

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

Early Arriver

- No supplies needed

10:15

Wind and Waves

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

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

In the Boat, Out of the Boat

- Painter’s tape

10:15

Focus Lenses

- “Focus Lenses” Activity Page; one set of glasses for each kid
- Colored cellophane lenses
- Clear tape
- Coloring materials

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

- Plastic cord, yam, or string; cut into 15-inch lengths; one for each kid
- Plastic pony beads; five for each kid

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

Early Arriver Idea

What You Need: No 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.

10:15**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!”**

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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:

- Historyteller
- Bible

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.

“One of my favorite ways to feel fully alive is to praise and worship God. Let’s do that together right now. Please help me call the Power Praise team in.”

Power Praise team enters as Host joins the audience.

Worship

SFX: “Live Loud”

SFX: “God Is For Us”

SFX: “We Are One”

Host retakes the stage as Power Praise exits.

HISTORYTELLER: “Thank you Power Praise. Hey, you know what? 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.”

Host exits. Historyteller enters.

SETTING UP THE BIBLE TRUTH

HISTORYTELLER: “Hey, everyone! Today I want to tell you about something amazing that Jesus did, and I need your help! Can you make our sound effects for today? *(Pause for response.)* Great! I’ll let you know when we need a sound, okay?”

“Now, Jesus did a LOT of amazing things. He performed a lot of miracles. He healed blind people and made it so they could see again. He cured people of all kinds of diseases. He even brought people back to life!

“There was one time when Jesus was teaching a group of over 5,000 people. Everyone was hungry, but no one wanted to leave. Everyone wanted Jesus to continue to teach them. Jesus took five loaves of bread and two fish, He thanked God for the meal, and He fed ALL those people. I bet I could eat five loaves and two fish by myself! Jesus performed a miracle and multiplied the food so that everyone was full. They even had leftovers!

“Over 5,000 people eating dinner together—I bet that was a loud meal. Everyone was happy and eating and celebrating. Let’s pretend we’re the people eating that day. Can you make some eating sounds?”

Invite the kids to make eating noises as you demonstrate as well.

“Good job! Be sure to wipe your face when you’re done.

Act like you have a napkin and dab the corners of your mouth.

“The disciples who followed Jesus were amazed. Even though they only had a tiny amount of food, Jesus came through in a big way!”

JESUS SENDS EVERYONE AWAY

HISTORYTELLER: “After everyone had eaten, Jesus told the 12 disciples to take a boat across the Sea of Galilee without Him. Jesus wanted to stay behind so He could pray and talk to God alone. The disciples did what Jesus told them to do. They got in a boat and began their journey across the water.

“After the disciples had left, Jesus told the 5,000-plus people to go home. People walking can be loud, especially if they’re leaving in a big group like they were that day. People shuffle their feet and murmur. Can you make that sound?”

Shuffle your feet and murmur along with the kids.

“After everyone was gone, Jesus went up the mountainside to pray. Up on the mountain, it was very different from being with the crowd. The crowd was loud and busy. Up on the mountain by himself, it was quiet and peaceful. Maybe there were crickets. What does a cricket sound like?”

Pause for the kids to make cricket noises.

“Maybe there was a quiet wind. How would you make a quiet wind sound?”

Pause for the kids to make wind sounds.

“You know those frogs that only come out at night? Maybe there were some of those with Jesus on the mountain too. What do frogs sound like?”

Pause for the kids to make frog noises.

“Let’s put all that together to see what it might have sounded like on the mountain with the crickets, the frogs, and the quiet wind.

Invite the kids to make the different noises all at once.

“Jesus prayed on the mountainside. He took the time to focus on God.”

DISCIPLES IN THE BOAT

HISTORYTELLER: “As Jesus prayed, the disciples sailed across the lake. The waves got bigger and the wind got . . . windier.

“Let’s make it sound like a windstorm in here. First, let me hear some ferocious wind!”

Invite the kids to make wind sounds. After a moment, encourage them to get louder.

“What about the waves crashing against the boat? What sounds did the waves make?”

Invite the kids to make wave sounds.

“Good job, everyone. Let’s put those together and hear the wind AND the waves.

Invite the kids to make the wind and waves sounds. Demonstrate yourself by alternating between the two sounds.

“Shortly before sunrise, while it was still dark, Jesus went out to meet His friends. But He didn’t take a

boat. He walked on the water—just like it was dry ground! That might seem impossible, but it wasn't impossible for Jesus.

“As Jesus got closer to the disciples in the boat, the disciples saw Him, and they were terrified! They thought He was a ghost. When you're afraid, what noise do you make?”

Invite the kids to make the noise they make when they're scared.

“The disciples were big, strong fishermen. *(Talk in a deep voice.)* They probably sounded like this. What do you think they sounded like when they were afraid?”

Invite the kids to make the noise they think the disciples made when they were scared. Also “scream” in your best low voice to demonstrate.

“Jesus knew the disciples were afraid when they saw him. Right away Jesus called out to them, ‘Be brave! It is I. Don't be afraid’” (Matthew 14:27 NIV).

PETER LOSES FOCUS

HISTORYTELLER: “Peter was one of the disciples in the boat. He must have been afraid just like the others. But listen to what he said to Jesus.

Open the Bible to Matthew 14:28 and read.

“Lord, is it you?” Peter asked. “If it is, tell me to come to you on the water” (NIV).

“Jesus said, ‘Come.’ Peter climbed out of the boat, stepped out onto the water, and started walking on the water toward Jesus! Amazing!

“Do you think the other disciples were surprised? I bet they were! When I'm surprised I sound like *(make a surprised noise)*. Can you make a surprised noise?”

Invite the kids to make the noise they make when they're surprised.

“In the middle of the night—with the wind blowing and the waves crashing—Peter was out there walking on water toward Jesus!

“But then Peter got distracted. He lost confidence because he started to look at the wind and waves. Let's make those sounds again—really loud!

Invite the kids to make the wind and waves noises again.

“Peter was afraid because he looked away from Jesus. He focused on the scary wind instead, and he started to sink into the water! What do you think he said THEN?”

Invite the kids to yell.

“As Peter sunk into the water, he cried out to Jesus, ‘Lord! Save me!’ Right away Jesus reached out His hand and caught Peter.

Open the Bible to Matthew 14:31 and read.

“Your faith is so small!” [Jesus] said. “Why did you doubt me?” (NirV)

WRAPPING UP THE BIBLE TRUTH

HISTORYTELLER: “Jesus helped Peter climb back into the boat. And immediately, the wind died down. The sea became calm and quiet. All you could hear was the sound of the boat creaking. What do you think a creaky boat sounds like?”

Invite the kids to make creaking noises.

“After seeing all this, the disciples worshipped Jesus. They were confident that what Jesus said was true and He really was the Son of God. Let me hear you say, ‘WOO-HOO!’”

Invite the kids to cheer.

“NOTHING matters more than staying focused on Jesus. Peter learned that for sure! When he was focused on Jesus, he was full of confidence. He was brave enough to get out of the boat and walk on water! But when he was distracted and focused on the wind and waves instead, he lost confidence. He sank into the water.

CG: Bottom Line Slide

“Just like Peter, you and I need to **[Bottom Line] stay focused on Jesus**. We might not be able to SEE Jesus like Peter could. But we can stay focused on what we know is TRUE about Him. We can think about how much He loves us and how He’s always with us. Then we’ll have the confidence to be able to live the way He wants us to.

“Let’s pray and ask God to help us.”

Pray

HISTORYTELLER: “God, we want to stay focused on Jesus just like Peter did when he first climbed out of the boat. Help us to not get distracted by the things around us that make us worried or afraid. Help us to focus on You so we can stay confident and strong. Help us to remember how much You love us and to trust You in the middle of anything we might face. We love You, and we pray in Jesus’ name, amen.”

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

Historyteller exits as Host enters.

Closer

HOST: “It seems like it should be so easy for us to focus on Jesus. We know He loves us. We know He’ll never ever leave us. We know we should live the way He wants us to live. But sometimes things can happen that distract us and keep us from focusing on Him.

“Maybe when you’re playing a video game, you get really focused on winning. You don’t want to let someone else have a turn, so you might end up hurting their feelings instead of being kind. Maybe you get totally focused on how frustrated you are when you don’t get your way. Or maybe you get really focused on something going wrong—like if you’re worried about something that’s happening at home or at school. It’s like what happened to Peter when he looked at the wind and the waves. Our fears, cares, and worries can make us take our eyes off Jesus.

“Here’s the one thing we need to remember today.

CG: Bottom Line Slide

[Bottom Line] “**Stay focused on Jesus.** Let’s say that together.”

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

HOST: “There are lots of ways we can focus on Jesus. One way is to read our Bibles and think about Him. (*Hold up Bible.*) We can focus on Him by talking about Him with our friends. With the help of the Holy Spirit, we can obey what He says to do. We can talk to God and pray. And we can even ask God to help us focus on Jesus. Sometimes figuring out how to focus on Jesus takes some work, but your Small Group Leader is here to help.”

“You’ll talk more about that now.”

Dismiss children to their Small Groups.

CG: Small Group Slide

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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

In the Boat, Out of the Boat

What You Need: Painter’s tape

What You Do:

- Place a line of tape on the floor long enough for all of the kids to stand together on one side.
- Invite everyone to gather on the same side of the tape and then explain that when they stand in this area, they are IN THE BOAT.
- Ask kids to jump to the other side of the tape then tell them that area is OUT OF THE BOAT.
- Explain that when you tell them to go IN THE BOAT, they should move to one side of the line and if you tell them to go OUT OF THE BOAT, they should jump quickly to the other side.
- Warn them that you might try to fool them so they must listen well and focus carefully. (*Some of the tricks you can use are pointing to one side as you call out the opposite side, repeat the same side several times, increase the pace, or say the first part of the phrase and then stop abruptly.*)
- After the game, praise the kids for being good listeners and keeping their focus on what they were doing.
- Ask them to name some things Jesus wants kids their age to do. What does He NOT want them to do? See if they can tell you a few ways kids in kindergarten and first grade can learn about Jesus and how to follow Him.
- Explain that doing those things helps keep our focus on Jesus.

What You Say:

“When we do what the Bible tells us to do, we **[Bottom Line] stay focused on Jesus**. One of the best ways to find out what God wants you to do is to listen well to the Bible stories we tell at church. The people in your life who love God will help you know how to obey Him. Listen to them the way you did in our game. We can also **[Bottom Line] stay focused on Jesus** by asking any questions we have about Him and by doing our GodTime devotionals.”

10:15**Focus Lenses**

What You Need: “Focus Lenses” Activity Pages, colored cellophane “lenses”, clear tape, coloring materials

What You Do:

- Give each kid a pair of “Focus Lenses” and the squares of cellophane.
- Demonstrate how to tape the cellophane inside the frames so that, when the lenses are worn, you can see through the colored plastic.
- Let kids tape the cellophane and then color the frames of the glasses if desired.

What You Say:

“The colored plastic changes what you see. It can make you notice some things, like how bright the lights are. And it can cause you to not see other things, like the difference between gray and blue (*change based on the color effect of your specific cellophane colors*). What you focus on changes what you see. When you **[Bottom Line] stay focused on Jesus**, you see things differently. Instead of seeing a free day to play video games until your eyeballs dry out, you might see an opportunity to be kind and play with your younger sibling. What other things might you see differently when you **[Bottom Line] stay focused on Jesus?** (*Give kids a chance to say how focusing on Jesus might change how they see the new kid at school, a difficult teacher, a chore from their parents, etc.*)

[Make It Personal] (*Share a time when focusing on Jesus changed your perspective. Maybe you prayed about a stressful situation and found peace. Or perhaps you handled disappointment with grace instead of complaining. Invite kids to share any of their own stories like this, and point out the ways that you focused on Jesus in the midst of your own storm: prayer, Bible reading, talking with wise Jesus-following friends, etc.*)

All Service Times**Pray and Dismiss (10 minutes)****What You Need:** No supplies needed**What You Do:**

- Ask one of the children to stand in front of the group and show what we look like when we pray. (The child might kneel, raise his hands, fold his hands, close his eyes, look up, sit, lie down, or any number of postures.)
- Let the others mirror the child who is posing.
- Allow each child an opportunity to demonstrate a different prayer posture while the others imitate his pose.
- Tell the kids that we can pray anytime, anywhere, and in any position.
- Remind them Peter prayed for help when he started to sink while walking on the water. Invite them to show you how Peter might have looked as he called out to Jesus for help.

What You Say:

“Prayer is one of the best ways to **[Bottom Line] stay focused on Jesus**. Choose one of the prayer positions we mirrored earlier and then let’s pray together. *(Pause as everyone positions themselves for prayer.)*”

“Dear God, we are so glad that we can talk to You anytime, anywhere, and no matter what we’re doing. When we pray, we can stand, sit, kneel, lie down, or walk, and You hear all of our prayers. Help us to stay focused on You by talking to You often every day. In Jesus’ name, amen.”

As adults arrive to pick up challenge kids to tell them what they remember about the Bible Truth—without blinking.