

Focus: Trusting God

Materials:

- Cd: America's 25 Favorite Bible Songs
- Beginners Bible
- Bowl with Water
- Ping Pong Ball
- A metal spoon
- Piece of Foil (4-2 for each mass)
- Cd: 25 Sunday School Songs

Gathering (children find/sit on a carpet square)

Say: *Good Morning everyone, my name is _____. Last week we talked about one of Jesus' miracles. It was the feeding of the 5,000. This week we will hear about another miracle that Jesus performed. It shows us we need to trust Jesus to help us all the time, especially when we are in trouble.*

Opening Prayer

Together we make the Sign of the Cross (do in reverse so children can mirror).

Say: *Now let's put our hands together and bow our heads.*

Let us pray.

God our Creator, you are the source of all life.

Help us come to know you better each day.

In the name of Jesus Christ we pray.

Amen.

Amen.

Song/Movement

Rejoice in the Lord Always, track:2525, from America's 25 Favorite Bible Songs

Play music, encourage children to stretch or move to the music (clapping, stamp feet march in place to the beat), turn to each other and shake hands, saying hello, etc. Have children sit on their carpet squares when finished.

Rejoice in the Lord always.
And again I say rejoice. (2x)

Rejoice! Rejoice! And again I say
rejoice. (2x)
Repeat.

Alternate Creative Movement

Have kids form two equal lines facing each other, or a big circle. To the beat of the music have them take four steps toward each other and clap the hands of the child facing them (or their own), then take four steps back and clap their hands together. Repeat.

Memory Verse

Say: *Now let's take a moment together to learn a verse from the bible.*

Jesus said, "Do not be afraid."

Have the children repeat the verse after you a couple of times.

Say: *Jesus knew his disciples were confused and afraid, he wanted to make them feel better. We hear these words many times in the Bible. We should always remember that if we believe in Jesus we should not be afraid.*

Gospel Story

Say: *Today we are reading from the Gospel of Matthew.*

Have children make sign of the cross on their forehead, mouth and heart saying. *"Lord, open my mind, my lips and my heart so that I may learn it, speak it and love it."*

Read: The Beginners Bible, pp. 380-385, *Walking on Water*

After the reading say: *The Gospel of the Lord*

Children respond: *Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ*

Discussion Starters:

- *What happens to the disciples' boat?*
- *Why does Peter walk on the water?*
- *What happens when Peter gets frightened?*
- *How does Jesus help Peter?*

Reflection on Reading:

In today's gospel, the disciples go out to sea on a stormy night. The wind and the waves frighten them. Jesus comes toward the rocking boat. He calms the forces of the raging sea. Peter comes out of the boat and starts walking toward Jesus, but when the winds come he gets afraid and starts to sink. Jesus reaches out his hand and Peter grasps it. Sometimes we get frightened and lose faith. In today's passage Jesus shows us that he is ready to help us. In times of difficulty Jesus reaches out his hand to help us. When we experience difficulties we can ask Jesus to help us; this does not mean he will take our troubles away.

- *Who are the people that help calm the storms in your life?-parents, grandparents, brothers and sisters, teachers, friends*
- *How does Jesus help you? By teaching us to do as God wants us to do so that we can be loved by others and be safe.*
- *Why is it important to have faith in Jesus? Because Jesus loves us. He loves us all the time. There is nothing we can do that will make him love us less.*

Gospel Activity

Activity 1:

Act out the Gospel Story

Choose someone to be Jesus and Peter and have the other children be the disciples in the boat with Peter. Help the children visualize and imagine the gospel scene: the darkness of the night, the storm (waves, wind), the disciples in the boat being tossed about and their fear. The disciples frightened by the storm, failed to recognize Jesus walking on the water. When Peter got out of the boat and walked towards Jesus he was walking on the water. But, when he took his eyes off of Jesus, he began to sink. In the end and the calming of the storm, Peter and the disciples recognize Jesus and praise him.

When we forget to keep our eyes on Jesus and make good choices we can get into trouble like Peter did.

Activity 2:

As you can see, I have a bowl of water and several other things with me this morning. Some of the items that I have with me will float in water and some of them will sink. I am going to show you an item and ask you to vote as to whether you think it will float or sink. Then we will put it in the water to see if you were right or not. Are you ready?

Here is a ping pong ball. How many of you think it will float in the water? How many think it will sink? Let's try it and see. Great! Most of you were right. The ping pong ball is floating in the water.

Here is the second item. A metal spoon. How many of you think it will float? How many think it will sink? Well, let's try it and see. You were right again! It sank!

Here is another item. A piece of heavy duty foil. How many of you think it will float? How many think it will sink? Okay, let's see. You were right again! It floats!

Here is another piece of foil. It is exactly the same as the other one. (Wad it up into a ball.) Now how many of you think it will still float? How many think it will sink? Right again! It still floats.

Are you a floater or a sinker? Don't worry, I'm not going to throw you into a tub of water to find out, but I think we can find the answer in the Bible. In the story from the Gospel today, Jesus had finished feeding the five thousand, he told his disciples to get into their boat and go to the other side of the lake while he went up into the mountains to be alone and to pray.

As we heard, while the disciples were going to the other side of the lake in their boat, the wind came up and the water began to get rough. The disciples became afraid that their boat would sink and they would be drowned. Then they looked, and they saw Jesus coming toward them and he was walking on the water. When Peter saw Jesus, he became excited and he said to him, "Lord, if that's really you, let me walk to you on the water. Jesus called Peter to him.

Then Peter climbed over the side of the boat and started walking on the water to Jesus. Then he began to look around, he felt the strong winds and saw the waves and he became afraid and

started to sink. He cried out to Jesus, "Help, save me!" Jesus reached out his hand and saved Peter and he said to him, "Oh, you of little faith, why did you doubt?"

As long as Peter kept his eyes on Jesus, he was walking on the water, but when he took his eyes off of Jesus, he began to sink. As we go through life, there will be some storms. We will encounter some pretty rough water. As long as we keep our eyes upon Jesus and put our trust in him, we will be okay. But when we take our eyes off of Jesus and put our confidence in our own ability, we will surely sink!

Dear Jesus, when the storms of life come against us, help us to keep our eyes on you and to put our trust in you. Amen.

Complete the weekly bulletin as a group-let the children color them if there is extra time

Closing Prayer

(Children respond: "We Believe!")

Ask: *Do we believe in God, who loves us and always wants us to be happy?*

Do we believe in Jesus, who helps us when we are in trouble?

Do we believe in the Holy Spirit, who helps us find peace with God?

Sending Forth

Say: *Say a prayer this week asking the Holy Spirit to help us keep our eyes on Jesus and say a prayer to Jesus when we feel sad or are in trouble.*

Lining Up/Closing Song

Play "I have decided to follow Jesus" track 16 from 25 Sunday School Songs while children put away any materials and line up. Hand out weekly bulletins. Remind them it is important that they return to their family quietly so that we may all listen and pray together in church.