

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

Mirror Me

- Hand mirror
- “Mirror Me” Activity Page; one for each small group

10:15

Can’t Believe My Eyes

- “Can’t Believe My Eyes Optical Illusions” Activity Page; one for every two kids
- Drawing paper
- Pencils with erasers
- A few rulers

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

Focus Chart

- Game die
- “Focus Chart” Activity Page; one for each kid
- Markers

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

9:00 & 11:30

- No supplies needed

10:15

- Kids’ “Focus Charts” from the activities above

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

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

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

Mirror Me

What You Need: “Mirror Me” Activity Page

What You Do:

- Explain to your group that you're going to play “Simon Says,” but they're going to have to stay very focused on doing what you SAY, not what you do.
- Stand up with kids facing you.
- Do a practice round by saying “Simon Says,” and then do one of the motions on the Activity Page.
- Make sure to narrate what you're doing, and specify which arm or leg (left or right) goes where.
- For example: if you make an L shape with your left arm up and right arm out, say, “Simon Says L shape, left arm up, right arm out.”
 - The trick is that kids will want to do the opposite, mirroring what you're doing instead of doing the same thing.
- After a couple practice rounds, play a “real” round, where kids will be out if they do a mirrored action instead of the correct, instructed action.
- Remind kids that the goal is focus, not necessarily quick, fast actions.
- Play until you have a winner, and then play again, giving other kids a chance to win.

What You Say:

“That was really fun but also really difficult to remember what we were supposed to do! You all did an amazing job at focusing on my moves and repeating back the right thing. **[Transition] Today in Large Group, we are going to learn about something super important we should always stay focused on!**”

Lead your group to the Large Group area.

10:15**Can't Believe My Eyes**

What You Need: "Can't Believe My Eyes Optical Illusions" Activity Pages, drawing paper, pencils with erasers, and rulers

What You Do:

- Pass out the Activity pages, and let kids figure out the pictures together in pairs.
- Then hand out drawing paper and pencils.
- Encourage kids to try to create their own optical illusions, like the hand illusion on the Activity Page.
- A classic illusion is for kids to trace their hands, from the wrists up, on the paper. (To see more cool images of this final product, do an internet search for "3-D hand illusion.")
- Then, kids should draw straight horizontal lines across the page, but skip the area of their handprint.
- When the lines are drawn, instruct kids to draw lines across the hand print, but those lines should be curved slightly.
- When all the lines are finished, it will look like a 3-D hand on the lined paper.

CONSIDER:

Older kids may have done the 3-D hand drawing before. Let them show you how it's done! Or challenge them to try to make a different shape, like a circle or cube, in the middle of their paper.

What You Say:

"These optical illusions work because our brains and eyes focus on one part of the picture. What we focus on can change what we see. **[Transition] Let's go hear about someone who needed to keep his focus.**"

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Basic Truth: I can trust God no matter what.

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

GETTING READY

1. Opener/Closer

What You Need:

- Host
- Two small groups
- Two inflatable mallets
- Two Whack-a-Mole “cages”
- Host’s phone (for the timer)
- Bible

2. Bible Truth

What You Need:

- Historyteller
- Bible
- Table
- 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 is on stage, welcoming the kids as they enter.

Opener

HOST: “Welcome, everyone! Are you excited to be here? Are you AMPED? I know I am! All summer we’ve been talking about what it means to live with confidence.

CG: Confidence Slide

“Confidence is living like you believe what God says is true. When you really trust God, that changes the way you live. You **[Basic Truth] make wise choices.** You **[Basic Truth] treat others the way you want to be treated.** You can face even tough things because you know God is with you.

“That’s good to remember, because sometimes life is full of problems. You can’t find your shoes. Your bike chain slips off. Your cat had an accident on your bed. Life’s a mess! It seems like problems pop up all over the place. But when you remember what God says is true, you can smack those problems right back down. Like this!

Pick up one of the inflatable mallets and bop three or four Small Group Leaders on the head.

“It’s like Whack-a-Mole! Has anyone ever played Whack-a-Mole before? Great! But honestly, those games are too small. We need to kick it up a notch. And it wouldn’t be *[your environment’s name]* if we didn’t AMP things up! Let’s play life-sized ‘Super-Duper Extreme Whack-a-Mole’!

“We’ll need two small groups up here to give it a try—including your Leaders.

Bring up two small groups.

“[Leader’s name] and [Leader’s name] will be the ones doing the bopping—using these!

Hand an inflatable mallet to each Leader.

Move the Leaders in place behind their groups' "cages" during this next part. Make sure the Leaders are facing toward the audience.

"[First Leader's name]'s group, you'll be kneeling down in here. (Point to the first cage.) You'll randomly stick your heads up and down, over and over again . . . while [First Leader's name] tries to whack you with the mallet. It only counts if he hits you while your head is all the way up.

"[Second Leader's name]'s group, you'll be kneeling down in here. (Point to the other cage.) You'll stick your heads up and down while [Second Leader's name] tries to whack you.

"I'll be out here in the audience watching, and I'll declare a winner at the end. I'll put 30 seconds on the clock (set a timer on your phone) . . . and GO!

SFX: High-energy music (for 30 seconds)

Call out the play-by-play as you watch. There's no way you'll be able to keep track of points, so just try to notice which team is doing a better job overall so you can declare a winner at the end.

"Whoa—that was intense! Both groups did a great job, but [Leader's name], you really laid the smack down. The victory is yours!

Dismiss both groups to their seats.

"That's pretty cool that they got to be inside the game, right? We're continuing that trend with the Bible Truth. Let's check it out."

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)

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**Focus Chart****What You Need:** “Focus Chart” Activity Pages, markers, die**What You Do:**

- Encourage your group to sit in a circle.
- Provide every kid with an Activity Page and a marker.
- Encourage kids to leave the circle in the middle blank for now.
- Ask them to think of the different things in their life that take up their time.
- Prompt them with ideas such as: homework, sports, music lessons, school, video games, time on their tablet or game device, hanging out with friends, etc.
- Encourage them to choose six of those things and write each one in a piece of their pie chart. Instruct kids to number each pie piece as well.
- Demonstrate how to roll the die and land on a number.
- Explain that whichever number they roll, they will point to that number on their pie chart and talk about whichever activity is written down.
- Let kids take turns rolling the die and sharing which activity is written in that particular pie piece.
- For each kid who shares, ask them how they could focus on Jesus during that activity.
- To help get them started, provide them an example from your own life, such as: “If I rolled a three and my number three was ‘cleaning my house,’ I could get distracted because I could end up spending too much time cleaning and not leave any time to read my Bible and pray. BUT I could also put my headphones in and listen to the Bible while I’m cleaning and stay focused on Jesus.”
- Make sure kids understand that not every single activity they do throughout their day has to be focused on Jesus. But help them walk away with some good ideas for how they can focus on Jesus during everyday things.
- Help your group to look up Philippians 1:16 together.
- Encourage them to write the memory verse in the circle on their pie chart.

What You Say:

“You each came up with some incredible examples of how to stay focused on Jesus during the things that take up time in your life! I’m also proud that you recognize how even the good things can sometimes distract us from being close to Him. **[Make It Personal]** **(Share a personal story about how something good in your life distracted you from Jesus and how you had to learn to put Him first.)** No matter what is filling our time, we always have a chance to **[Bottom Line]** **stay focused on Jesus.** This week, I want you to use this pie chart to remind yourself of all of the times when you can put Him first!”

All Service Times**Pray and Dismiss (10 minutes)****What You Need:****9:00 & 11:30**

No supplies needed

10:15

Kids' "Focus Charts" from previous activities

What You Do:**9:00 & 11:30**

- Ask each kid to find one thing on their chart that 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.

10:15

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- 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 (All Service Times):

"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**.