

WEEK 4
LESSON GUIDE



BIG IDEA

Wow!
Jesus has the power to save.

BIBLE

Jesus Walks on Water:
Matthew 14:22–36; Mark 8:31–38

LARGE GROUP TIME

Wow! Our world is filled with all kinds of wonders, but none are as wonderful as Jesus! Technology might have helped power our world and make life easier for everyone, but when I think about how Jesus has the **power to heal, calm our fears, and provide**, I can't help but ask, "Is there anything Jesus can't do?" Let's discover one more very important thing that can only happen through the power of Jesus!

WHAT? *What are we talking about today?*

ACTIVITY | Life-sized Tech

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Create groups of four or five kids each. Assign each group the name of a technological gadget that the group has to act out, such as a washing machine, toaster, hoverboard, vacuum robot, laptop, security system, microwave, coffee maker, or fan. The objective is for the group to act out being the machine, not just using the machine.*
- Isn't technology cool? Technology is all around us, in our homes and schools and even here at church. Technology is basically anything that was designed to help us solve problems in a new or better way. **What problem do you think your machine was designed to solve?**
- The power of technology saves us from spending lots of time and energy to do things. Today, let's explore a power that saves us from way more than that!

ACTIVITY | On the Water Challenge

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Challenge kids to build a floating device that will keep small figurines like [counting bears](#) from sinking in water. You'll need building materials like aluminum foil, popsicle sticks, glue, tape, cardboard box scraps, plastic wrap, drinking straws, or anything else that might help the device float. Set up a few shallow tubs of water or a kiddie pool to have kids test their devices.*
 - ✳ **ACCESSIBILITY HACK:** *Set up a "sink or float" station where kids can experiment with different objects to see if they'll sink or float.*
- Wow! You guys have created such amazing devices!
- Ever wonder how big steel ships float on the water? When you spread out the weight of an object over a wider area, it doesn't break the surface tension of the water and allows something to float rather than sink.
- In today's Bible story, we'll see an even more amazing way to stay above the water!

POLL | Machine Code

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Have kids answer by shaping one hand into a zero to indicate a “no” and holding up an index finger to indicate a “yes.”
- Computers use binary code, which is made up of zeroes and ones. Let’s try communicating with this code.
 - Show me a zero for “no” and a one for “yes”!**
 - I can swim.
 - I’d rather go to the beach or a lake than to a swimming pool.
 - I’d rather swim in a pool than at the beach or a lake.
 - I like using floaties when I swim.
 - I am afraid of the deep end of the pool.
 - I have been on a boat before.
 - I like to dive off the diving board.
 - I like going on water slides.
 - I need goggles when I swim.
 - I can hold my breath underwater for more than ten seconds.
 - I think I could be a lifeguard one day.
 - I have needed to be saved from the water before.
- By now you might have guessed that we are in a bit of a watery situation today! Now, let’s discover what water has to do with today’s Bible story.

SO WHAT? Why does it matter to God and to us?

SCRIPTURE | Matthew 14:22–36 (Jesus Walks on Water)

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Read the passage or tell the Bible story using the provided script below. Dress up (or ask another volunteer) as a quirky researcher named “Scientist Sam” who says “Wow!” a lot. Use costumes and props from previous weeks.
 - For the experiment portion, prepare a large shallow dish, some water, black pepper, and dish soap. The pepper represents doubt and the soap represents faith.
 - When it’s time to illustrate doubt, dip your finger into the peppery water and hold it up to show the kids.
 - When it’s time to illustrate faith, wipe the pepper off your finger, coat it with dish soap, and dip it back into the peppery water. The soap will keep the pepper away from your finger.
- Wow! Welcome back to my lab! Scientist Sam here, ready to report yet another discovery from the Bible about the most mysteriously powerful power there is! Greater than electromagnetic and gravitational forces combined is . . . the power of Jesus!
- Today’s story will defy any scientific law that I’ve ever studied. And I’ve studied a lot. Ready to dive in?
- **Let’s read Matthew 14:22–36.**
 - **Have you ever floated on the water before?** A lot of us have, and if Jesus had been swimming in the water, I’m not sure this story would be anything out of the ordinary. But this story goes against everything I know about physics and the laws of buoyancy. Buoyancy is the ability to float. And human beings simply cannot walk on water. We can’t even stand on the water . . . Trust me, I’ve tried to before. But Jesus did, because he has unlimited power. Wow!
 - Jesus is so powerful that even Peter could walk on the water, too! At least, he did for a second until the wind scared him and he started to sink. And when Peter cried out for Jesus to save him, Jesus reached out and grabbed his hand right away.

- **What do you think will happen if I stick my finger into this dish?**
 - Yes, my finger will get a little peppery, no doubt. Or rather, “yes doubt” – lots of doubt! It’s like when Peter was walking on the water.
 - Peter had a lot of faith to just step onto the water in the first place, but then, he began to doubt Jesus when he got distracted by everything going on around him and took his eyes off Jesus. He literally looked away from Jesus and instead, focused on all the things that could go wrong, like this pepper on the water.
- **But what happens when we have faith instead of doubt?**
 - Wow! The pepper just scattered away from my finger! When we have faith in the power of Jesus and look to him to guide us, our fears and doubts will scatter away, too.
- We can always count on the power of Jesus to save us in times of need! Wow!

BIG IDEA | Wow! Jesus has the power to save.

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Create a giant smartphone out of black foam board [like this](#) that can fit about twenty “apps” (see [printable](#)) to help kids memorize the Big Idea. Pick seven of the apps and write one word of the Big Idea on each of them. Flip them over and attach all of them to your smartphone board. Invite kids one at a time to pick an app and turn it over to see if it contains a Big Idea word. Once all the words are found, recite the Big Idea together.
- Smartphones are one of the most essential innovations in our lifetime. On these devices, we can send and receive messages, take photos, plan our days, play games, track our activity, and more. There’s an app for anything you might need to do! But as cool and helpful as smartphones are, even this advanced technology is nothing compared to what Jesus can do.
- **Can you help me find the apps that will lead us to our Big Idea?**
- Let’s say the Big Idea together: **Wow! Jesus has the power to save.**

ACTIVITY | Lifesaver Training

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** For this “rescue,” you’ll need Life Savers Gummies candy, gummy worms, clear plastic cups, and paper clips. Have the kids pair off or create small groups. For each group, place a Life Savers Gummies candy underneath a clear plastic cup and a gummy worm on top of the upside-down plastic cup. Also, give each team four paper clips. Using only the paper clips, kids have to try to get the Life Savers candy around the gummy worm. Play a short clip from a video [like this](#) one to help explain the activity. For more information on how to legally use copyrighted material for educational purposes, [read this!](#)
 - ✂ **PRETEEN HACK:** Create an imaginary scenario for preteens to debate and work through where they are “lost at sea” on a lifeboat and have only managed to salvage five items they must rely on until rescue comes. What are those five items? Why did they pick those? What would they choose if they had to whittle that list down to one essential item?
 - ✂ **ACCESSIBILITY HACK:** Place a dozen gummy worms on one plate and see how many kids can retrieve using small tongs and transferring them to a second plate.
- **Can you get the Life Savers ring around our stranded buddy, the gummy worm?** But you must do so without . . .
 - Letting the worm fall into the “ocean,” or onto the table
 - Poking holes or ripping the worm
 - Using anything other than the paper clips
- Wow! It was hard work to save this little gummy worm. Thankfully, saving us is not hard work for Jesus! Jesus is always ready and waiting for us to look to him and trust him to save us!

OBJECT LESSON | Now Saving . . .

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Open up Microsoft Word or Google Docs and share your screen on a projector. Start typing something and “accidentally” close it. In Word, you should be shown a “save” screen and in Docs, your progress will be auto-saved, so you can open it right back up.*
- Saving can mean many things, especially in the world of technology. When you’re working on an assignment on a computer or trying to beat a level in a video game, you want to save your progress so that your hard work doesn’t get erased!
- Nowadays, most programs have the option to auto-save or prompt you to save your progress if you accidentally close your screen. All of your work gets stored in the device’s memory or the cloud. Wow!
- If Jesus wanted to, he could auto-save all of us, too. Whether it’s a sticky situation we have gotten ourselves into or the state of our relationship with God, Jesus could easily swoop in and save us all. But he doesn’t do that because Jesus gives us the freedom to choose to be saved.
- Just like how Peter called out to Jesus to be saved when he was sinking in the water, we can call out to Jesus, too. And the minute we do, Jesus will be right there to save us from whatever mess we’re in. **Wow! Jesus has the power to save!**

SCRIPTURE | Mark 8:31–38

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Create slides in Google Slides or PowerPoint with this Bible passage, in the translation of your choice, using a chalkboard template [like this](#). Have kids read the passage together or have someone read it for the group. Feel free to elaborate more on the message of salvation as you teach it in your context.*
- Jesus knew that he would soon face certain death, but to Peter or any of the other disciples, that must have sounded ridiculous. He was Jesus — the Jesus who had the power to do anything!
 - Jesus could heal people and calm storms using only his words. Jesus could take a small amount of food and feed thousands of people with it. Jesus could even walk on water! Surely he could avoid dying!
 - The thing is, he totally could have, but he chose not to. Instead, Jesus chose to die on a cross, even though he did not deserve to. Jesus stuck with God’s plan to save the world from the power of sin, to show that the power of God is greater. And if you know how this story ends, you know just how powerful this is . . . Jesus is even more powerful than death.
- So when we say, **“Wow! Jesus has the power to save!”** we’re not just talking about a simple water rescue. We’re talking about the incredible rescue of our souls. Because of what Jesus did, we can be saved from anything that tries to separate us from God.
- And once we are saved, our story with Jesus doesn’t end there. That’s just the beginning. We can then go ahead and tell others about Jesus’ awesome power to save!

VIDEO | Wow!, Episode 4

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Play this week’s episode of [Press Play](#).*

NOW WHAT? *What does God want us to do about it?*

REFLECTION | Thought Experiments

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Have kids add to the lab notebooks they created and started in Week 1. Have kids draw and write as they think about the prompts given. You can send the notebooks home this week. This week might be a good time to have a conversation with kids about what it means to be “saved,” in a way that is consistent with your church’s teaching.*

✂ **PRETEEN HACK:** *This week, set aside time to talk with preteens about their understanding of salvation and their relationship with Jesus. What does “being saved” mean to them? What questions do they have about Jesus and his saving work on earth? You may also talk with them about the next steps in their decision to follow Jesus.*

- It’s time for more thought experiments related to what we’ve been discussing today. Let’s fill up our notebooks as we process our discoveries!
- **What are some things that we are powerless to save ourselves from?**
- **What might you say to Jesus to ask for his power to save you?**
- **Write or draw someone with whom you might want to share about all the things Jesus can do!**

RESPONSE | Saving Prototype

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *You’ll need poster boards and markers. Have kids work in small groups or pairs to come up with a technological invention that could help them spend time with God. Have them draw up their ideas on their poster and present it to the large group.*

✂ **ACCESSIBILITY HACK:** *As you wrap up your STEM-themed series with the topic of technology, remember that for some of your kids with disabilities, technology is not a luxury but a necessary component of their lives. If they are willing, allow kids to share about how some of the devices they use help them every day.*

- Technology saves us time by making things easier and faster to do. Technology also saves our progress on some devices. But technology uses a lot of energy, so it’s important to be smart about how we can save energy, too.
- **What are some ways we could save energy?** *(Things like turning off lights and appliances when not in use, switching to LED bulbs, and investing in efficient products all help to conserve energy.)*
- Spending less time on your devices would also help save energy, too! But it’s about more than just helping the environment. What else would you save if you spent less time on social media, games, and videos? These things drain us of our energy – even though it might feel fun at the moment – and take us away from time we could spend with God.
- When we pray, read our Bibles, connect with our small groups, and spend time with friends and leaders who love God and love us, we start to know the true source of power even more! Nothing is more powerful than Jesus, and only Jesus has the power to save.
- **What kind of technology would help you spend more time with God?**
- As you dream up your prototypes, think through what problem you want your gadget to solve.
 - **What gets in the way of you connecting with God?**
 - **What can your invention do to fix that problem?**

MEMORY VERSE | 1 Chronicles 29:12b (NIV)

- **“In your hands are strength and power to exalt and give strength to all.”**
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Write the memory verse on a wave border like [this](#), along with a sprinkling of words that are not in the memory verse. Cut out all the words and arrange them across the floor from one side to the other. Have kids split into teams that will try to cross the room by stepping only on the waves that contain the memory verse words.*

PRAYER

- Wow God, you are powerful! Whenever I feel like I’m sinking because I am hurt, scared, or disappointed, you have the power to save me from my pain, fear, and sadness. Thank you also for loving us so much that you showed us the greatest saving power there is through your son Jesus. Amen.

SMALL GROUP TIME

DISCUSSION

● SCRIPTURE QUESTIONS

- **How did the disciples respond when they first saw Jesus walking on water?** *They were afraid! They thought he was a ghost.*
- **What did Peter ask Jesus to do in order for him to step out of the boat?** *Peter asked Jesus to tell him to come out onto the water, too.*
- **Why did Peter begin to sink?** *He began to doubt and became afraid.*
- **Read Mark 8:35. What do you think Jesus means when he says that we will save our life when we lose it?** *When we live our lives for God rather than for ourselves, we can count on Jesus to save us.*

● APPLICATION QUESTIONS

- **What are some things that may cause you to be afraid or to doubt?**
- **Why do we need Jesus to save us?**
- **Whom can you tell about the power of Jesus to save us?**

ACTIVITY | Wow! Kaleidoscope

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Have kids make kaleidoscopes by cutting up [mirrored sheets](#) to create a triangular prism to place inside a cardboard tube. Have kids cut a circle out of white card stock and design each quarter of the circle differently, using keywords from each of the four Big Ideas in this series (heal, calm, provide, save). Poke a hole in the middle and slide it down the long end of a bendy straw, with the short end acting as a stopper. Attach the straw to the length of the tube so that you can see the designs through the other end of the cardboard tube. Spin the card stock to see the cool shapes! (See a worked example [here](#).)*
 - ✂ **PRETEEN HACK:** *You can have preteens make more elaborate kaleidoscopes using a kit like [this](#).*
- The powers of science, technology, engineering, and math each play a role in creating a device like a kaleidoscope. Let's keep these little inventions close by so we can always be reminded of how Jesus is always ready to heal, calm our fears, provide, and — most importantly — save. Wow!