

Do Not Be Afraid Lesson Plan

The purpose of this Do Not Be Afraid lesson plan is to explore the theme of fear and trust in God through a guided meditation on Matthew 14:22-33, where Jesus walks on water during a storm. Participants will reflect on their own fears, seek ways to trust in God, and identify practical steps to overcome fear in their lives.

Materials and Preparation for the Do Not Be Afraid Lesson Plan

- Printed copies of the scripture reading
- Bible
- Narrator, Jesus, and Peter (can be chosen from the group)
- Comfortable seating arrangements
- Materials for the opening game

Opening Activity for the Do Not Be Afraid Lesson Plan

[Fearful Finds Relay](#)

The Fearful Finds Relay game, included in this lesson plan, offers a lighthearted and engaging way to explore the theme of fear. This relay challenges participants to confront their fear of unknown substances by reaching into a container to find hidden coins. The game may evoke humorous reactions as participants encounter unusual textures within the container. Through the Fearful Finds Relay and subsequent reflection, participants will have the opportunity to delve into their personal fears and discover how their faith can support them in facing and overcoming those fears.

[See the complete instructions for the game.](#)

Follow up with a few large group questions:

- How did the Fearful Finds Relay game relate to the theme of fear? Did you notice any moments when fear or discomfort arose during the game? How did you handle those emotions?
- Reflecting on the game, what do you think it teaches us about facing our fears? Are there any connections you can draw between the lighthearted fears of the game and the fears we experience in real life?

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- How do you think our faith and trust in God can help us when we encounter fears? Can you think of any specific examples from your own life or the lives of others where faith played a role in overcoming fear?

Scripture Reading for the Do Not Be Afraid Lesson Plan

Today, we turn our attention to a powerful and inspiring account from the Gospel of Matthew. In this passage, we encounter a remarkable moment when Jesus walks on water during a storm. The story captures a profound message about fear, trust, and the unwavering presence of Christ in our lives. As we reflect on Matthew 14:22-33, we are invited to explore how fear can sometimes hinder our ability to step out in faith, but with trust in God, we can find the courage to walk confidently through life's storms.

Within this narrative, we witness the disciples' initial fear as they spot Jesus walking on the water, mistaking Him for a ghost. Yet, Jesus reassures them with His words, saying, "Take courage, it is I; do not be afraid." Peter, filled with both faith and doubt, requests to join Jesus on the water. Although Peter's fear causes him to momentarily sink, Jesus extends His hand, catching Peter and reminding him of the importance of faith. This compelling encounter presents us with an opportunity to reflect on our own fears, the ways they impact our journey of faith, and the assurance that God is always with us, ready to lift us up when we stumble.

Read [Matthew 4:22-33](#). You can just read it, or do as suggested below and have it in parts. You will need a narrator, Jesus, and Peter. Have a group of youth play the part of the disciples:

Narrator: Then he made the disciples get into the boat and precede him to the other side, while he dismissed the crowds. After doing so, he went up on the mountain by himself to pray. When it was evening he was there alone. Meanwhile the boat, already a few miles offshore, was being tossed about by the waves, for the wind was against it. During the fourth watch of the night, he came toward them, walking on the sea. When the disciples saw him walking on the sea they were terrified.

Disciples: It is a ghost!

Narrator: They cried out in fear. At once Jesus spoke to them.

Jesus: Take courage, it is I; do not be afraid.

Narrator: Peter said to him in reply

Peter: Lord, if it is you, command me to come to you on the water.

Narrator: Jesus said

Jesus: Come.

Narrator: Peter got out of the boat and began to walk on the water toward Jesus. But when he saw how strong the wind was he became frightened; and, beginning to sink, Peter cried out.

Peter: Lord, save me!

Narrator: Immediately Jesus stretched out his hand and caught him, and said to him,

Jesus: O you of little faith, why did you doubt?

Narrator: After they got into the boat, the wind died down. Those who were in the boat did him homage, saying,

Disciples: Truly, you are the Son of God.

Reflection for the Do Not Be Afraid Lesson Plan

Next, have the group get comfortable and close their eyes. Have them put themselves in the reading by doing the following guided meditation:

Imagine you and Peter are speaking after this incident. He is explaining what happened. Listen to the voice of Peter telling this story.

We were so excited. Jesus had just fed the five thousand. It seemed like Jesus could do anything! Maybe he could drive the Romans out of Israel. Life under their rule was so hard. We had a hope like never before.

The crowd was large and we needed to get away. As usual, Jesus thought of us first. He told us to take the boat to the other side of the lake while he dismissed the crowd. We knew he would meet up with us later somehow.

Most of us were experienced fishermen, so it was like second nature to take the boat out. But we were in the middle of the lake when a sudden storm hit us. The boat was being tossed this way and that. It was one of the worst storms I had ever been caught in and everyone was getting worried that we wouldn't make it.

Then suddenly we saw someone walking through the storm on the water. No person could possibly do that. Was it a ghost? There were many old stories about the lake. We were terrified. We huddled on the deck in terror, sure we were about to die.

But then I heard the voice. "Have courage. It is I. Do not be afraid." I knew that voice. It was Jesus!

I'm always so impulsive! I called out, "Lord if it is you, command me to come to you on the water."

But then Jesus said, “Come”. Without thinking, I jumped over the side of the boat and started walking toward Jesus. On the water and in the storm!

But then I started thinking. This is impossible! I can’t walk on water. Why did I leave the boat? I started to feel very alone and powerless. I began to sink into the water. Then my head went under water and I couldn’t even hear the wind anymore. I was sinking, drowning, struggling.

A wave tossed me up to the surface again and I cried “Lord save me!” Suddenly I felt a hand grasp mine and pull me up. It was Jesus! He got me back in the boat.

And then he said “Why did you doubt?”

Small Group Reflection Questions for the Do Not Be Afraid Lesson Plan

After the reflection, young people will be divided into small groups for further discussion. The following questions will guide their conversation:

- We all have storms in our lives. What is it you fear right now?
- How are you currently dealing with this fear?
- How can Jesus help you in this situation?
- Are there any practical steps you can take in your faith life to help you with this fear?

After a few minutes, ask for volunteers to share their thoughts with the larger group.

Challenge for the Do Not Be Afraid Lesson Plan

Encourage the youth to think about asking Jesus to help them with a fear throughout the week.

As we reflect on our fears and the role of trust in God, I encourage each of you to take a moment to consider practical steps that can help you trust in God and overcome your fears. Consider a fear you are currently dealing with.

Each day this week, spend a few minutes imagining yourself facing this fear with Jesus beside you, saying “Do not be afraid. Take courage. I am with you.”

Prayer for the Do Not Be Afraid Lesson Plan

Gather the participants in a circle and lead them in a closing prayer. Thank God for His presence and ask for His help in facing fears with courage and trust.

Offer prayers for specific fears or intentions shared by participants during the small group discussion.

Dear Jesus, we come before You, knowing that You understand each of us, facing unique challenges and fears. We ask for Your help to walk in faith and trust You completely, no matter what circumstances we may encounter. Give us the strength and bravery to let go of our fears and surrender them into Your loving hands. We believe that with You by our side, we can conquer any obstacle. Amen.

Resources

[More Themes](#)

[Background Material](#)

[Music Suggestions](#)

[More Youth Ministry Lesson Plans and Reflections](#)

[Learn how to let Jesus calm the storms in teen life](#)

[Give up worry](#)