

Object Lesson on Faith

I'm going to ask you a simple question: can you walk on water? Of course you can't!

But sometimes, even things that are impossible to do, become possible with a little faith – so here we go, our object lesson on faith...



What you need:

1. A glass or bowl of water
2. A box of paper clips
3. Dish detergent

How to do this Object Lesson on Faith

Try floating a paper clip on the water. It doesn't work. Paper clips sink. Nothing unusual there.

Next, bend one paper clip to make a "holder" for a second paper clip to rest on. Place the second paper clip flat on the paper-clip-holder, and gently submerge the paper clips into the water. This time, the unbent paper clip will actually float on the surface of the water.

Lesson: by ourselves, we can't do "the impossible". However, if we rest on Jesus, or have faith in Him (like the paper clip rests on the holder),

He will enable us to do what we never thought we could.

But we also need to beware of “doubt”. Just like Peter in the story, once he took his eyes off Jesus, he let doubt and fear invade his mind, and he started to sink.

Place some dish detergent in the water around the floating paper clip. It will start to sink.

Lesson: Jesus promises that even with faith the size of a mustard seed, we can move mountains. But if doubt crowds out our faith, we'll start to sink just like Peter did. We need to guard our hearts against doubting Jesus' power.

This object lesson on faith demonstrates:

1. That we need to rest on Jesus in order to do whatever seems impossible to us (just like the paper clip holder was necessary).
2. That doubt will cause us to falter (just like the dish detergent causes the floating paper clips to sink).

The Science behind the Object Lesson

This object lesson on faith, or making bits of metal float on water, is all about surface tension of the water. The water molecules at the surface of water create really strong bonds with one another (stronger than the bonds between water molecules that aren't at the surface). Water actually has the [strongest surface tension](#) of any liquid other than mercury! So if you lay the paper clip flat on the water, and don't break the surface tension, the molecular cohesive bonds will actually support the weight of the coin!

Dish detergent breaks down the cohesive bonds between the water molecules, which is why the paper clip will then sink if you add the detergent to the water.