

On Top of the Sea

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

Key Question: What distracts you from focusing on Jesus?

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: Providing Time for Fun Interaction (9:00, 10:15, 11:30)

9:00 & 11:30

Just for Fun

- No supplies needed

10:15

Get Your Head in the Game

- No supplies needed

Bible: Communicating God’s Truth in Engaging Ways (9:10, 10:25, 11:40)

- Bible Presentation in Large Group

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

9:00 & 11:30

Discussion Questions

- No supplies needed

10:15

Verse to Take with You

- “Focus First Cards” Activity Page; one set per Small Group
- Bibles
- Index cards

Prayer: Making it Personal (9:55, 11:10, 12:25)

- No supplies needed

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

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Social: Providing Time for Fun Interaction (Small Groups, 10 minutes)

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

Before kids arrive, pray that your kids’ ability to focus and stay distraction free would grow in your small group as well as in their walks with God. Take some time to pray for each student in your group by name, and ask that God would make Himself real to them today, whether they’re in group today or not. Pray that they would understand what it means to eliminate things in their lives that can be distractions.

9:00 & 11:30

Just for Fun

What You Need: No supplies needed

What You Do:

- **Pair** kids up.
- **Explain** that this activity requires kids to focus.
- For Round 1, **instruct** pairs to count 1-2-3 over and over, alternating who says the number. For example:
 - Kid #1: says 1
 - Kid #2: says 2
 - Kid #1: says 3
 - Kid #2: says 1 and continue for about 15 seconds or so
- For Round 2, **instruct** pairs to repeat the activity but kids clap instead of saying #1. For example:
 - Kid #1: claps
 - Kid #2: says 2
 - Kid #1: says 3
 - Kid #2: claps and continue until they get the hang of it
- For Round 3, **instruct** pairs to repeat the activity but now kids jump instead of saying #3. For example:
 - Kid #1: claps
 - Kid #2: says 2
 - Kid #1: jumps

- Kid #2: claps
- Kid #1: says 2
- Kid #2: jumps and continue for about 15 seconds or so
- **Ask:** What round was the hardest to keep track of the count? Why or why not?
- If you have extra time, **allow** kids to create their own movement and/or sound for #2 or even replace the clap and jump with something else for #1 and #3.

Lead your group to the Large Group area.

10:15

Get Your Head in the Game

What You Need: No supplies needed

What You Do:

- **Pair** kids up.
- **Explain** that kids will compete in a staring contest.
- The rules are:
 - You must stare at each other's eyes.
 - You can talk, crack jokes, or sing; however, you can't touch your partner.
 - The first person to blink, laugh, or look away loses.
- **Play** several rounds.

What You Say:

"You had to really focus to make sure you didn't blink or look away. *[Transition]* **Let's head to Large Group to hear a Bible Truth about someone who lost his focus, looked away, and ended up getting all wet.**"

Lead your group to the Large Group area.

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Bible: Communicating God’s Truth in Engaging Ways (Large Group, 30 minutes)

GETTING READY

1. Opener/Closer

What You Need:

- Host

2. Bible Truth

What You Need:

- Communicator
- Host
- Bible
- Kid volunteer
- Pitcher of water
- Two empty, sturdy water bottles such as a Nalgene
- Table
- Towel
- Large group script or “Notes”
- Jacket
- Duct tape

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, 30 minutes)

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

SFX: Play high-energy music as kids enter.

CG: AMPED Theme Slide

Host enters.

Welcome

Host has lots of energy as he or she welcomes everyone to The Base. Host is relatable and inviting. Host wears his or her favorite summer sportswear; such as, board shorts, tank top, or a theme appropriate t-shirt of their favorite extreme sport. Host discusses recent events: National Ice Cream Month, Independence Day, Wimbledon Championships, Tour de France, summer vacation, movie opening (Hotel Transylvania 3: Summer Vacation, Teen Titans Go To The Movies, etc.), a viral video on YouTube, etc. Host tells them how excited he or she is that they’re there and briefly runs through what they can expect. This is especially helpful for first-time guests to make them feel like they know what’s happening.

Host transitions to Worship.

HOST: “Hey, everybody! I love that we are all here together. Help me welcome the Power Praise team in this morning.”

WORSHIP

SFX: “Live Loud”

SFX: “God Is For Us”

SFX: “We Are One”

Power Praise team exits as Host retakes the stage. Host transitions to the opening game.

Opener

HOST: “You guys know what’s the worst? When I’m put in a BOX. When my creative juices aren’t allowed to FLOW. When I’m not allowed to express myself for the SUPER cool, extremely AMPED UP person that I am. Do you guys feel me? *(Pause for response.)* THANK you! Okay, dig this: I’ve been watching a bunch of cliff diving videos these past few days. This is one of my favorites right here . . .”

CG: Cliff diving clip

“Pretty crazy, right? I saw that video, and I figured, ‘Hey, this would be a pretty cool extreme sport to show to the guys back in *[Name of Environment]*!’ So I went to *[Name of Children’s Pastor]* and made an *extremely reasonable* request. All I asked was that we knock out that wall *(pointing)* and put in an eighty-foot-high cliff and fill the rest of the room with water so I could cliff dive into it! And you know what they said? Do you KNOW what they said?! They said, *(mockingly)* ‘That’s not in the budget!’ Can you believe that?! An eighty-foot cliff and several thousand gallons of water and it’s not in the budget! What’re they going to spend it on—GOLDFISH crackers?!”

HOST huffs and puffs a bit more.

“Well . . . *Pastor John* may not have had the foresight to budget for authentic cliff diving but he did make sure we had a great Bible truth for today. Let’s just move on to that I guess.”

Host exits as Communicator enters.

INTRODUCTION

COMMUNICATOR: “Uhm, well that was one warm welcome *[Host’s Name]*.”

“ so, what’s happening, everybody? I am amped to have all of you in *The Base*. Before we get started today, I need a little help with a project on this stage. It’s an easy task that shouldn’t take too long and is relatively painless. Do I have any willing volunteers?”

Communicator selects a kid to assist and brings them to the stage.

“Thank you so much! I really appreciate the help—all I’m going to need you to do is take this jug of water *(produce jug of water)* . . . and use it to fill these two water bottles *(produce two large, sturdy water bottles)*. Try your best not to make a mess, and I REALLY appreciate your help.”

Allow volunteer to start filling bottle.

“Okay, so like I was saying, today we’re talking about . . . oh, actually, I think I have the wrong notes here. *[Name of Volunteer]*, could you hold these for me while I go look for my notes for today?”

Communicator helps kid set down the water jug, put notes into their hand.

“If you could hold off on the water thing until I get back, I would appreciate it.”

Communicator steps backstage for a moment, leaving volunteer standing alone. Communicator returns.

“Oh, wouldn’t you know it, those ARE my notes for today! I guess I was just looking at the wrong page. Thanks for holding those *(taking notes back)*. You can get back to the water now, thanks again.”

Volunteer continues filling water containers.

“So anyway, today we’re going to—*(smacks lips)* you know what? My mouth is a little dry. I need something to wet my whistle. *[Name of Volunteer]*, I hate to interrupt, but could I snag some of that water really quick? Thank you so much.”

Communicator takes the water bottle and drinks all of it.

“Oh man, that hits the spot. You can get back to filling that bottle, thanks.”

Volunteer resumes filling up the bottles with water.

“Alright, today we’ll be diving deep into the world of . . . hey, is it cold in here to anyone else? I think *[Name of Volunteer]* looks a little chilly. *[Name of Volunteer]*, could you stop what you’re doing for just a second and put this coat on? I just feel bad; it’s so chilly in here, and I don’t want you to catch a cold. It’ll just take a second, and it’ll make me feel better.”

Communicator takes jug away, gives them a coat, and waits for them to put it on.

“Oh, thank you so much—you look nice and toasty. Could you go ahead and top off that water bottle though? Sure is taking you a while.”

Communicator allows the kid finish filling the water bottles.

“There we go! Let’s give *[Name of Volunteer]* a big hand! You can go back to your seat, and thank you again! Those water bottles will come in handy a little later.”

TENSION

COMMUNICATOR: “Before we continue, consider this question with me: have you ever felt distracted? This happens when it is difficult to complete a task because something or someone is screaming for your attention. *[Name of Volunteer]*, have you ever felt distracted . . . while filling up water bottles . . . while standing on this stage? *(Pause for response.)* Absolutely you have! What should have taken 30 seconds, took a couple of minutes because you had to hold some notes . . . and put on a jacket . . . in the middle of July . . . and pass me some water! Your simple task took more time because I was distracting you.”

“We all have days FILLED with distractions. Maybe you’re supposed to be studying for a big test you’ve got coming up, but you JUST got a new game for your Nintendo Switch and you’re DYING to play it. You hear it whispering your name. Maybe you’re supposed to be watching your little brother while your parents are away, but your favorite show just came on TV. Your mind can’t shake the idea of watching

it! Maybe you're supposed to be cleaning your closet but you stumbled upon your old Pokemon™ Card Collection that's just beckoning for some attention."

"Let's be honest: every single person in this room gets distracted by something or someone. When we get distracted, it's hard to focus on what's important. Today's Bible Truth is all about focusing on the right thing, and it comes to us from the book of Matthew."

TRUTH

COMMUNICATOR: "When Jesus was on Earth, He drew large crowds who were curious to hear what He'd say and see what He'd do. On the shores of the Sea of Galilee, the book of Matthew says 5,000 men gathered around Jesus—and that didn't include all the women and children who were there. Around supper, Jesus fed the large crowd with just a few loaves of bread and a couple of fish."

"After Jesus had finished speaking, Jesus told His disciples to get in a boat and sail ahead of Him across the Sea of Galilee. He didn't join them because He wanted to take some time alone to pray and talk to His Father. Jesus' friends piled into their boat, He sent the crowds away, and then He climbed up the mountainside to talk with God alone."

"For a while everything was—if you'll pardon the pun—smooth sailing. However, as the boat moved across the water and it got later and later in the night, the winds and waves began to pick up. The disciples were clinging to the boat in the rough waters when things took an EXTREME turn. A short distance away from the boat, the disciples spotted what looked like spooky figure walking toward them on the water. The Bible describes the scene like this, *(Open Bible and read Matthew 14:26) 'They saw him walking on the lake and were terrified. "It's a ghost!" they said. And they cried out in fear, (NirV).'* Literally, Jesus was walking on TOP of the water. They had no idea who or what was approaching the boat in the middle of the Sea of Galilee! But as the figure drew closer, they realized that it wasn't a ghost at all—it was their Friend and Teacher, Jesus, walking towards them on the water!"

"Jesus called out to them, 'Be brave. It is I!' Peter, who was on the boat, looked out at the figure and yelled, *(Open Bible and read Matthew 14:28) "'Lord, is it you? . . . If it is, tell me to come to you on the water, (NirV).'*" So Jesus told Peter to come onto the water. Peter didn't hesitate to go. He, too, walked on TOP of the water!"

HOST: *(From audience)* "I could do that!"

COMMUNICATOR: "What? Who said that?"

HOST: *(walking on stage)* "Me. I said I could do that. I'm not impressed."

COMMUNICATOR: "You're telling me you're not impressed that Peter literally walked on water?"

HOST: *[Name of Communicator]*, I've gone barefoot skiing on the lake being pulled by a boat at 40 miles per hour—just me and the water and my bare tootsies. Walking on water ain't nothing. In fact, I could walk on water right here, right now!"

COMMUNICATOR: "You can't be serious."

HOST: “I am! Anybody want to see me walk on water, right here and right now? *(Pause for response.)* Alright! Let’s do this then!”

Host grabs both water bottles from earlier and duct tapes them to the bottom of his/her shoes. Host proudly walks around on stage “walking on water.”

HOST: “BOOM! How do you like me now?! Walking on water!”

COMMUNICATOR: “You and I both know Peter didn’t claim to walk on water by duct taping water bottles to his feet! Get off this stage!”

HOST: “Alright, alright.”

Host carefully makes way backstage. Once offstage, Host fakes a loud thud, as if they have fallen.

HOST: *(Offstage)* “OW!”

COMMUNICATOR: “Sorry about that! Where was I? Oh yes—focused on Jesus, Peter got out of the boat and began walking towards Him on TOP of the water. However, the wind was going crazy blowing water and waves all over Peter. For just an instant, Peter’s gaze shifted from Jesus to the oncoming waves. In that moment, Peter plunged into the water with his arms flailing screaming out for help from Jesus. Immediately, Jesus reached out and saved Peter. Jesus walked with Peter to the boat to join the rest of the disciples, and they knew for certain that they were in the presence of the Son of God. They knew nothing mattered more than staying focused on Jesus.”

APPLICATION

COMMUNICATOR: “What I find interesting about this Bible Truth is what caused Peter to sink. When his attention was focused on Jesus, Peter had no issues strolling across the top of the water. After the strong waves and wind caught his eye, he shifted his focus off Jesus, and Peter sank.”

“Now, we’re not going to walk on water where waves and wind will cause us to sink. But as we’ve already stated, life is full of distractions taking our attention off what really matters. And Jesus is who really matters. If we believe in Jesus, our attention should be fixed on Him. This means we should learn what He tells us in God’s Word, and with the help of the Holy Spirit, we should try to live out what the Scriptures say.”

“This sounds easy enough, but it’s not. Sports are a great opportunity to demonstrate a Jesus-like attitude to everyone playing, but it’s easy to become distracted by desiring to win—especially winning at all costs, which can hurt friendships and what people think of us. A good night’s rest can be a great way to help you focus your attention on Jesus at church, but video games can be so distracting that you stay up all night playing and fall asleep during church. Sports and video games aren’t bad, but if you don’t make wise choices about them, they can distract your attention away from what’s most important.”

“Getting distracted is all too easy. Instead, we should try and focus our lives on Jesus. If you have trouble with this, pray. Ask God to help you stay focused. If you can carve out focused time every day to spend with Jesus, the dividends will be fantastic.”

LANDING

COMMUNICATOR: “Think about this as we head to small groups today . . .”

CG: Key Question Slide

“What distracts you from focusing on Jesus? What is it in your life that you might find getting in the way of your relationship with God? If you’re not sure, take the time to talk about it with your Small Group Leader or a trusted adult. I’m sure they’d love to help you figure out how you can focus your life on Jesus. Before we head to Small Group, let’s pray right now and ask Him for help.”

Communicator leads group in a prayer related to what they just heard then dismisses them to small group.

SFX: Play high-energy music as the kids exit.

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

Basic Truth: I can trust God no matter what.

Groups: Creating a Safe Place to Connect (Small Groups, 15 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

Discussion Questions

What You Need: No supplies needed

What You Do:

Ask:

- How do you recognize when you are being distracted? How do you recognize when you aren't focused on Jesus?
- What distracts you from focusing on Jesus? How can you get rid of these distractions or make them less of a distraction?
- Are there times when you feel like it's more difficult to stay focused on Jesus? When is it easy to be focused on Jesus?
- What does it look like to stay focused on Jesus? Are you literally thinking about him 24/7? How do you “do normal life” while also staying focused on Jesus?
- Why do we need to stay focused on Jesus? What's one thing that's better in your life when you're focused on Jesus?

10:15**Verse to Take with You**

What You Need: “Focus First Cards” from Activity Pages, Bibles, index cards

What You Do:

- **Shuffle** the “Focus First Cards” and lay them out facedown on the floor in a giant grid pattern.
- **Explain** to kids that it’s important to be focused to win this game. Encourage them to not get distracted.
- **Guide** kids to play a game of “Focus” with the cards.
 - Kids take turns flipping over two cards trying to match the verse reference with the verse.
 - **Encourage** kids to use the Bible to look up verse references they don’t know and get excited if/when they do know some of the verses!
 - Kids can use index cards as bookmarks.
 - To keep things moving quickly, kids get only one turn, even if they find a match.
 - The kid or team with the most matches wins.
- **Let** kids divvy up the cards with full verses printed on them.
- **Encourage** them to take home a verse they can think about this week. Tell them to put the verse in a place they will see it often, such as a bathroom mirror or bedside table.

All Service Times**Pray and Dismiss (5 minutes)**

What You Do: No supplies needed

- **Sit** in a circle.
- **Review** the ways remain focused on Jesus that your group talked about earlier.
- **Give** kids a moment to think about one of the ways they will practice this week to stay focused on Jesus.
- **Pass** around the glasses from the “Take a Snapshot” Activity.
- **Encourage** kids to put the glasses on and ask Jesus to help them stay focused on him by _____
- For example, lead the prayer with:
 - Jesus, I want to be focused on You. Help me to read my Bible every day this week.
(Pass the glasses to the kid sitting next to you)
- When the glasses return to you, close prayer time by thanking Jesus for always being there for us even when we get distracted.