

SMALL GROUP

TODAY'S WONDER TRUTH: JESUS WALKS ON WATER



WORD OF WONDER:

How great God is! We'll never completely understand him.
- Job 36:26a

GOD'S BIG STORY:

Jesus Is the Son of God
(Matthew 14)

GOD'S BIG STORY 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?

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

- 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?

Curiosity Activity: Walk it Out!

- 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.
 - 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! 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!

Word of Wonder Activity

- 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. 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.

Responding in Worship: Floating Hearts

- 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.)
- 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.
- 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.**

SMALL GROUP PRAYER

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!

Invite kids to join you in a circle to spend time talking to Jesus. Ask whether anyone has a question, something they would like to share with Jesus, or a prayer request. Give each kid a chance to participate, then close in prayer, remembering to thank Jesus for loving us!