activity:

- Did anything surprise you about this activity?
- Have you ever tried to walk on water at a pool or at the beach? What happened?

Walking on water is impossible, right? Well, in today's part of God's big story, we're going to hear about two people who did the impossible! Display the Water Wonder Truth Slide. Most importantly, we're going to learn what this shows us about Jesus. Our Wonder Truth today is **JESUS IS THE SON OF GOD**—and He really is!



Preteen Interactive Game: Possible or Impossible?

SUPPLIES: paper (2 sheets), permanent marker (prep only), tape

Wonder Ink RESOURCES: Possible or Impossible? Slides, Water Wonder Truth Slide

Ahead of time, write "Possible!" with a permanent marker in the center of a sheet of paper. On a second sheet of paper, write "Impossible!" Tape the two signs to walls on opposite ends of the room.

Gather the kids in the center of the room (between the "Possible!" and "Impossible!" signs). Display the first Possible or Impossible? Slide. **In this game, your job is to decide whether something is possible or impossible.** Point to the two signs. **We'll read a question on the screen, and if you think it can be done, you'll move to the "Possible!" sign.**

If you think it cannot be done, you'll move to the "Impossible!" sign.

After you've moved to one sign or the other, you'll pause to hear the answer. OK, let's get started!



Make It Inclusive: The more concrete thinkers in your group might view these facts from a different perspective and arrive at differing answers. That's OK! Allow them to share their answers and rationale freely. If any kids decide that all the facts are possible with God—that's great too!

Advance to Possible or Impossible? Slide 2. Read the following words from the slide or invite a kid to read the slide out loud: **Possible or Impossible? Can humans jump to the moon?** Invite kids to move to a sign; then reveal the answer: **Impossible. The moon is over 240,000 miles away. The official record for the highest a human has jumped from a standing position is 63.5 inches (161.3 centimeters).**



Gather kids back in the middle and advance to slide 3: **Possible or Impossible? Can a cat bark like a dog?** Invite kids to move to the "Possible!" or "Impossible!" sign. Then reveal the answer: **Impossible. Cats don't have the vocal chords needed to bark.**

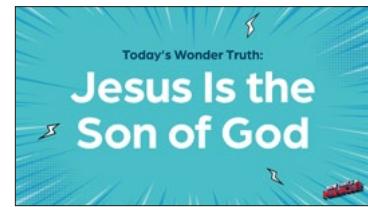
Gather kids in the center and advance to slide 4: **Possible or Impossible? Can plants grow without sunlight?** Invite kids to move to the "Possible!" or "Impossible!" sign. Then reveal the answer: **Possible. Plants can grow under artificial lights, like LED light. However, it's impossible for plants to grow without any light at all.**

Gather kids in the center and advance to slide 5: **Possible or Impossible? Can humans breathe underwater (without special equipment)?** Invite kids to move to the “Possible!” or “Impossible!” sign. Then reveal the answer: **Impossible. Humans don’t have gills!**

Gather kids back in the middle and advance to slide 6: **Possible or Impossible? Can a house float across the ocean?** Invite kids to move to the “Possible!” or “Impossible!” sign. Then reveal the answer: **Possible. People have turned houses into houseboats. It just takes some skilled engineering!**

Gather kids in the center and advance to slide 7: **Possible or Impossible? Can humans walk on water (without any equipment)?** Invite kids to move to the “Possible!” or “Impossible!” sign. Then reveal the answer: **Impossible. The human body is much denser than water. Our feet are not large enough, nor can we move them fast enough to keep us on the surface, and gravity pulls us down with more force than the water pulls us up.**

Gather kids back together. **Walking on water is impossible! Yet in today’s part of God’s big story, we’re going to hear about two people who did the impossible!** Display the Water Wonder Truth Slide. **Most importantly, we’re going to learn what this shows us about Jesus. Our Wonder Truth today is JESUS IS THE SON OF GOD—and He really is!**



Declaring God’s Wonder

Wonder Ink RESOURCES: Water Declaration Slide

Display the Water Declaration Slide. Read each line boldly and invite kids to repeat after you.

Thank You, God, that You are good! (Kids repeat.)

You made me on purpose, for a purpose. (Kids repeat.)

And when I follow Jesus, I am Your kid! (Kids repeat.)

You know me, love me, and lead me. (Kids repeat.)

You show us Your power, (Kids repeat.)

And we believe Jesus is the Son of God! (Kids repeat.)

My life can tell of Your wonder! (Kids repeat.)

Thank You, God, that You are good! (Repeat)
You made me on purpose, for a purpose. (Repeat)
And when I follow Jesus, I am Your kid! (Repeat)
You know me, love me, and lead me. (Repeat)
You show us Your power, (Repeat)
And we believe Jesus is the Son of God! (Repeat)
My life can tell of Your wonder! (Repeat)

LESSON 5 ELEMENTARY & PRETEEN

Large Group

Guide kids into knowing God, exploring His big story, and marveling at His wonder.

LESSON AT A GLANCE

WONDER TRUTH: Jesus Is the Son of God

SCRIPTURE: Matthew 14

WORD OF WONDER: Job 36:26a

Prayer of Invitation

Lead kids in a prayer of invitation before entering into worship and God's big story: **God, thank You for loving us and for always being with us. Please show us Your power today. We invite Your Holy Spirit to help us understand Your Word better so we can recognize that Jesus is Your Son. In Jesus' name, Amen.**

Worship

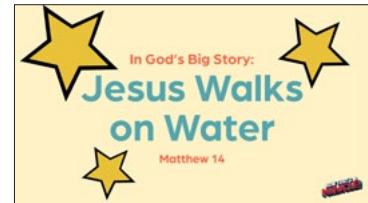
Wonder Ink RESOURCES: songs from the [Now That's a Miracle! Elementary Spotify playlist](#)

Today we'll hear about something amazing Jesus did that showed His disciples—and us—that He really is the Son of God! Let's worship Jesus now! Play songs from the [Now That's a Miracle! Elementary Spotify playlist](#) and encourage the kids to sing and dance as they praise God.

God's Big Story

Hear It, Watch It, Experience It!

This lesson includes three opportunities for your kids to enter the story—each one reinforces the others! **HEAR** it read directly from the Bible. **WATCH** it in a video. **EXPERIENCE** it through the live script.



SUPPLIES: Bibles (1 per kid)

Wonder Ink RESOURCES: Water Title Slide; [Jesus Walks on Water God's Big Story Video](#)

Display the Water Title Slide. Tell kids that today's part of God's big story comes straight from God's Word, the Bible. Remind kids that the stories about Jesus recorded in the four Gospels—Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John—really happened, no matter how surprising they seem! Help kids find Matthew 14.

Let's start by reading part of God's big story directly from the Bible. Afterward, we'll watch and experience more of the story!

Read Matthew 14:22–36 and pause at key words to let kids say the next word aloud. Then do one or both of the following:

- Use the following Jesus Walks on Water Experience It! Script
- View the [Jesus Walks on Water God's Big Story Video](#)

LESSON 5 JESUS WALKS ON WATER EXPERIENCE IT! SCRIPT

Encourage kids to spread out and find a seat. Invite them to listen carefully to the story so they can be ready to help you tell it!

It had been a long day for Jesus and His disciples—His 12 closest followers. After hearing that His relative, John the Baptist, had been killed, Jesus had wanted to be alone. But a crowd had gathered around Him, and He had compassion on them and healed the sick among them. When evening came, the people were hungry so Jesus had fed them miraculously with just five small loaves of bread and two fish.

Nighttime was now approaching quickly so Jesus sent His disciples in a boat across a big lake called the Sea of Galilee. Then He sent the crowd away and climbed up a mountainside to a quiet, private place.

This next part of the story gets a little more intense. There are a lot of actions and emotions in the story, and I'd like your help telling the story! Let's stand up and express what we think the people in the story may have been feeling and doing. When I say, "3 ... 2 ... 1," you'll choose a pose that shows us what the people in the story are doing and feeling. Then when I say, "Freeze!" you'll keep that pose in place. I'll keep telling the story, but when I say, "Unfreeze!" you need to listen carefully so you can change your position to a different pose that shows us what the people in the story are doing and feeling in that moment. I'll walk around to make sure everyone is staying frozen!

Here we go ... Jesus was finally alone, and He prayed into the night. 3 ... 2 ... 1 ... Freeze! Encourage kids to freeze in place. Walk among them as you continue the story.

The disciples' boat was now far away from the shore. It was windy out on the lake, and big waves crashed against the side of the boat.

Unfreeze! Find a new pose in 3 ... 2 ... 1 ... Freeze! Pause as kids move into a new pose.

Just before sunrise, Jesus went to join the disciples. He walked on the water to reach their boat! When they saw Him walking on the lake, they were frightened—no one had ever seen anything like that before! The disciples thought Jesus was a ghost so they let out a panicked cry!

Unfreeze! Time to find a new pose, and remember, the disciples were afraid! 3 ... 2 ... 1 ... Freeze! Pause as kids shift poses.

Immediately, Jesus spoke to them and said, "Be brave! It is I. Don't be afraid" (Matthew 14:27).

Jesus' friend, Peter, questioned whether it really was Jesus. Peter asked Jesus to call him onto the lake with Him. This way, Peter could be sure it really was Jesus and that Jesus really was walking on water!

"Come," Jesus told him. So Peter stepped over the side of the boat and onto the water.

Unfreeze! Peter is walking on the water! What do you think he looked like in that moment? 3 ... 2 ... 1 ... Freeze! Pause for kids to pose.

Peter began to walk toward Jesus. Peter noticed the strong wind, and he once again got scared. Peter started to sink. He cried out, “Lord! Save me!” (Matthew 14:30).

Unfreeze again! Peter is sinking! 3 ... 2 ... 1 ... Freeze! Pause for kids to shift poses.

Instantly, Jesus grabbed Peter’s hand and rescued him. In fear, Peter’s faith had wavered. “Why did you doubt me?” Jesus asked him (Matthew 14:31). Then Jesus and Peter climbed into the boat, and the wind stopped immediately.

Everyone on the boat was in awe of what they had just seen.

Unfreeze! What do you think the disciples on the boat looked like after watching all this happen?

Ready? 3 ... 2 ... 1 ... Freeze! Pause as kids move into a new pose.

The disciples worshiped Jesus saying, “You really are the Son of God!” (Matthew 14:33).

When Jesus and His disciples got to the other side of the lake, they arrived at a place called Gennesaret (GEN-uh-sar-et). The people there recognized Jesus and spread the word to others about His arrival. Again, large crowds gathered. People brought their sick friends to Jesus. And again, Jesus healed the sick.

Unfreeze! Great job! Let’s have a seat. Give kids time to sit down.

Over and over, Jesus does the seemingly impossible! He feeds large crowds and heals sick people and walks on water! Each amazing thing Jesus does points to His power over creation and His power and authority as God’s Son. That is a miracle—an amazing sign that God is at work. Jesus is the Son of God!

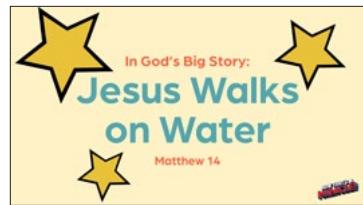
Connecting the Wonder Truth

Wonder Ink RESOURCES: Water Wonder Truth Slide

Display the Water Wonder Truth Slide. Our Wonder Truth today is **JESUS IS THE SON OF GOD**. Where did you see our Wonder Truth in the story? Allow kids to answer freely.

It’s incredible that Peter walked toward Jesus on the water, but the most amazing thing about this story is that Jesus walked on water!

The disciples had witnessed Jesus heal people, cast out demons, and feed 5,000 people. But it was seeing Him walk on water that prompted them to say, “You really are the Son of God!” (Matthew 14:33).



In Awe of God’s Wonder

Spend a few moments allowing kids to think about the wonder of God’s story.

Wow! What an incredible story! What would it have been like to see Jesus walking to you on the water? Give kids time to think and share.

By the end of this passage, the disciples knew that Jesus really is the Son of God. What do you think caused them realize this? Give kids time to think and answer.

LESSON 5 ELEMENTARY & PRETEEN

Small Group

Help kids see the wonder of God's story and how it connects to their own story.

LESSON AT A GLANCE

WONDER TRUTH: Jesus Is the Son of God

SCRIPTURE: Matthew 14

WORD OF WONDER: Job 36:26a

Word of Wonder Activity

WORD OF WONDER

How great is God—beyond our understanding!

—Job 36:26a (NIV)

How great God is! We'll never completely understand him.

—Job 36:26a (NIV)

SUPPLIES: Bible, scissors (prep only), tape, stopwatch (optional, 1 per small group)

Wonder Ink RESOURCES: Walk on the Word Sheet NIV or NIV (1 per small group), Word of Wonder Slide (optional), [Elementary Word of Wonder Video](#) (optional)

Ahead of time, print the Walk on the Word Sheet NIV or NIV for each small group. Cut the strips apart. Before the activity, spread the Walk on the Word strips on the floor in order, hopscotch style, with enough space between each strip for kids to hop to it. Secure the strips to the floor with tape. (Prepare a verse set for each small group.)

Today in God's big story, we learned that Jesus walked on water! He really is the Son of God who does amazing miracles! Let's declare how

amazing God is by saying our Word of Wonder together. Open your Bible to Job 36:26a. If possible, display the Word of Wonder Slide or watch the [Elementary Word of Wonder Video](#). Invite kids to read Job 36:26a several times together.

Let's take turns hopping on each section of the Word of Wonder in the order of the verse. Say the word as you land on it. We can see how quickly everyone can get through the verse. If you have a stopwatch, consider timing how long it takes for everyone to get through the verse. Then challenge kids to see if they can do it faster in a second round! To make the activity more challenging for preteens, leave more space between each section of the verse and challenge kids to do certain movements to get from strip to strip, such as jump backward, frog-hop on all fours, or jump with their eyes closed.



Make It Inclusive: For kids who may find hopping too difficult, invite them to jump with two feet or to walk from sheet to sheet, taking large steps between each.

Elementary Questions

- **What did Jesus do after He sent the crowd away?** (He went up a mountain to a quiet place and prayed.)
- **How did Jesus get to His disciples when they were on the lake in a boat?** (He walked on the water!)
- **What happened when Peter stepped out of the boat? What happened when Peter noticed the wind and got scared?** (Peter walked on water. He started to sink when he noticed the wind and got scared.)
- **When have you been scared? When you look back at it now, where was Jesus when you were scared?** (Note: Assure kids that when we follow Jesus, He is always with us through the Holy Spirit.)
- **What do all of Jesus' miracles show us?** (Possible answers: Jesus is powerful, Jesus is loving, Jesus is God's Son.)
- **Jesus is God's Son, and He is powerful! Think about a hard or scary situation in your life. How can knowing that God's Son, Jesus, is with you change how you think and act in that situation?**

Every one of us feels scared sometimes. As followers of Jesus, we can remember that the same Jesus who walks on water loves us and is with us! Jesus is the Son of God, and He is ready to help us with whatever we're going through. Let's talk with Him in prayer now!

Preteen Questions

- **What did Jesus do after He sent the crowd away?** (He went up a mountain to a quiet place and prayed.)
- **How did Jesus get to His disciples when they were on the lake in a boat? How did His disciples respond when they saw Jesus walking on the lake?** (Jesus walked on the water! The disciples were frightened and thought He was a ghost, so they cried out.)
- **What did Peter ask Jesus to do? What happened next?** (Peter asked Jesus to call him onto the lake. Jesus told Peter to "Come," and Peter stepped out of the boat and began walking toward Jesus. Then Peter noticed the wind, got scared, and began to sink. Jesus grabbed Peter's hand and saved him.)
- **When have you been scared? Is it ever hard to remember that Jesus is with you and is more powerful than your situation? Why do you think that is?** (Note: Some kids may share aloud, but others may want to simply think about their answers silently.)
- **Jesus is God's Son, and He is powerful! How can knowing that affect the way you live?**

Every one of us feels scared sometimes. As followers of Jesus, we can remember that the same Jesus who walks on water loves us and is with us! Jesus is the Son of God, and He is ready to help us with whatever we're going through. Let's talk with Him in prayer now!

Small Group Prayer Time

Invite kids to share any prayer requests and praises they have. Ask for two volunteers to pray aloud for each person in the group. Then invite everyone who would like to praise Jesus aloud to take turns declaring, "Jesus is the Son of God, and He loves me!"

LESSON 5 ELEMENTARY & PRETEEN

Large Group or Small Group

Create space for God to remind kids they are known, loved, led, and their lives can tell of God's wonder.

LESSON AT A GLANCE

WONDER TRUTH: Jesus Is the Son of God

SCRIPTURE: Matthew 14

WORD OF WONDER: Job 36:26a

Elementary Responding in Worship: Floating Hearts

SUPPLIES: cups (1 per 4–6 kids), water, glass plates or pans with edges (1 per 4–6 kids), dry-erase markers, paper towels

Wonder Ink RESOURCES: Floating Hearts Slide, [Now That's a Miracle! Elementary Spotify playlist](#)

Ahead of time, fill cups with water (one per 4-6 kids).

Cue music from the [Now That's a Miracle! Elementary Spotify playlist](#) to play quietly in the background throughout the activity. Display the Floating Hearts Slide and gather the kids together.

Jesus spent a lot of time with His friends, the disciples, while He was on earth. And He did a lot of miracles—amazing signs that God is at work! Still, it took a while for the disciples to truly understand that Jesus is the Son of God.

In today's part of God's big story, Jesus did an awesome thing on the water. How did Jesus show His power in this story? Invite kids to respond.

Yes! Jesus walked on the water! Can any of you walk on water? Allow kids to respond. No matter how hard we try, we can never do this. This act of walking on water is another reminder of just how powerful Jesus is. He has this power because He is the Son of God. What does this mean to you? How can knowing this help you? Invite kids to thoughtfully respond.

Jesus has amazing power and can do anything! Let's do an activity to remind us that Jesus is always with us and can do the impossible—like walking on water!

Help kids form small groups of 4–6 (or keep everyone together if your group is already small). Give each group a glass plate/pan, a dry-erase marker, a cup of water, and paper towels for cleanup. Walk the groups through these steps:



1. Invite each kid to draw a heart on the center of their group's glass plate or pan with the marker. It's best if the shape is drawn in one motion (without lifting the marker and without coloring in the shape). (Be ready to help kids who struggle with drawing or holding a marker.)
2. Ask a leader or older kid to slowly and carefully pour water from the cup onto the plate/pan to cover each of the drawings.
3. Encourage kids to wait and see what happens to the drawings. If nothing happens, gently shake the plate/pan. The hearts should rise to the top of the water and float on top of the water.

What do you see on top of the water? Allow kids to respond.

Jesus is powerful, and He is the Son of God! But there's even more to the story than that. Jesus loves you, and Jesus loves me. The hearts in the pan can remind us of that! And just as Jesus, the Son of God, loved Peter and was with him in a very scary situation, He loves you and is always with you.



Preteen Responding in Worship: Imaginative Prayer

SUPPLIES: note cards (1 per kid), writing utensils (1 per kid)

Wonder Ink RESOURCES: Imaginative Prayer Slide

Gather kids and display the Imaginative Prayer Slide. **Jesus spent a lot of time with His friends, the disciples, while He was on earth. And He did a lot of miracles—amazing signs that God is at work! Still, it took a while for the disciples to truly understand that Jesus is the Son of God.**



How many of you like to imagine or picture things in your mind? Allow kids to respond. **One of the ways that we can pray and ask God for understanding is through the practice of imaginative prayer. How many of you have ever heard of it?** Allow kids to respond. **Imaginative Prayer is imagining ourselves in the story as a form of prayer. So, here's what we're going to do. We're going to hear a part of God's big story again, but this time, we're going to imagine ourselves in the story.**

Let's get comfortable and close our eyes. Pause for kids to get comfortable. **Come, Holy Spirit. We open our imaginations to You.**

Nighttime was now approaching quickly so Jesus sent His disciples in a boat across a big lake called the Sea of Galilee. Then He sent the crowd away and climbed up a mountainside to a quiet, private place. Jesus was finally alone, and He prayed into the night.

Imagine that you're on the boat. The boat is now far away from the shore. It's dark, and Jesus is not with you. What do you notice around you? Pause for five seconds.

You feel the wind on your face, and the waves are crashing against the boat. What are you feeling right now? Pause for five seconds.

You've been on the boat for a while now. The sun is about to start rising. You see something—someone—in the distance. It's a person—walking on the water! Who do you see? Pause for five seconds.

The other disciples are saying that it must be a ghost. You hear their panicked cries. Now how do you feel? What do you notice on the disciples' faces? Pause for five seconds.

The person is getting closer. You hear Him speak: "Be brave! It is I. Don't be afraid" (Matthew 14:27). **How are you feeling? Relieved? Frightened? Excited?** Pause for five seconds. **How is He doing this? What are you thinking now?** Pause for 10 seconds.

Then you hear Peter's voice. He is questioning if this is Jesus. Are you wondering the same thing? Pause for five seconds.

Jesus calls out to Peter to come. What expression do you see on Peter's face? Do you want to join him? Pause for five seconds.

Peter steps out of the boat. There is a strong wind, and you feel the boat jerk. Then you hear Peter's cry: "Lord! Save me!" (Matthew 14:30). **You see Jesus grab Peter's hand and pull him out of the water. They get into the boat, and the wind immediately stops. Who is this man?** Pause for five seconds.

You look around and see the look of amazement on the other disciples' faces. What expression is on your face? Pause for five seconds. **Then you see the disciples worshiping Jesus and saying, "You really are the Son of God!"** (Matthew 14:33). **What are you doing? How are you worshiping Jesus?** Pause for five seconds.

Now open your eyes. What was that like for you? Allow kids to respond. Give each kid a note card and a writing utensil. Invite them to write what they experienced through this prayer. **How did you experience Jesus as the Son of God in this story?** Allow time for kids to respond through writing or drawing.

Jesus, the Son of God, loves you and is always with you. May you continue to imagine being with Jesus, knowing that He is powerful.

Blessing Your Kids

Wonder Ink RESOURCES: Water Blessing Slide

Display the Water Blessing Slide. Speak this blessing over your kids, as a group or as individuals. If you bless kids individually, insert each name into the blessing.

Blessing: Jesus truly is the God of miracles! May you always remember that Jesus, the Son of God, loves you and is with you!

BLESSING

Jesus truly is the God of miracles! May you always remember that Jesus, the Son of God, loves you and is with you!