

Jesus Walks on Water

(Mark 6:45-52)

Pre-Session Warm Up

Do you ever get afraid? Sometimes we become so involved in thinking about our problems, we forget that God can help. Or, sometimes we look for help in the wrong places. Too often we look to ourselves. We think, "I can get myself out of this problem." That is never a good idea since Jesus says, "Without me you can do nothing." (John 15:5)

God knows how frightening your troubles can be and He has the power to solve every one of your problems.

Today we are going to learn how important it is to look to Jesus when we are in troubled times and to remember that He is with you and can help you.

Opening Prayer

Father, it's one thing to say that we know You are always with us and that You will always take care of us no matter what happens. But when we are in the middle of a fearsome time, it's hard for us to not be afraid. This morning, Lord, we want to learn to trust You, even when the situation around us looks hopeless. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.

Memory Verse

God is our refuge and strength, A very present help in trouble. Therefore, we will not fear. (Psalm 46:1-2a)

Lesson

The miracle of the feeding of the 5,000 had just happened and all the people were caught up in the excitement. Then Jesus commanded his disciples to go across the lake to a quiet place where they could rest.

Mark 6:45-46a

Immediately after this, Jesus insisted that his disciples get back into the boat and head across the lake to Bethsaida, while he sent the people home. (46) After telling everyone good-bye, he went up into the hills by himself to pray.

Spending time alone with God the Father was very important to Jesus. Every day He made a point of getting away to pray and listen to the Father speak to His heart.

If Jesus needed to spend time in prayer to the Father, how much more do we need to? Spending time with God in prayer equips us to meet life's challenges and struggles.

Mark 6:47

Late that night, the disciples were in their boat in the middle of the lake, and Jesus was alone on land.

After rowing for several hours, the disciples were only ½ way to the other side of the lake. Even though they were trying to obey Jesus, the rowing was hard. Jesus wasn't in their boat and they were struggling to be obedient. If we try to do God's will without Jesus in our boat (that is, without the power of the Holy Spirit), we will struggle, too.

[Remember our verse for today, Psalm 46:1-2a.]

Mark 6:48

He saw that they were in serious trouble, rowing hard and struggling against the wind and waves. About three o'clock in the morning Jesus came toward them, walking on the water. He intended to go past them,

Jesus saw the disciples straining at their oars trying to row to the other side of the lake. Jesus sees our struggles, too.

Why do you think Jesus waited so long before He helped them? He knows we learn many things by going through trials. That is how our faith grows.

Mark 6:48 says, “*Jesus came toward them, walking on the water.*”

Jesus could have commanded the storm to stop from the sea shore or from the top of the mountain. He could have just appeared to them in the boat instantly. Why did Jesus come to them walking on the water? He wanted them to know He was God and that He has complete authority over His creation.

Mark 6:48 then says, “*He intended to go past them.*”

Why did Jesus intend to pass by them? He wanted them to notice Him. Jesus wants us to seek after Him, too.

What do you think the disciples were doing at that time? They were in the middle of a violent storm; the waves were huge. They were scared. They were straining at rowing. They were probably bailing water out of the boat. They were busy trying to get to the other side of the lake. They were so busy trying to obey Jesus that they might not have seen Jesus coming to them walking on the water.

Sometimes we can be so busy serving Jesus that we don't see Him in the middle of our struggles. We get our eyes off Jesus and onto our problems and we forget that Jesus can help us.

[Remember our verse for today, Psalm 46:1-2a.]

Mark 6:49

but when they saw him walking on the water, they cried out in terror, thinking he was a ghost.

Why did it terrify them to see Jesus coming to them walking on the water? They didn't expect Him to come miraculously. They thought He was a ghost.

We should always expect Jesus to be with us. Jesus was looking for faith, but He found fear.

Mark 6:50

They were all terrified when they saw him. But Jesus spoke to them at once. “Don't be afraid,” he said. “Take courage! I am here!”

Jesus didn't let them stay afraid. He spoke to them and they knew His voice. John 10:4 says, “*The sheep follow Him because they know His voice.*” How do we know God's voice? By studying the bible.

Jesus speaks to us to calm our fears, too. He wants us to trust Him. When you are in a troublesome time, do you have faith that God will give you all you need to go through the trial?

[Remember our verse for today, Psalm 46:1-2a.]

Mark 6:51

Then he climbed into the boat, and the wind stopped. They were totally amazed,

What happened when Jesus got in the boat? What does the text say? The wind stopped!

When I let Jesus into my boat (that is, when I trust Jesus in the middle of a trial), He gives me peace.

Why were the disciples surprised that the wind stopped when Jesus got into their boat? They had never experienced a terrible storm like that to stop instantly.

Mark 6:52

for they still didn't understand the significance of the miracle of the loaves. Their hearts were too hard to take it in.

Why were their hearts hard? They didn't believe that Jesus was God and that He was all powerful and more than able to help them.

What do the loaves represent? (The word of God.) The disciples did not have complete faith in God's Word.

Conclusion

The Bible says we can expect to have troubles in our lives (John 16:33). At times those problems may seem to crash all around you, like waves in a storm. If you keep your mind focused on the difficulty, you become discouraged and want to give up. It's not easy to keep going through the hard times in your life. But as you look to God for help, that is, as you get in the boat with Jesus, He will calm the storms of your life. We need to stay in the boat with Jesus, too.

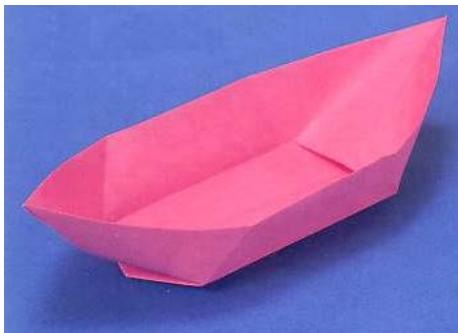
Closing Prayer

Thank You, Father, that You are with us always. Help us to think about You and Your great power instead of worrying about our own problems. Help me to trust You to take care of my problems. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.

Learning Activities

Craft Corner

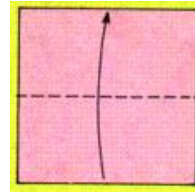
Paper Boats



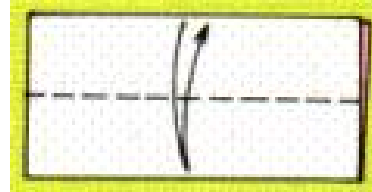
Procedure:

Begin with a square sheet of paper.

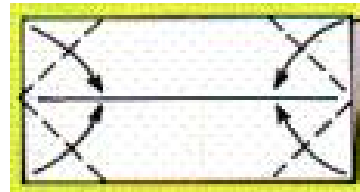
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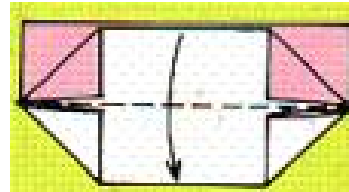
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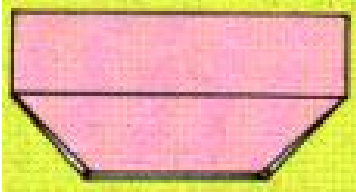
3. Fold in the corners as shown:



4. Fold half of the paper over:



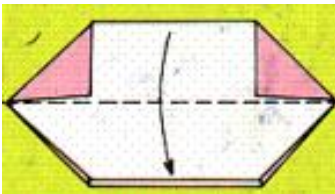
5. Turn it over:



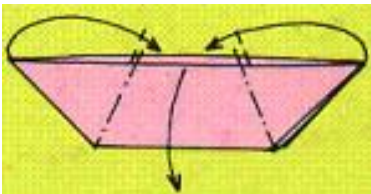
6. Fold down the corners:



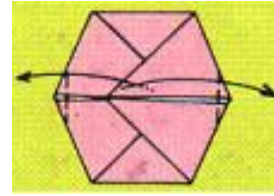
7. Fold in half:



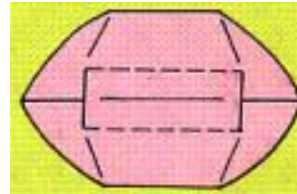
8. Make creases, then open from the top and flatten:



9. Fold ends to middle and make creases. Open again, keeping creases in place:



10. Crease the sides as shown to help the boat stand up:



Game Center

Use the following review questions in a game of your choice:

1. What did Jesus command the disciples to do? (Get in the boat and go to the other side of the lake.)
2. What did Jesus do as soon as the boat load of disciples sailed away? (He went up on a hill to pray.)
3. Why is it important for us to spend a quiet time every day praying to God? (It equips us to meet life's challenges and struggles.)
4. When the disciples were about four miles out to sea, what happened? (A fierce storm arose.)
5. What would you have thought if you saw someone coming to you walking on the water in the middle of a raging, stormy sea? How did the disciples react? (They thought it was a ghost!)
6. Why did Jesus wait so long to come to them? (He wanted to test their faith)

7. Why would have Jesus passed them by? (To catch their attention)
8. What do you think the disciples were doing in the boat? (Rowing hard, bailing water. They were busy.)
9. Why did the disciples cry out? (They were afraid; they thought they saw a ghost.)
10. Why were they afraid of Jesus? (They weren't expecting Him to come miraculously.)
11. What happened when Jesus got in the boat? (The winds calmed down.)
12. Are troubles in life a sign that we've been bad? (No! The Bible says we can expect troubles in our lives. God uses them to make us into the kind of person He wants us to be.)
13. What important lesson did you learn this morning? (If we keep our mind focused on our difficulties, we become discouraged and want to give up. But as we look to God for help, He will calm the storms of our lives.)