

LESSON

4

Background Scripture:
Matthew 14:22-33
Print Passage:
Matthew 14:22-33

No Need to Worry

Jesus immediately said to them: "Take courage! It is I. Don't be afraid." (Matthew 14:27)



To look at Neffie and Jess, people would not believe they are talented opera singers. Neffie and Jess come from a family of gifted singers. They were raised in a musical environment and were always engaged to be leaders and trailblazers. Knowing that very few people of color sing opera motivates Neffie and Jess to be

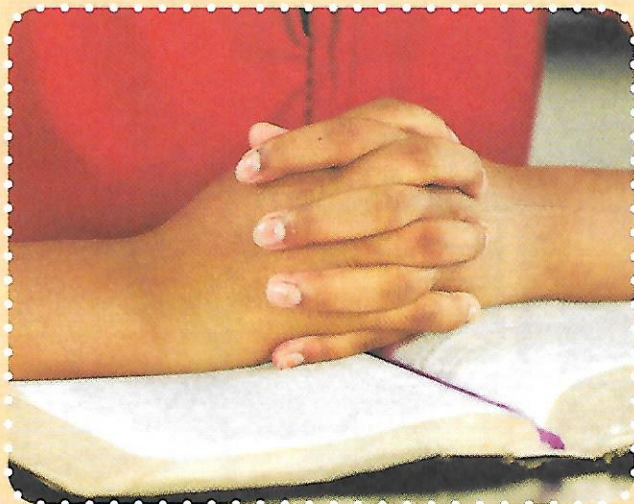
exceptional opera singers for their generation. Their family and school choir teacher know of their singing skills and interest in opera. However, no one else outside of their family circle has heard them sing. The choir teacher challenged Neffie and Jess to sign up for the city-wide talent show. A prize of six hundred dollars would go to the talent show winner. Both Neffie and Jess thought it would be a great opportunity to showcase their talent. To prepare for the talent show, they spent extra time practicing. They also worked with a local fashion designer to come up with costumes that would be both contemporary and theatrical.

On the day of the talent show, Jess was very anxious. His friends and many people from his community would hear him sing opera for the first time, and he knew this was not the kind of music his friends listened to or would ever expect him to be singing. Neffie assured Jess that they would be fine. Before taking the stage, Neffie and Jess prayed and asked God to bless their performance. Jess could see some of his family and friends in the crowd. Neffie and Jess starting to sing and quietness fell over the crowd. Not a sound was heard other than the two of them singing. When the song ended, the entire audience—friends, family, and strangers—gave Neffie and Jess a standing ovation.

How do you overcome fear when you are challenged to step out in faith and do new things?

Matthew 14:22-33

22 Immediately Jesus made the disciples get into the boat and go on ahead of him to the other side, while he dismissed the crowd. **23** After he had dismissed them, he went up on a mountainside by himself to pray. Later that night, he was there alone, **24** and the boat was already a considerable distance from land, buffeted by the waves because the wind was against it. **25** Shortly before dawn Jesus went out to them, walking on the lake. **26** When the disciples saw him walking on the lake, they were terrified. "It's a ghost," they said, and cried out in fear. **27** But Jesus immediately said to them: "Take courage! It is I. Don't be afraid." **28** "Lord, if it's you," Peter replied, "tell me to come to you on the water." **29** "Come," he said. Then Peter got down out of the boat, walked on the water and came toward Jesus. **30** But when he saw the wind, he was afraid and, beginning to sink, cried out, "Lord, save me!" **31** Immediately Jesus reached out his hand and caught him. "You of little faith," he said, "why did you doubt?" **32** And when they climbed into the boat, the wind died down. **33** Then those who were in the boat worshiped him, saying, "Truly you are the Son of God."



Intersect

Today's lesson features the notable Bible event when Peter walked on water. Just before this act of faith, Jesus had just performed the miracle of multiplying five loaves of bread and two fish to feed a multitude of more than five thousand men, not counting the women and children. Jesus made the disciples get in a boat to return to the other side of the lake. Back on shore, Jesus went up into the hills by Himself to pray. Meanwhile, the disciples were still out at sea when a strong wind arose, creating raging waves. Jesus suddenly appeared to them, walking on the water. The disciples knew Jesus had gone to the hills to pray, so it is understandable that they believed the human image walking on water was a ghost. Jesus assured the disciples that it was really Him and they should not be afraid of what they were seeing.

Peter told Jesus to invite him to come to Him on the water if He really was Jesus. Peter was the only one who responded with at least a little faith, believing the man on the water might be Jesus. Jesus beckoned Peter to come to Him. As long as Peter focused on Jesus, he was able to walk on water. But when Peter looked away from Jesus and focused on the heavy waves, he started to sink. Peter cried out to Jesus, and Jesus saved him. Jesus commented on Peter's doubt and lack of faith. This marked the second time that Jesus addressed the disciples' lack of faith during dangerous times at sea.

Inside Out

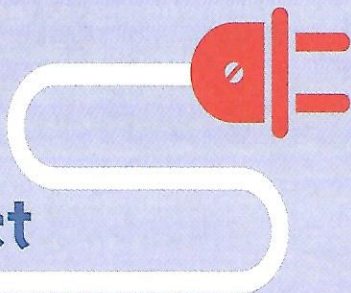
Peter loved Jesus. He wanted to have unwavering faith in Jesus, so Peter asked to walk on the water to Jesus. Yet, after he was walking on the water toward Jesus, Peter's faith faltered under the fear of the raging wind and waves. Are you able to keep the faith when you are placed in uncomfortable situations? Being able to maintain your focus on Jesus will grow as your faith in God grows. When your faith wavers, regroup and ask God to show you how to increase your faith.



There's an App for That!

When Peter saw Jesus walking on water, he may have presumed he would be successful doing so as well. Peter learned that without much faith, he was not capable of doing the things that Jesus could do. Many people think they can manage their lives without Jesus' help. But, as Peter found out, Jesus has supernatural power that is far superior to anything we can accomplish on our own. What can you do to invite Jesus into your daily decisions and plans? Stop trying to figure things out on your own and turn to the one who already has all the answers—Jesus.

Connect



In today's "Reflect" story, Neffie and Jess revealed their singing talent. Sometimes, you may lack confidence in being your authentic self to the world. In those times, talk with Jesus and ask Him to strengthen your faith to move through life with confidence. When you invite Jesus to be your partner, there are no limits to what you can accomplish.



Stepping Out!

This week, you are challenged to come up with an acronym for the word FEAR. An anonymous writer wrote that *fear* is "false evidence appearing real." Can you think of other words that you can use as your personal mantra to overcome fear? Believers should not give in to patterns of fear because Jesus will respond to our cries for help, even in times of doubt or faithlessness. Trust God's ability to protect and keep you now and always.

Media Mission

Conduct research on the Internet using the phrase "biblical characters of faith." Many youth hear the word *faith* and believe that only older Christians can possess great faith. The study of biblical personalities who have faith clearly shows how God uses ordinary people to accomplish extraordinary missions and grow their faith in the process.

