

Don't Be Afraid: A 5-Day Devotional for Kids

Based on the story of Jesus walking on water

This week, we are going on an adventure! Each day, you will read a Bible verse, think about what it means, and find a way to trust Jesus when things feel scary. Jesus reminded his disciples – and reminds us – that he is always near. Let's discover together what that looks like every single day.

01	02	03
Day 1: Stormy Seas	Day 2: Only Jesus	Day 3: Don't Be Afraid
Recognize fears in the storm	Focus on Jesus, not the waves	Hear Jesus' calming words
04	05	
Day 4: Peace Be With You	Day 5: Jesus Is Beside You	
Receive God's comforting peace	Trust Jesus and breathe easy	

Stormy Seas

KEY VERSE

Key Verse: "Immediately Jesus made the disciples get into the boat and go on ahead of him to the other side, while he dismissed the crowd." — Matthew 14:22 (NIV)

Devotional

Have you ever been in a situation that felt really scary or out of control? Maybe a thunderstorm rolled in and the lights went out, or maybe something happened at school that made your tummy feel funny. The disciples of Jesus knew exactly how that feels.

In our story, the disciples were out on a boat in the middle of the night. The wind started howling and the waves got big and rough. They were far from the shore with nobody to help them. Can you imagine how that must have felt? It was dark, it was loud, and the water was tossing them around like a toy in a bathtub.

Here is something important to notice: Jesus knew right where they were the whole time. He did not forget about them. He did not get distracted or fall asleep. He was praying on the mountain, and he knew his friends were out there on the water. He always knows where you are too, even when things feel stormy and hard and scary.

Sometimes life gives us storms. A hard day. A big change. A new grade. A new school. But just like the disciples, we are never truly alone in the middle of our storms. Jesus sees us, he knows us, and he is already on his way.

Reflection Questions

1. Can you think of a time when something felt scary or like a storm in your life? What happened?
2. How does it make you feel to know that Jesus always knows where you are, even during the hard times?
3. Draw a picture of a boat in a storm. Then draw Jesus nearby. Hang it somewhere you can see it this week.

Prayer

Dear God, thank you for always knowing where I am. Even when things feel scary and stormy, help me remember that you see me and you are close. Thank you for being a God who never forgets about me. Amen.

Only Jesus

KEY VERSE

Key Verse: "Shortly before dawn Jesus went out to them, walking on the lake." — Matthew 14:25 (NIV)

Devotional

Walking on water. Just think about that for a second. You cannot do it. Your mom cannot do it. Your teacher cannot do it. Nobody in the history of the whole world has ever walked on water, except for Jesus. And in our story, that is exactly what he did. He walked right out across the waves to get to his friends.

When the disciples first saw him coming, they were terrified. They thought he was a ghost! And honestly, who could blame them? Nobody walks on water. It is impossible. Except that with Jesus, impossible things happen all the time. He turned water into juice at a wedding. He fed thousands of people with just a little bit of bread and fish. He healed people who were very sick. And now, here he was, just strolling across the top of a lake like it was no big deal.

Why does this matter for you? Because sometimes the things in our lives feel impossible too. A problem that seems way too big to solve. A friendship that feels broken. A fear that will not go away. And Jesus is saying to us, "I am the one who walks on water. I can handle the impossible things in your life too." He is bigger than any problem you will ever face.

There is nobody like Jesus. He is not just a good teacher or a nice story. He is the Son of God who does the impossible, and he loves you more than you can imagine.

Reflection Questions

1. What is something in your life that feels impossible or really, really hard right now?
2. Why do you think Jesus walked on water to get to his disciples instead of waiting for them on shore?
3. Write down one "impossible" thing on a piece of paper and put it in your hands. Then open your hands and say, "I give this to you, Jesus."

Prayer

Dear God, you are amazing. You do things that nobody else can do. Help me remember that when my problems feel too big, you are bigger. I trust you with the impossible stuff in my life. Amen.

Don't Be Afraid

KEY VERSE

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

Devotional

Have you ever been really scared and then someone you love showed up and everything felt better? Maybe it was a parent at the end of a hard day, or a best friend who showed up right when you needed them. There is something so powerful about hearing a familiar voice when you are frightened.

That is exactly what happened to the disciples. They were screaming, they were terrified, and then they heard the voice of Jesus saying, "Take courage! It is I. Don't be afraid." Three short sentences. But those three sentences changed everything. Why? Because it was Jesus. The one they knew. The one they trusted. The one who loved them.

Did you know that the phrase "do not be afraid" appears in the Bible over 300 times? That means God really, really wants us to hear it. He is not saying our feelings are wrong. Being scared is a totally normal, human feeling. Even some of the bravest people in the whole Bible, people like Moses and David and Mary, felt afraid at times. But God kept reminding them, "I am here. You are not alone. Take courage."

When you feel scared about going back to school, trying something new, or facing something hard, hear Jesus saying those same words to you today: "Take courage. It is me. Don't be afraid." He has not left. He has not looked away. He is right there with you, and he is enough.

Reflection Questions

1. What is something you are a little scared or nervous about right now? It is okay to be honest!
2. Why do you think God tells us "do not be afraid" so many times in the Bible? What does that tell us about God?
3. Every morning this week, before you get out of bed, say out loud: "Jesus is with me today. I do not have to be afraid."

Prayer

Dear God, I am going to be honest with you today. Sometimes I feel scared. Help me hear your voice saying "do not be afraid" in those moments. Thank you for giving me courage when I need it most. Amen.

Peace Be With You

KEY VERSE

Key Verse: "And when they climbed into the boat, the wind died down. Then those who were in the boat worshiped him, saying, 'Truly you are the Son of God.'" — Matthew 14:32-33 (NIV)

Devotional

There is a big word that shows up a lot in the Bible: **peace**. Jesus talked about peace all the time. He told his disciples, "Peace be with you." He calmed storms and brought quiet. He healed people and gave them rest. Peace was one of his favorite gifts to give the people around him, and it is one of his favorite gifts to give you too.

When Jesus climbed into the boat with his disciples, the Bible says the wind died down. Just like that. All of that chaos, all of that noise and fear and crashing waves, and then suddenly, quiet. Calm. Peace. The disciples were so amazed that they bowed down and said, "Truly you are the Son of God!" They went from screaming to worshiping. That is what the peace of Jesus can do.

Now, here is something really important. The storm did not stop before Jesus arrived. The disciples had to go through the storm first. And sometimes that is how life works too. We do not always get to skip the scary or hard parts. But Jesus promises that his peace will be with us inside the storm, not just after it is over. His peace does not depend on everything going perfectly. His peace lives in our hearts even when things around us are still hard.

Think about what peace feels like. A slow breath in and out. A warm hug. A quiet moment. That is what Jesus offers you, even on your hardest days. You can have his peace in your heart no matter what is happening around you.

Reflection Questions

1. What does peace feel like to you? Where or when do you feel most peaceful?
2. The disciples worshiped Jesus after the storm. How do you think going through hard things might help us appreciate Jesus more?
3. Practice a "peace breath" today. Breathe in slowly for four counts and breathe out slowly for four counts. Do this three times and remember that Jesus is with you right now.

Prayer

Dear God, thank you for the gift of peace. Even when things around me feel loud and scary and hard, help me feel your calm in my heart. I trust you in the middle of my storms. Amen.

Jesus Is Beside You

KEY VERSE

Key Verse: "Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go." — Joshua 1:9 (NIV)

Devotional

Our key verse today is from the very beginning of the book of Joshua. God was speaking to Joshua, who had a really big and scary job ahead of him. He had to lead an entire nation of people into a new land. That is an enormous, overwhelming task. And what did God say to him? "Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid. Do not be discouraged. I will be with you wherever you go." Those same words are for you today.

Going back to school is not the same as leading a whole nation, but it can still feel big and overwhelming and scary! And God says the same thing to you that he said to Joshua. You do not have to be brave all by yourself. You just have to remember who is walking beside you. And when you remember that Jesus is there, you can take one more step forward, even when you are scared.

Here is the best news: this devotional may be ending, but Jesus does not stop being with you. He is with you tomorrow and next week and next year and always. So go out there this week, take a deep breath, and remember the words you learned this week. Don't be afraid. Peace be with you. Jesus is beside you. You've got this, because he has got you.

Reflection Questions

1. What is the most important thing you learned this week from our devotional about Jesus walking on water?
2. How will you remind yourself that Jesus is beside you when you feel scared or nervous this week?
3. Share one thing you learned this week with a friend or family member. Tell them what Jesus said to the scared disciples, and why it matters to you.

This Week's Prayer

Dear God, thank you for giving us Jesus. Thank you that he walks on water and reminds us that he is beside us, even when we are scared. Help us be strong and courageous, not because we are fearless, but because we know you are always with us. In your name we pray, and are not afraid. Amen.