

TO HELP US STUDY

1. While Jesus' disciples were crossing the sea in the boat, what was he doing? _____
2. Late in the night the disciples were still only half way across the lake. Why did they move so slowly? _____
3. "During the fourth watch of the night," what did the apostles see? _____
4. What did they think they were seeing? _____
5. What did Jesus say to them? _____
6. What did Peter want to do? _____
7. Was Peter able to walk on the water? _____ Why? _____
8. Why did Peter begin to sink? _____
9. What happened when Jesus and Peter got into the boat? _____
10. What did the disciples say then? _____

TO HELP US REMEMBER: *Young ones*—Matthew 14:31, "You of little faith, why did you doubt?"
Older ones—Matthew 14:29-31, beginning with "Then Peter got down..."

TO CHALLENGE TEEN THOUGHT

In a good commentary, or study Bible, or Bible dictionary, find out what time "the fourth watch of the night" is on our clocks. Then, on the back of this page, write a good paragraph on the reason Peter began to sink. Is this the reason we "sink" sometimes when we try to serve Jesus?

TIPS FOR TEACHING PARENTS

Language remains our biggest barrier in teaching any child. Our kids must be able to understand the words we use. This story shows why we recommend that parents use an up-to-date version of the Bible in studying with their families. In older versions, for example, we hear the disciples saying, "It's a spirit," or "It's an apparition." Almost all the newer versions say, "It's a ghost!" and our kids can understand this. In John's Gospel, some of the older versions talk about how many "furlongs" the apostles had rowed. The NIV states the distance in miles that all of us can comprehend.

Another of our teaching tasks is to make the Bible stories seem real to our children. Our youngsters must realize that the Bible stories are about real people with real problems and real feelings. Only then can they appreciate what Jesus did to meet those problems and to respond to those feelings. A story like the one for this week helps us to do this, for in this story we see people experiencing many of the emotions that are part of every human life. Be sure your kids feel the fear of the apostles who cried out, "It's a ghost!" Not a play-like, Halloween-type ghost. The Bible says these grown men were *terrified*. Remind your children of times when they have been especially scared and then draw a parallel between their experience and the story. Help your kids to see men who were bone-tired, having fought the sea all night long. Again, speak to your children about their own weary moments. Other emotions displayed, such as Peter's panic when he began to sink, or the disciples' awe as they said, "Truly you are the Son of God," can impress our children with the reality of this story and its truths.

FOR ADULT STUDY: Isa 12:2; 41:10; 43:1; Heb 13:6; Ps 34:4; 62:5-8; 121; 125:1; Prov 1:33; 2 Tim 1:7; Lk 1:73-75; Jn 20:27; Phil 4:13.