

# Testing the water

## PETER WALKS ON THE WATER TO JESUS

MATTHEW 14.22-33 • 9-15 AUGUST 2020



Read the [Introduction for leaders](#), or [Introduction for parents and carers](#) for guidance on how to use these ideas.

**You will need these items:** objects which sink or float; person shapes from paper or card, pens/pencils/felt tips, toy boat or draw one; a die (online, if you haven't got one: [www.online-stopwatch.com/online-dice/](http://www.online-stopwatch.com/online-dice/)), sweets (or another snack); flattened cardboard boxes or cushions, (optional: water pistols); a bowl to put water in and pebbles, or toy figures; wooden lolly sticks or strips of card, pipe cleaners or a person-shaped cut-out; blue paint and shallow plates or a thick blue pen, large piece of paper; stepping stones cut out of card; boat shapes cut out of card; the song Simply trusting Jesus, at <https://sameboatmusic.com/pages/roots> and a phone/tablet to play it on.

### Part 1

#### Sink or swim?

Run some water into the sink and experiment together with objects to see which ones float and sink.

#### Into the boat

Cut out person shapes from paper or card and invite everyone to decorate their person and write their name on it. Then take turns to place the people into a drawn or toy boat, explaining that this week's story is about what happens to Jesus' disciples one day in their boat.

#### Thank-you prayer

God of wind and waves,  
thank you that you meet us  
when we are sure of our faith  
when we are battling our doubts  
wherever we are today.  
Amen.

### Part 2

#### Roll the dice

Ask a volunteer to read **Matthew 14.22-33**. Before they read, encourage them to take a risk by rolling one die (if you haven't got one you can roll a dice online here: [www.online-stopwatch.com/online-dice/](http://www.online-stopwatch.com/online-dice/)): rolling a number 1 means they must read with the Bible/story text upside down; a 2, they can read normally and win a tube of sweets (or help themselves to a snack); a 3, they should sing the passage to a tune of their choice; if they roll a 4 they can nominate someone else to read; a 5 means roll again; and if they roll a 6 they have to read in French (find La Bible du Semeur on biblegateway.com). Ask: are all risks worth taking?

*Straight after feeding the crowd with the fish and bread, Jesus made the disciples get into the boat and cross to the other side of the lake. He sent the crowds home. When everyone had left, he went up the mountain by himself to pray. He stayed there on his own until evening.*

*Meanwhile, the boat that the disciples were in was caught in a storm – battered by the waves, far from the shore, with the wind against them. Early the next morning, Jesus came walking towards them on the water. When the disciples saw him they were absolutely terrified! They shouted out in fear, 'It's a ghost!'*

But immediately Jesus called to them, 'Be brave! It's me. Don't be afraid.'

Peter called out in reply, 'Lord, if it's really you, tell me to come and meet you on the water.'

'Come!' called Jesus. So Peter climbed out of the boat and began to walk across the water to Jesus. All was going well until Peter began to notice the strong wind and got frightened.

He started to sink and cried out, 'Lord, save me!' Jesus immediately reached out his hand and caught him.

'Why didn't you trust me?' he asked Peter.



When they got back into the boat and sat down the wind died down. This made everyone in the boat worship him saying, 'Truly, you are the Son of God.'

### Act out the story

Act out the story as if you are all sitting in the boat. Use flattened cardboard boxes or cushions for the boat sides (ask everyone to bob these up and down with the movement of waves), and wave your arms to recreate the movement of the water. You could even use small water pistols to squirt people with (being aware that not everyone will appreciate this!) and ask two people to act out the parts of Jesus and Peter walking on the water, miming and adding the spoken words that those characters say.

### Talk together

- If you were Peter, would you have stepped out of the boat?
- What are some of the big and small things that scare you?
- When you're in trouble or scared, who might you ask to help?

### A prayer for others

Sit together in a circle. Put a container of water in the middle and give each person a pebble or small object to place in it during the prayer. Or use toy people, and no water.

We bring before you, God,  
all those who are finding it hard  
to put their trust in you.

*Place the pebbles in the water or put the toy people into the centre of the space.*

Fill them with your Holy Spirit  
and restore their faith in you.

**Amen.**

## Part 3

### Peter's courage

You will need: paper, pens/pencils, glue, wooden lolly sticks or strips of card, pipe cleaners or a person-shaped cut-out.

Give everyone paper and pens/pencils, then ask them to draw a picture of the disciples' boat and Jesus walking on the water towards them. Help everyone to use glue to attach lolly sticks or strips of

card to look like the timber of their boat and pipe cleaners to fashion a figure of Peter to add to the boat. Invite everyone to use pens/pencils to add other details to the picture.

### Steps of faith

Lay out a large piece of paper and pour some blue paint onto shallow plates. Encourage everyone to take off their shoes and socks, step onto the paint, and make footprints across the paper as though they were walking on water. Write 'Trust in me' across the paper when the paint has dried. Help everyone to clean their feet! If you don't want to use paint, you could draw around feet with a blue pen.

### A prayer of praise and thanksgiving

Invite everyone to join in with the response: **You are God over all.**

Almighty God, creator of all things:

**You are God over all.**

God in our weakness.

**You are God over all.**

God in our strength.

**You are God over all.**

God with authority.

**You are God over all.**

God in our doubts and fears.

**You are God over all.**

Almighty God.

**You are God over all.**

**Amen.**

## Part 4

### Stepping over doubt

You will need: card 'stones', pens.

Ask everyone to think about the things that might hold them back from knowing and trusting Jesus. Write their answers on card 'stones', and lay them across the floor, to make stepping stones, with the writing facing up. Pray together about the doubts and worries written on the cards. Gradually invite everyone to turn the stones over one by one as they pray over them, and walk across to the other side of your space.

### Sing

Learn and sing the song 'Simply trusting Jesus' from Same Boat Music:

<https://sameboatmusic.com/pages/roots>

## Part 5

### Remember to trust in God

Cut out a boat shape from some card and write on it a situation where you need to trust God. Decorate it as you wish, then stick it on the fridge (or somewhere else you will see it) to remind you.

**Stepping prayer**

Stand in a line and encourage everyone to take a large 'step' out at the appropriate point.

Lord Jesus, when we go out,  
help us to step out in faith,  
remembering who we walk with,  
knowing that you have authority over all.

**Amen.**