

February 6, 2013

Jesus Walks on Water

Mark 6:45-51

LESSON FOCUS

“God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.” Psalm 46:1

Jesus Walks on Water

Immediately Jesus made the disciples get into the boat and go on ahead of Him to the other side, while He dismissed the crowd. After He had dismissed them, He went up on a mountainside by Himself to pray. When evening came He was there alone but the boat was already a considerable distance from land, buffeted by the waves because the wind was against it. During the 4th watch of the night Jesus went out to them, walking on the lake. When the disciples saw Him walking on the lake they were terrified. “It’s ghost they said, and cried out in fear. But Jesus immediately said to them, “Take courage. It is I. Don’t be afraid.” (*Matt 14:22-27*)

This story also appears also in *Mark 6:45-51* and *John 6:15-21* and as in the feeding of the 5000 lots of additional insight can be gained by comparing all three accounts. All agree that this event followed immediately on the heels of the miraculous feeding, and that the disciples set out across the lake without Jesus, while He went up the mountainside alone to pray.

Jesus came to that remote area to be alone with His disciples to grieve the death of John the Baptist and hear the reports of their recent missionary tour. But their presence was discovered and they were followed by a huge group of people (*Matt 14:13-14* & *Mark 6:30*). Putting aside His own needs, He ministered to the crowd, fed and dismissed them, and was now free to be alone. Perhaps sending the disciples out without Him was even an effort to divert the crowd and get some “face time” with His Father.

John the Baptist was a relative (*Luke 1:36*) and had just been beheaded by Herod as a favor to his wife (*Matt 14:1-12*), and the 12 had just completed their first assignment, spreading the Gospel throughout Israel. It was time to check in.

In *Matt 14:25* we are told that it was the 4th watch of the night (3-6 AM) and from John’s account that the disciples had only covered about 3-3 1/2; miles (1/2; the distance across the lake) (*John 6:19*) yet they had been rowing since early evening. They were straining at the oars but not getting very far. In fact Mark tells us that Jesus was making better time walking than they were rowing and was about to pass them by when they saw Him (*Mark 6:48*) even though they had a head start of several hours.

Thinking He was a ghost they were terrified. But Jesus calmed them by identifying Himself. “Take courage. It is I. Don’t be afraid.” The words translated “It is I” in verse 27 can also be translated “I am”, the same words spoken to Moses from the burning bush.

“Lord, if it’s you,” Peter replied, “Tell me to come to you on the water.” “Come,” He said. Then Peter got down out of the boat, walked on the water and came toward Jesus. But when he saw the wind he was afraid, and beginning to sink cried out, “Lord, save me.” Immediately Jesus reached out His hand and

caught him. "You of little faith," He said. "Why did you doubt?" And when they climbed into the boat the wind died down. Then those who were in the boat worshipped Him, saying, "Truly, You are the Son of God." His mastery over the laws of nature had persuaded them. (*Matt 14:28-33*)

As the disciples had made very little progress rowing across the sea against the wind, Israel had made very little progress in their mandate to tell the world about God (*Isa. 43:10-13*). And as Peter was called out of the boat to walk on the water, the Church was called out of Israel to dwell in the world and spread the Gospel (*Matt 28:19-20*).

As long as Peter stayed focused on the Lord he was able to remain above the waves, empowered by his faith to perform a miracle and sustained by his closeness to the Lord. When he was distracted by the winds he began to sink and his life was in peril. As long as we stay focused on the Lord, we're able to remain above the ways of this world, empowered by our faith to perform miraculous works and sustained by our closeness to Him. When we're distracted by the winds of controversy and deceit, we begin sinking into the world's unbelieving ways and our spiritual life is in peril.

When Peter cried out, "Lord save me," the Lord was immediately at his side, reaching out to rescue him and bring him to safety. When we cry out, "Lord save me," the Lord is immediately at our side, reaching out to rescue us and bring us to safety. We are never beyond His reach.

BIBLE STORY

Jesus Walks on Water Mark 6:45-51

Read from your Bible. Ask students to find it in a Bible too. Those that can read can follow along. Choose the passages you would like to read aloud. Use visuals to help tell the story.

“God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.” Psalm 46:1

Imagine yourself in a small boat. The wind begins to blow hard, and the waves come up and splash the boat. The boat rocks back and forth, and you get wet! (Spray water into the air if desired) This is the scene for today’s lesson.

Jesus had just finished feeding the 5000 people. The people wanted to make Him king. But this is not what Jesus wanted. He had His disciples get into a boat to go to the other side of the lake. He told the people to go home. He went up on a mountain to pray by Himself.

When it was evening the disciples in the boat were in the middle of the lake. They were trying to row across, but a storm came and the wind was so strong they couldn’t.

Jesus was not with them, but He was alone on the land. Jesus did not stay on the land. The disciples needed His help. In the middle of the night, Jesus walked on the water toward the boat. When the disciples saw Him coming they were very scared and said, “It is a ghost.”

But Jesus spoke right away and told them not to be afraid. He said, “Be happy. It’s Jesus. Do not be afraid.” Peter answered Jesus. “Lord, if it is You, tell me to come to You on the water.”

And Jesus told Peter to come. So Peter got out of the boat and walked on the water toward Jesus. But then Peter saw the big waves and became scared. He started to sink. He called out to Jesus to save him. Jesus reached out His hand and helped Peter. He asked Peter why He had doubted Him.

Then Jesus stepped into the boat. As soon as He did the storm stopped—the wind stopped blowing and the lake was calm. The boat was also at the other side of the lake. The disciples weren’t out in the middle any longer.

The disciples worshiped their Savior in thankfulness. “Truly You are the Son of God.”

The disciples had been with Jesus for quite a while. They had seen Him do amazing things. And now, Jesus was walking on the water to them! Peter had faith in Jesus’ power, and so he climbed out of the boat and walked on the water with Jesus. But then Peter took his eyes off of Jesus. He looked at the big waves splashing around him. In that moment, Peter forgot that Jesus is bigger than anything—even the wind and the waves.

We may shake our heads and think Peter was foolish for sinking in the water. But we do the same thing in our lives. We worship Jesus and try to follow Him. But then problems come—and they seem so big! We take our eyes off Jesus and the problems grow bigger and bigger. We begin to sink down into the stormy waters of our troubles.

But Peter called out to Jesus, saying, “Lord, save me!” And Jesus reached out and pulled Peter out of the raging waters. He will do the same for us. We can call out to Jesus anytime, anywhere, about anything. And He is there. He wants to be with us and help us through the storms of life.

1. What did Jesus do after He sent the disciples away in the boat? (prayed)
2. Did the disciples recognize Jesus when they saw Him on the water? (No; they thought He was a ghost)
3. What did Peter say to Jesus? (“Lord, if it is you, tell me to come to you on the water.”)
4. What did the disciples do when Jesus got into the boat with them? (worshipped Him)

Dear Jesus, You saved the disciples when they were in a storm. You will save us when we are in trouble too. Thank You, Jesus, for taking care of us. Amen.



BIBLE CHALLENGE

Read this passage from your Bible. Ask students to locate it in a Bible too. Help them learn this verse.

“God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.” Psalm 46:1

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Discussion and Activity:

Jesus Walks on Water

A jump rope rhyme to Miss Mary Mac

Syllables in each line: tap shoulders, pat lap, clap, right hands, left hands, clap, right hand, left hand, right hand, clap, right hand, left hand

You can also use jump ropes and jump to the rhyme. Enlarged version is at the end of this lesson. Make several copies to post in Bible Challenge area so kids can read the rhyme and jump or do hand claps.

**A man named Peter, Peter, Peter
Did walk on water, water, water
Out to see Jesus, Jesus, Jesus.
He was walking on water, water, water!**

**As he walked out, out, out
He looked away, way, way
From Jesus’ eyes, eyes, eyes,
And he did fall, fall, fall**

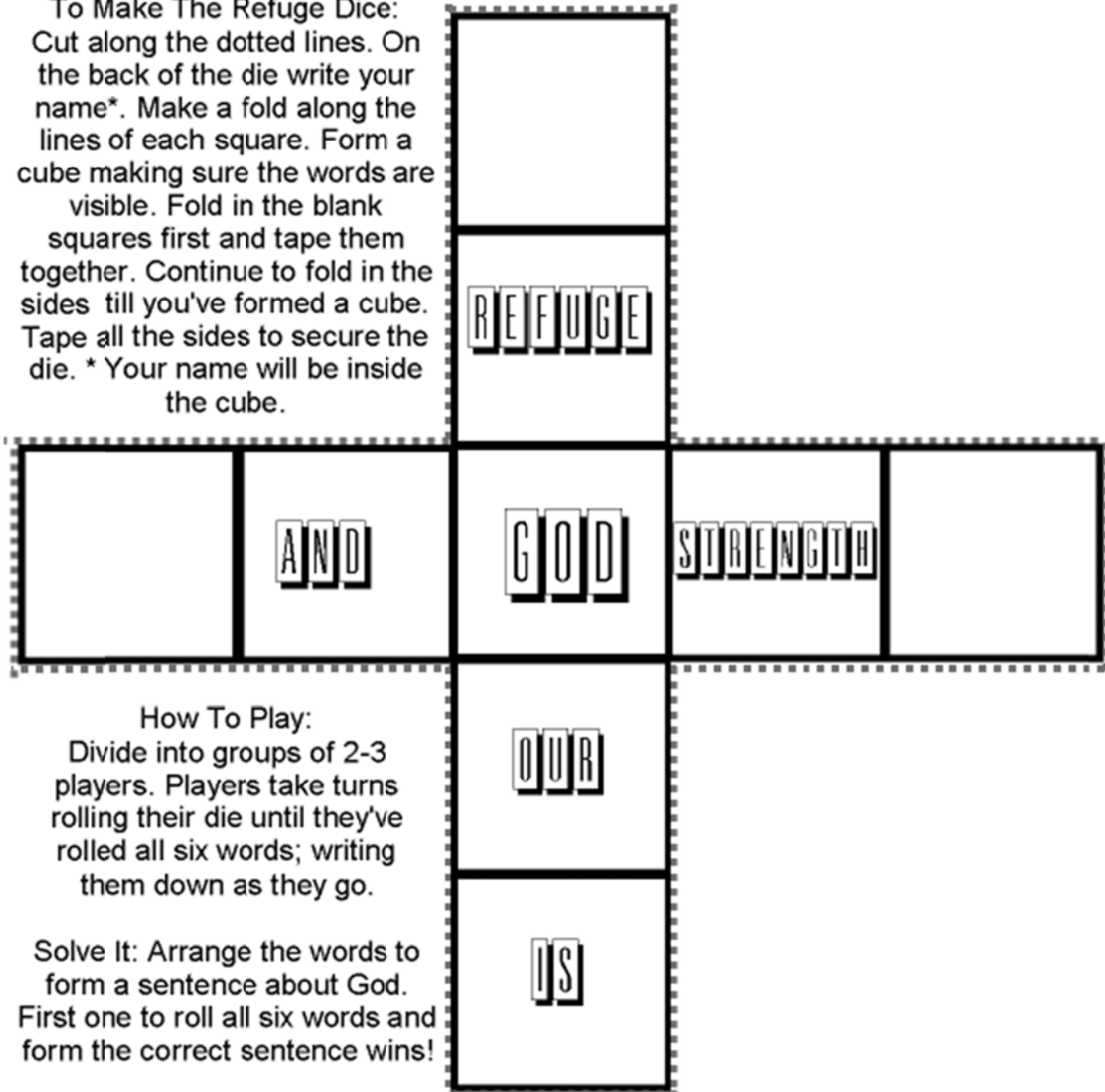
**And Peter said “Lord, Lord, Lord,
I’m gonna drown, drown, drown.”
Then his friend Jesus, Jesus, Jesus
Did grab his hand, hand, hand**

**Then they did walk, walk, walk
Back to the boat, boat, boat
Where Peter did stay, stay, stay
The rest of the night, night, night.**

GAMES

Print out the picture, below, and copy on card stock paper for durability. Print one per player and follow the directions.

To Make The Refuge Dice:
Cut along the dotted lines. On the back of the die write your name*. Make a fold along the lines of each square. Form a cube making sure the words are visible. Fold in the blank squares first and tape them together. Continue to fold in the sides till you've formed a cube. Tape all the sides to secure the die. * Your name will be inside the cube.

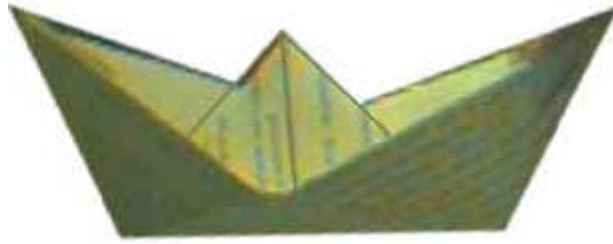


"God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble." Psalm 46:1

After the game, ask players to define the word 'refuge'. Ask the players how they might trust God this week to be their refuge and strength.

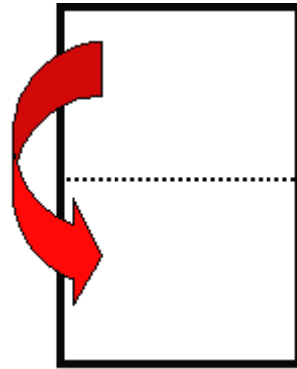
SCIENCE ACTIVITY

Origami Boat

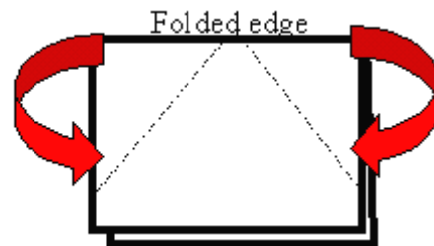


Yes, the boat will really float, but as the paper gets saturated with water, it will sink and be ruined. This can actually start a neat discussion about what made the boat float to begin with and then what made it sink.

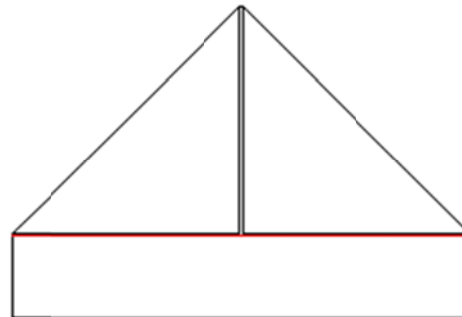
Fold the paper (or the 1/2 sheet of newspaper) in half



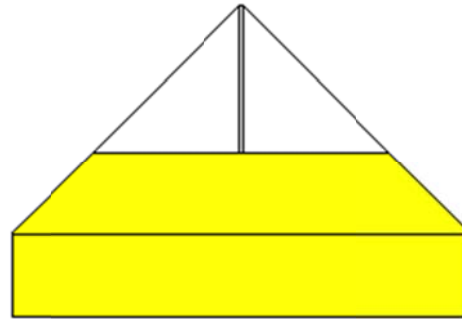
Fold down each side to make triangles



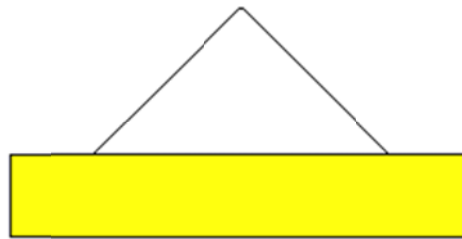
At the bottom fold the top strip upward on the red line.



Fold the two small triangles on the left and on the right backwards to make them disappear.

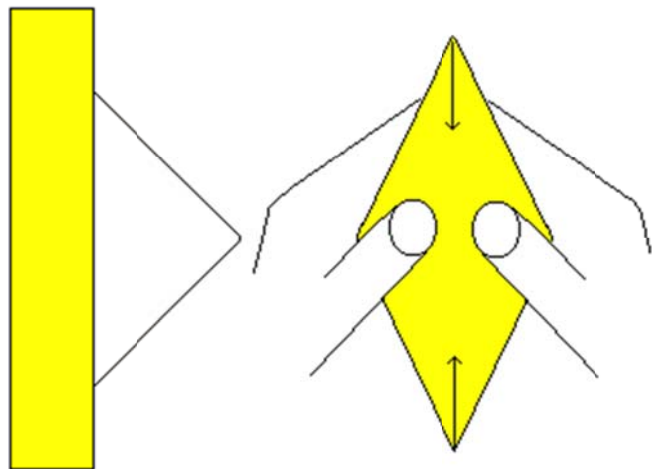


Turn the paper over and fold the other lower strip upwards. You have formed the well known paper hat. (if you're finding the origami too challenging with a group of kids, you can always just stop here and wear your hats as sailor hats!!)

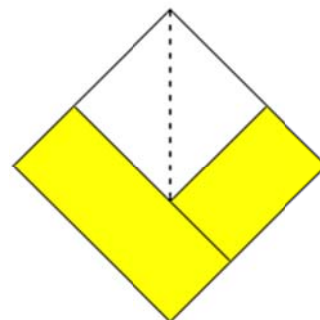


If you're feeling brave enough to continue on to make a boat:

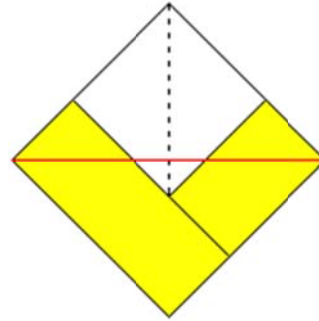
Turn the hat 90 degrees and open it so you're looking inside the part you would wear on your head. The thumbs must be inside.



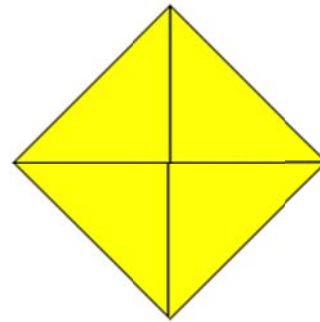
Lay the upper and the lower parts on each other so it looks like a diamond (see the image to the right).



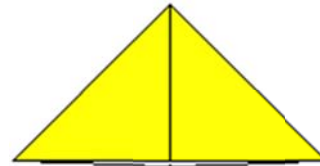
Fold the lower front triangle upwards on the red line.



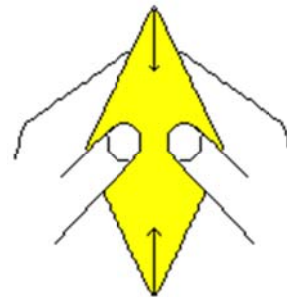
so it looks like:



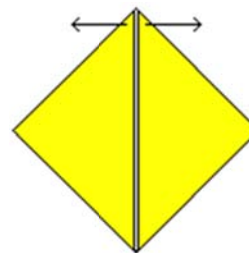
Turn the paper over and fold the other triangle up. It basically looks like the hat without the brim this time



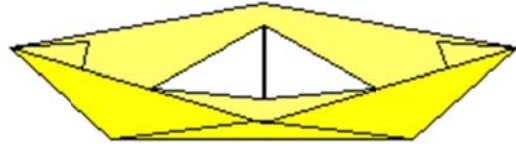
Open the hat again and put the upper part on the lower one to make a diamond shape again



Pull the upper corners of the triangles in direction of the arrows. As you pull these corners you'll see the boat forming before your eyes.



Stretch the boat both to the right and left, and then separate it slightly from underneath so it can float.



**A man named Peter,
Peter, Peter
Did walk on water,
water, water
Out to see Jesus, Jesus,
Jesus.**

**He was walking on
water, water, water!**

**As he walked out, out,
out**

**He looked away, way,
way**

**From Jesus' eyes, eyes,
eyes,**

And he did fall, fall, fall

**And Peter said “Lord,
Lord, Lord,
I’m gonna drown,
drown, drown.”**

**Then his friend Jesus,
Jesus, Jesus
Did grab his hand,
hand, hand**

**Then they did walk,
walk, walk**

**Back to the boat, boat,
boat**

**Where Peter did stay,
stay, stay**

**The rest of the night,
night, night.**