

# On Top of the Sea

**Bible:** On Top of the Sea (Peter Walks on Water) • *Matthew 14:22-33*

**Bottom Line:** Stay focused on Jesus.

**Memory Verse:** “Being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus.” *Philippians 1:6, NIV*

**Life App:** Confidence—Living like you believe what God says is true

**Basic Truth:** I can trust God no matter what.

## **Social: Setting the Tone for the Experience (9:00, 10:15, 11:30)**

**9:00 & 11:30**

### **Wind and Waves**

- One straw for each child
- 6x3-inch ocean-like wave out of blue tissue paper for each child

**10:15**

### **Early Arriver**

- No supplies needed

## **Bible: Communicating God’s Truth in Engaging Ways (9:15, 10:30, 11:45)**

- Bible Presentation in Large Group

## **Groups: Creating a Safe Place to Connect (9:40, 10:55, 12:10)**

**9:00 & 11:30**

### **Stay Focused**

- Blue painter’s tape
- Masking tape

**10:15**

### **Piece of Pie**

- “Focus Charts”
- Markers
- Bibles

## **Prayer (9:50, 11:05, 12:20)**

- No supplies needed

## **Dismiss (10:00, 11:15, 12:30)**

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## **Social: Providing Time for Fun Interaction (Small Groups, 15 minutes)**

Welcome kids and spend time engaging in conversation and catching up. Get ready to experience today’s Bible Truth.

*Before kids arrive, take a few moments to pray for them. Ask God to help kids know what distracts them and to recognize, in the moment, when they’re being distracted. Pray that God would guide your conversations today and help the group come up with tangible ways to stay focused on Jesus.*

**9:00 & 11:30**

### **Wind and Waves**

**What You Need:** Straws, blue tissue paper “waves”

#### **What You Do:**

- Give each child a straw and a tissue paper “wave.”
- Ask everyone to stand in a line facing the same direction.
- At your signal, tell kids to place the tissue paper on the tip of their straw and blow it as high in the air as they can.
- Tell them to handle their waves carefully so they don’t tear or crumple but stay as flat as possible.
- Look for the wave that goes the highest. Then play again to see if anyone can blow their wave even higher.
- If you have extra time, play a relay game to see who can move their wave from one end of the room by using their straws to blow the tissue paper.

#### **What You Say:**

“Have you ever seen waves on a lake or in the ocean? (*Pause.*) Wind makes waves on the water. If the wind is strong, the waves go higher. **[Transition] You made your paper waves go high in the air, but in our Bible Truth today we will hear about some waves that were even higher than yours. Let’s go!**”

Lead your group to the Large Group area.

**10:15****Early Arriver Idea**

**What You Need:** Ono supplies needed

**What You Do:**

- Ask kids to pair up.
- Tell kids to stare at each other for 10 seconds and then turn back-to-back.
- See if they can tell you (without looking back) what color their partner's eyes are.
- Switch partners and play again, asking different questions each time.
  - What color is your partner's hair?
  - What kind of shoes is your partner wearing?
  - Is your partner wearing socks?
  - How many buttons did you see on your partner's clothes?
  - Is your partner's hair long or short?
  - Is your partner wearing a belt?
  - Is your partner shorter or taller than you?
  - What color are your partner's eyes?
  - What colors is your partner wearing?
  - Is your partner wearing open or closed-toed shoes? (You may need to explain this concept.)

**What You Say:**

"Wow, you had to really focus on what your partner looked like to do well in this game. In today's Bible Truth we are going to hear about how important focus is when we want to follow Jesus."

Lead your group to the Large Group area.

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## Bible: Communicating God’s Truth in Engaging Ways (Large Group, 25 minutes)

### GETTING READY

#### 1. Opener/Closer

##### What You Need:

- Host
- Other pre-selected adult volunteer
- Table
- Items/costumes to use for distraction
- Prop box containing:
  - Three baseball caps labeled #1, #2, and #3 (or you could use three different types of caps instead)
  - One baseball (or other small, lightweight ball)

#### 2. Bible Truth

##### What You Need:

- Bible
- Table (can be the same one as the Opener)
- Prop box containing:
  - Two large, clear containers (ideally with lids) filled with water
  - Lots of salt
  - Three uncooked eggs (brown eggs will show up better)
  - Towel

#### 3. Worship

##### What You Need:

- Power Praise Team

##### Music and Sound Effects (SFX):

- “Live Loud”
- “God is For Us”
- “We are One”

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## **Bible: Communicating God’s Truth in Engaging Ways (Large Group, 25 minutes)**

Engage kids’ hearts through a dynamic and interactive Bible Truth, worship, and prayer experience in a Large Group setting.

**CG: 10 Second count down**

**CG: AMPED Theme Slide**

*Host enters, carrying the prop box, and sets it down on the table.*

### **Opener**

**HOST:** “Hey, everyone! Welcome back to [your environment’s name]. We’ve been having an incredible summer discovering together what it means to live FULLY ALIVE. If there’s one thing I’ve learned, it’s that living fully alive takes a lot of confidence!

“What IS confidence?”

**CG: Confidence Slide**

**“Confidence is living like you believe what God says is true.**

“I get really AMPED when I think about how each of our lives could change if we lived with that kind of confidence. The truth is, we’re all a work in progress, and the more confidence we have in what God has planned for us, the more we can live fully alive!

“Check out what our verse says this month.

**CG: Memory Verse Slide**

*“Being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus (Philippians 1:6 NIV).*

“How cool is it that God has a big plan for our lives? And not only that, but He will also help us finish it. He will help us live a life that will change the world around us. Talk about an amazing promise from God!

“Remembering what God has promised keeps our focus on what is true. I’ve got a game today that will

also require some focus. Who's ready to play 'Extreme Cap Shuffle'?

*Pull out the baseball caps and baseball.*

"You might have seen something like this at a baseball game. I'll put this baseball under one of these caps, and then I'll shuffle them around. You need to pay close attention to what I'm doing so you can keep track of the baseball. When the music stops, you'll need to guess which cap has the baseball.

*Place all three caps on the table, and put the baseball under one of the caps. Slowly start to shuffle the caps around and then get faster and faster.*

**SFX:** "Jump" by Van Halen (be ready to lower the volume when the volunteer interrupts)

*Adult volunteer enters, at the back or the side of the room, to distract the kids. Host continues shuffling the caps the entire time.*

**VOLUNTEER:** "Hey, [Host's name]!"

**HOST:** "Oh, hey! How's it going?"

**VOLUNTEER:** "Just fine. I'm feeling AMPED. See you later!"

*Volunteer exits.*

*Host keeps shuffling the caps a few seconds longer.*

**SFX:** Pause music

**HOST:** "Okay, who thinks the baseball is under cap number one? (Let kids respond.) Number two? (Let kids respond.) Number three? (Let kids respond.)

*Lift up the cap with the ball under it.*

"That was great! Let's play another round and see how you do.

*Play two more rounds the same way as the first, but amp up the distractions with the adult volunteer and your prop closet. (See notes above in "What You Do.")*

"You did awesome! I know it was hard to keep your focus on the baseball when there were so many crazy things happening around you, but you did a great job. Now let's put our listening ears on and hear what [Historyteller's Name] has to tell us about focus from the Bible."

*Historyteller enters as Host exits. Before you begin the lesson, make sure the prop box containing the water containers, eggs, and towel is close to the table.*

**SETTING UP THE BIBLE TRUTH**

**HISTORYTELLER:** “The Bible Truth I have for you today comes from the book of Matthew. (*Hold up Bible.*) The book is called Matthew because it’s written by—you guessed it—Matthew.

“Our Bible Truth today picks up just after Jesus had fed a crowd of over 5,000 people. He did it with just a few pieces of bread and fish from one boy’s lunch! As you can imagine, Peter and the other disciples were all amped up after having seen Jesus perform this amazing miracle.”

**JESUS SPENDS TIME ALONE WITH GOD**

**HISTORYTELLER:** “But Jesus needed some time alone. They were standing by the Sea of Galilee, so Jesus told His disciples to get into a boat and cross the sea ahead of Him. He would catch up with them later. Then Jesus also sent the crowd of people away.

“After He sent everyone away, Jesus went up on a nearby mountain by Himself to pray alone.

“Imagine for a minute that you were on the boat with the disciples at night crossing a huge lake. This wasn’t an easy cruise. It was dark, and the wind was blowing against them.”

**THE STORM AND “GHOST”**

**HISTORYTELLER:** “As Jesus prayed, the boat with the disciples got further and further away. The wind picked up and began pounding waves against the boat.

“Jesus went out to meet the disciples where their boat was sitting on the water, being pounded by the wind and waves. But you might be thinking: Where did He get a boat, since the disciples took it? Well, Jesus walked on the water!

*Walk behind the table. Pick up the two containers filled with water and the towel and set them on the table. Hold up the “J” egg so the kids can see it, and then place it in the pre-salted water container. It should float.*

“Now, it’s pretty cool that this egg is floating, but of course, that’s nothing compared to seeing a man out walking on the water, right? What would YOU think if you saw someone walking on the water? (*Pause to let them respond.*) Yeah, I’d be scared out of my mind! Matthew says that the disciples saw Jesus walking on the water and were TERRIFIED. They thought He was a ghost!

“But right away, Jesus calmed their fears. He shouted out to them and told them it was Him and not to be afraid.”

**PETER WALKS AND SINKS**

**HISTORYTELLER:** “Peter was in awe. Listen to what He called out to Jesus.

*Open the Bible to Matthew 14:28-29a and read.*

*“Lord, is it you?” Peter asked. “If it is, tell me to come to you on the water.” “Come,” Jesus said (Matthew 14:28-29a NIV).*

“Well, when Jesus is walking on water and He tells you to come to Him, you do that, right? So Peter

stepped out of the boat, and he started walking on the water toward Jesus! Wow!

*Hold up the “P” egg so the kids can see it, and then place it in the pre-salted water (the same container as the “J” egg).*

“Imagine being Peter in that moment—in the middle of that huge lake, in the dark, WALKING on the surface of the water! And remember, the wind was still blowing ferociously. When Peter saw the wind and waves, he took his eyes off Jesus . . . and he began to sink.

*Take the “P” egg out of the pre-salted water and place it in the non-salted water, where it will sink.*

“Peter called out to Jesus: *Lord! Save me!* (Matthew 14:30 NIV). And, of course, Jesus did. Here’s what happened.

*Open the Bible to Matthew 14:31 and read.*

*“Right away Jesus reached out his hand and caught him. “Your faith is so small!” he said. “Why did you doubt me?” (Matthew 14:31 NIV).*

*Remove both eggs from the water and place them gently on the towel.*

### **WRAPPING UP THE BIBLE TRUTH**

**HISTORYTELLER:** “Jesus and Peter both climbed into the boat. When they did, the wind died down. All of the disciples on the boat began to worship Jesus. They realized He really was the Son of God!

“I think Peter probably realized something else that day, too—that nothing matters more than staying focused on Jesus. When Peter took his eyes off Jesus, he immediately began to sink.

“The same thing can happen to you and me when we don’t keep our eyes on Jesus. We won’t literally sink in the sea like Peter did, but we can begin to sink into our fears and worries and doubts when we focus on anything other than Jesus.

*Hold up the “ME” egg.*

“There are lots of things that can distract us from Him. We might feel sad or angry because we have a fight with a friend. We might feel like we’re not good enough or smart enough to do something. We might feel scared if someone we love is sick. We might feel stressed out or worried about the future.

“What can happen when we focus on these things and not on Jesus?”

*Hold up the “ME” egg so the kids can see it. Then place it in the non-salted water, where it will sink.*

“Just like Peter, we might find ourselves sinking. We might sink into worry, anger, or fear.

“But if JESUS is our focus, then we can be strong and confident even when we go through something tough or scary. We can keep walking on the water with Him.

*Hold up the “J” and “ME” eggs so the kids can see them.  
Then place them in the salted water, where they’ll float.*

“That doesn’t mean the hard times won’t come, but it DOES mean that we’ll have Jesus with us to carry us through. So remember this, and you’ll always be ready.

**CG: Bottom Line Slide**

**[Bottom Line] “Stay focused on Jesus.**

“It can be hard to stay focused on Him when the wind is blowing and the waves are crashing around us. We need God’s help to do it. Let’s pray and ask God to help us.”

### Pray

**HISTORYTELLER:** “Dear God, thank You for sending Jesus—not just to save us from our sins, but also to hold us up and carry us through whatever we might face in life. We can get distracted by so many things that we take our focus off of You. Help us to stay focused on You through whatever storms might come our way. We love You, and we ask these things in Jesus’ name, amen.”

“If you have an offering with you today, raise your hand and we will bring the bucket over to you.”

“Now, up on your feet and get Amped! It’s time for some praise and worship with our Power Praise team!”

*Power Praise team enters as Historyteller exits.*

### Worship

**SFX: “Live Loud”**

**SFX: “God Is For Us”**

**SFX: “We Are One”**

*Power Praise team exits as Host enters.*

### Closer

**HOST:** “Life is FULL of distractions, isn’t it? It’s hard to concentrate on your homework when your little brother turns on the TV. It’s hard to focus at dance practice when you’re so hungry that your stomach is going (*make some growling noises*). It’s hard to play ‘Extreme Cap Shuffle’ when (*reference whatever distractions happened in the Opener*).

“If you believe that Jesus is the Son of God—that He came to earth to die for your sins—then you should keep your eyes on Him. But if we’re honest, sometimes we get distracted by the things that happen in life. Sometimes good things happen, and we forget to talk to Him and thank Him. Sometimes tough things happen, and we get distracted because we feel worried, angry, or afraid. We forget to stay

focused on Him.

“So how DO you stay focused on Jesus? You can talk to Him when things are good OR when you’re going through something tough. You can read about what He said and did in the Bible. And with the help of the Holy Spirit, you can do what He said to do.

“Whatever you do, don’t give up. When life tries to distract you, keep your eyes on Jesus, and remember that He’s with you ALWAYS. That’s why the one thing to remember today is this.

**CG: Bottom Line Slide**

**[Bottom Line] “Stay focused on Jesus. Say that with me.”**

**HOST and KIDS: [Bottom Line] “Stay focused on Jesus.”**

**HOST:** “If you do, then you can live with true confidence—even when the wind and waves come at you. Now let’s head to Small Group and talk about that some more.”

*Dismiss children to their Small Groups.*

**CG: Small Group Slide**

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**Basic Truth:** I can trust God no matter what.

## **Groups: Creating a Safe Place to Connect (10 minutes)**

Create a safe place to connect and learn how the Bible Truth applies to real life experiences, through interactive activities and discussion questions.

**9:00 & 11:30**

**Stay Focused**

**What You Need:** Blue painter’s tape, masking tape

**What You Do:**

- Create three six-foot lines of tape about five feet apart from each other.
- Use the blue painter’s tape for the middle line (water) and the white/cream colored masking tape for the outside lines (boats).
- Choose one kid to begin the game as “Peter” and encourage him to stand at one of the ends of the tape (so he is looking at the lines vertically.)
- Instruct the rest of the group to stand on one of the “boats,” facing the water.
- Explain that you will be standing at the opposite end of the blue line from where Peter is.
- Peter’s goal is to cross the blue line to where you are while maintaining eye contact with you without stepping off the blue line.
- The rest of the group will be trying to distract Peter by walking in front of or behind him, but they cannot touch him.
- If Peter “sinks” (breaks eye contact with you), he must go back to the boat with the other kids and a new Peter can have a turn.
- Allow each kid a chance to be Peter.

**What You Say:**

“Who knew you all could walk on water? I learn something new about you every week. You know, I really do think Peter was trying to stay focused on Jesus in our Bible Truth today. Can you imagine all of the things going through his mind as Jesus asked him to come out to him on the water? What do you think he was thinking about? (*Allow for responses. Peter was probably scared and freaking out a bit.*) I’m sure he was thinking of all of those things! Listen, I know Jesus doesn’t call us to walk on the water every day, but He does call us to follow him. I also know that there are many things in our lives that can distract us from this calling. What kinds of things can keep us from focusing on Jesus? (*Let kids respond with things like: video games and TV, playing with friends, forgetting to spend time with Him, etc.*) Remember that no matter what you have going on, nothing is more important than to **[Bottom Line] stay focused on Jesus.**”

**10:15****Piece of Pie****What You Need:** “Focus Charts” activity page, markers, Bibles**What You Do:**

- Help your group to look up Philippians 1:16 together.
- Encourage them to write the memory verse in the circle on their pie chart.
- Explain that the pie pieces on the chart represent the different things that take up their time, such as: homework, sports, music lessons, school, video games, time on their tablet or game device, hanging out with friends, etc.
- Practice the verse in a game in which kids echo back short phrases of the verse as you say them.
- Tell them that you will look at one kid at a time.
- That person must echo back the words you say and not blink until you look at someone else.
- The person you look at next will begin the echo while trying not to blink.
- Each time you start the verse over, change the way kids must focus. Instead of not blinking, have them:
  - Imitate the tone or pitch of your voice
  - Mirror your movement as you speak
  - Use the same facial expression (fish face, squinty eyes, wide eyes)
  - Follow a familiar tune such as “Happy Birthday”

**What You Say:**

“Our memory verse this month says that God will complete the good work He started in us. This means that He has plans for you and me that He wants to accomplish. What are the dreams you have for yourself? Like what do you want to be when you grow up or what things are you excited about doing next year at school? (*Encourage each kid to share.*) Those are wonderful ideas! You are big dreamers. I can’t wait to see the plans God has for you unfold. Whatever we are trying to accomplish, it’s always a good idea to **[Bottom Line] stay focused on Jesus.**”

**All Service Times****Pray and Dismiss (10 minutes)**

**What You Need:** No supplies needed

**What You Do:**

- Ask each kid to think about one thing they could spend five minutes without this week.
- Provide examples such as: time on the tablet/gaming device, video games, TV, etc.
- Make sure they understand that they can't spend five minutes less on things their parents ask them to do, such as: soccer, violin practice, cleaning their room, etc.
- When each kid has chosen their activity, encourage them to review their memory verse, read the Bible Truth, or pray during those five minutes every day this week.
- Let a few kids share which activity they've chosen and what they think they'll do to focus on Jesus during those five minutes.

**What You Say:**

"Dear God, we know that our time is filled with many things. Some are really good for us, and others are just for fun. Whatever we are doing this week, I pray that we can always **[Bottom Line] stay focused on Jesus**. Help us to learn how to put You first in everything we do so that we may bring You glory with our lives! We love You. In Jesus' name, amen."

As adults arrive to pick up, prompt them to share what thing they will spend five minutes less on to help them **[Bottom Line] stay focused on Jesus**.