

CASH AND THE ULTIMATE LINEUP

BY KATIE SWANK



The headlights of the Swank family adventure van, affectionately named, “Mercy”, cut through the quiet Monday night as the Swank family turned away from Oceanside Harbor. They were leaving the chilly ocean breeze behind them, knowing full well, they would be back soon. Cash leaned his head against his head rest, his body sinking into the seat from pure, happy exhaustion.

“Thanks dad,” he said. “I was so bummed that I left my wetsuit at home tonight and I didn’t think I would want to go out in the water without it. Thanks for encouraging me through my frustrations and coming out with me. You are always such a great example of overcoming obstacles and you help me have fun, no matter what. You’re the best dad ever.”

“The surfing was top-notch tonight, bud, just me and you out there in the waves together, it’s something I’ll never forget,” Daddy Swank agreed from behind the wheel, his flat-billed hat visible from the rear view mirror. “You carried great speed through those little harbor inside sections, son.”

It had been an incredible evening at Christian Surfers. The energy was still buzzing in the truck as Madison turned to her brother from the seat beside him, her blue eyes bright and her long blond hair perfectly brushed.

“That testimony from James Havens tonight was unreal,” she said, smiling at Cash. “Hearing how he trusted God and had his identity shift from pro-surfer to son of God, really impacted me. Then after devotions, we all went out and played on the sand together. It was fun getting out there to see everyone cheering each other on surfing those amazing waves—the whole experience was so cool.”

“And the community gathered under the black CS tent, with all those little groms serving one another, and the adults, the yummy pizza. That act of service melted my heart.” Mommy Swank turned her gaze towards her loving husband, her blue eyes and happy smile catching the glow of the beautiful sunset that evening as they made the last turn out of Oceanside Harbor on their way home. “Making those new friends, sharing that great food together—it really feels like a second family out there. What a way to kick off the start of the new school year.”



Cash nodded enthusiastically, completely agreeing with Madison and his parents as he recounted the waves caught that evening. “I got barreled again tonight, mom, just a bit, but the feeling is incredible, something I will never forget.”

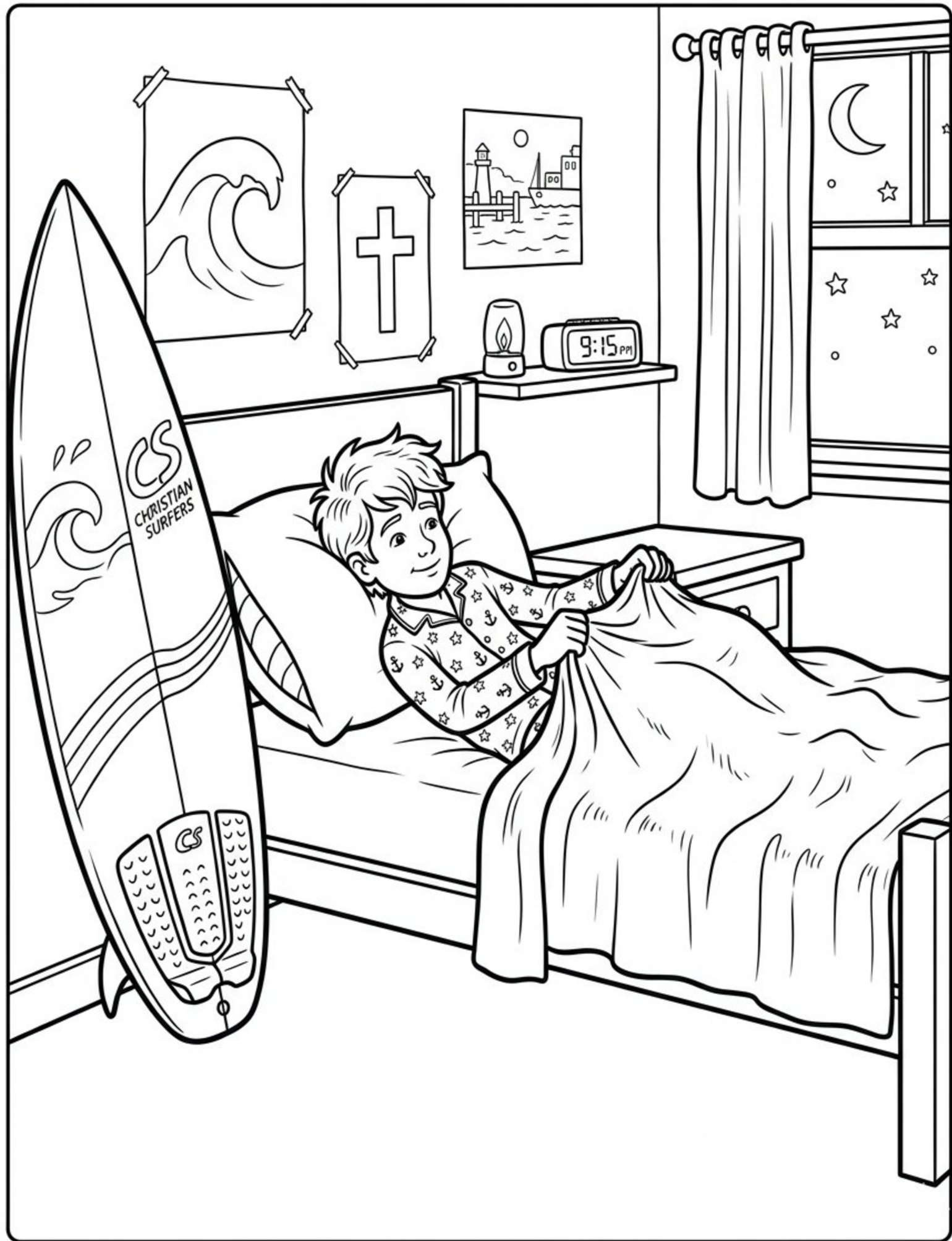
As a ten-year-old kid constantly fueled by a high-octane mix of pure stoke and infinite energy, Cash never slowed down. He was a perpetual motion machine—nothing from a grueling new middle school workbook schedule to paddling hard out at the harbor could sap his momentum while he was on his feet. He stayed wide awake and buzzing through the drive home, through the walk up the driveway, and even while mechanically moving his toothbrush.

His internal battery stayed at one hundred percent right up until the exact microsecond his body finally made contact with his bed. The absolute moment his head sank into his pillow and his hands pulled up his cozy blankets, the physical reality of his non-stop sprint of a day hit him like a tidal wave. The sheer weight of his exhaustion finally broke through his defenses as his muscles completely uncoiled. His hyperactive mind, which had been racing at full speed since sunrise, finally received the signal that it was safe to disengage.

Within three deep breaths, his thoughts slowed to a crawl, the familiar, comforting scent of surf wax on his nightstand drifted into the background, and the best dream ever took over.

The next morning over breakfast at the large island in the Swank family kitchen, Cash told his mom and sister all the details of what had happened that night while they were all sleeping. His wonderful dream impacted his whole family as he retold the accounts of the movie his vivid imagination played for him through the feeing hours of the night.

Mommy Swank, who was a decorated Children's Book Author, took the opportunity to write a book about Cash's dream so the whole world could get a closer look of what it's like to be a 10 year old boy, and it goes a little something like this:



The storm howled through the canvas of the small Galilean fishing boat, ripping freezing spray from the crests of the waves and flinging it directly into Cash's face. Cash wiped his eyes, his mind struggling to bridge the gap between his bedroom and where he was now. The air didn't smell like pizza at the harbor anymore; it smelled like heavy rain, old wood, and raw panic.

"Hold the line!" a voice shouted over the roar of the gale.

Cash gripped the side of the wooden ship. The boat pitched violently, dropping into a deep trough before slamming into the next swell. As a surfer, Cash knew the physics of waves. He understood buoyancy, hydrodynamics, and how a hull was supposed to slice through water. But this boat wasn't navigating through calm waters, this was a terrific storm of vast proportions.

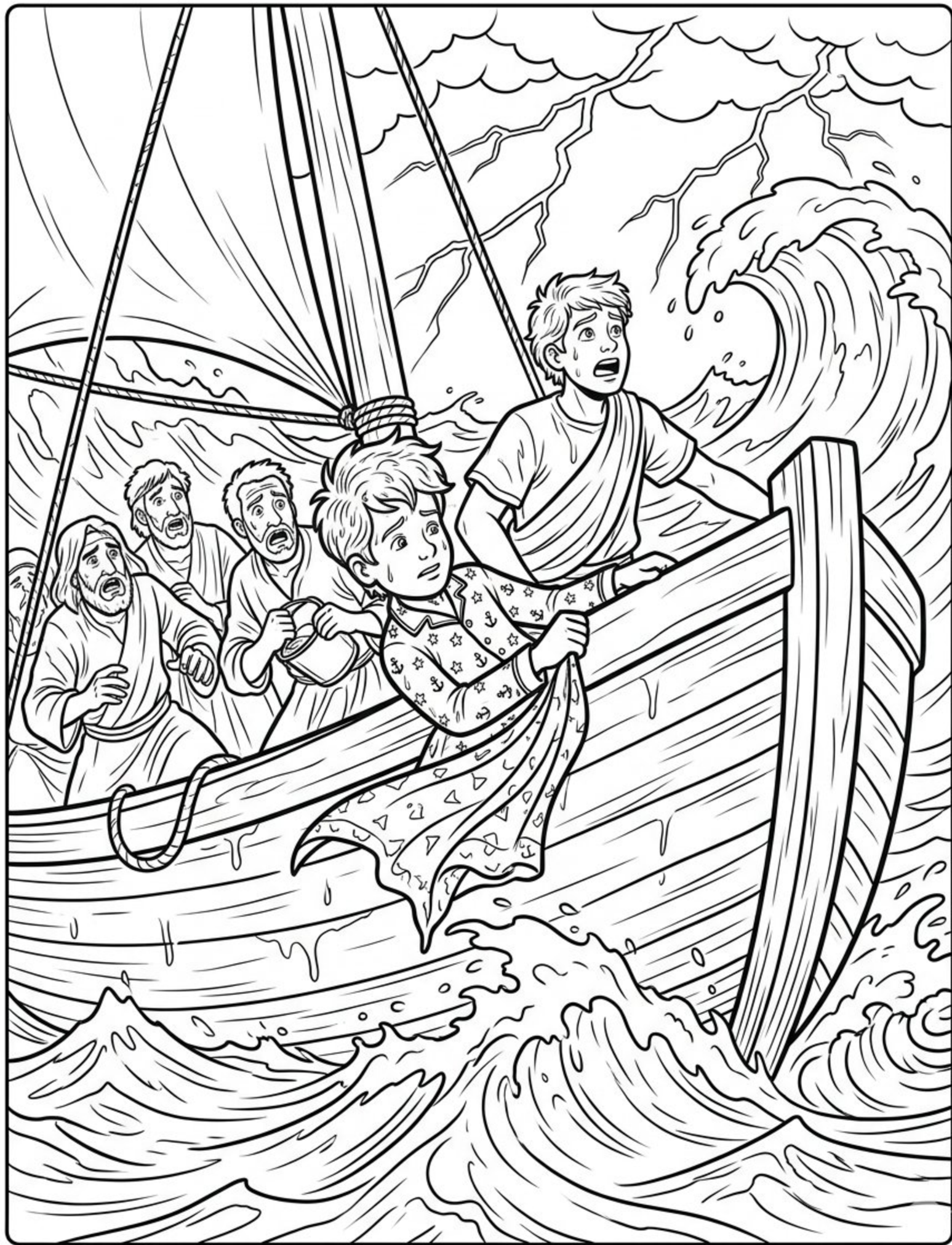
He observed that he was inside a heavy, waterlogged fishing vessel caught in a massive squall on the Sea of Galilee, and the forces of gravity and fluid dynamics were winning.

Beside him, eleven men were throwing their weight against the oars and bailing water with frantic, rhythmic desperation. There was one more man, however, standing near the bow, his face etched with a mixture of fierce determination and deep anxiety. Cash recognized him instantly without knowing how: it was Peter.

"We're making no headway!" Peter yelled, his voice strained against the wind.

Suddenly, the wind seemed to shift, and the storm clouds split open to reveal the full moon shining every so brightly on the spot where the boat and the crew were struggling. The light was so radiant that they could see clearly, everything around them was sparkling, while the wind and waves still crashed, unrelenting down upon the boat. A heavenly power was in the air sweeping its way through the wind, and the waves continued to churn. One of the disciples pointed out across the dark, undulating surface of the lake.

"Look! It's a ghost!" he screamed, his voice cracking with terror.



Cash poked his head above the edge of the boat, squinting through the spray and the driving rain. His well trained eyes, able to spot the subtle shifts in the ocean's horizon, locked onto a figure. Someone was walking on the water in a dry pure white robe. He was not swimming, not paddling, and not struggling, and the white of his teeth expressed the joy in his heart.

Cash pressed his grip firmly on the bow of the boat beside Peter and leaned over its wooden side while it tossed and turned in the storm, his eyes wide, completely captivated by what he was seeing. This wasn't a casual stroll across a calm, flat swimming pool. Cash knew from his entire 10 year old life of studying the Bible and hearing this over and over at home and at church.

It was Jesus on top of the water. He was navigating a massive, chaotic storm. He was stepping over surging whitecaps, shifting his weight with the crests, and descending smoothly into the deep troughs of the swells.

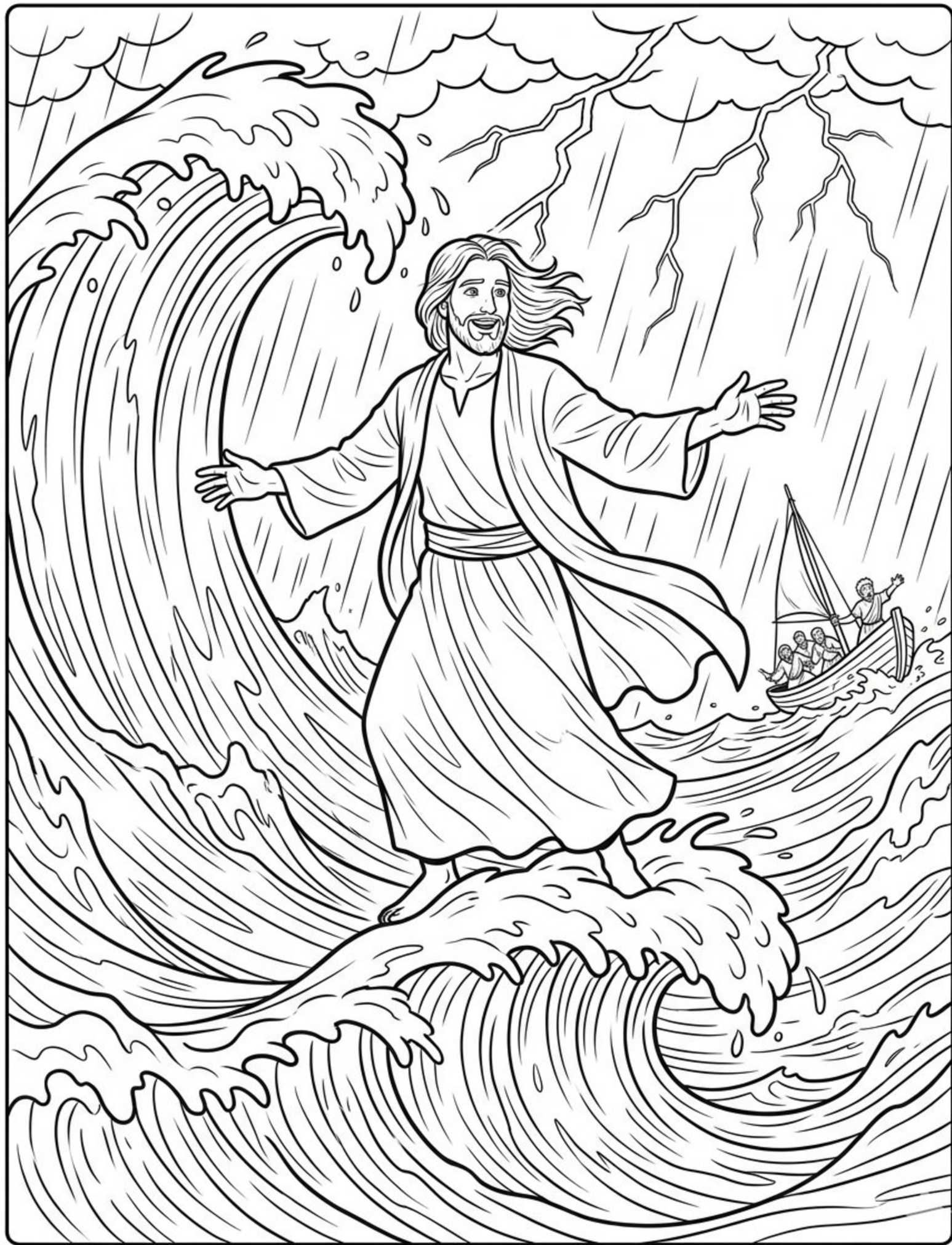
To Cash's surfer eyes, it looked like the ultimate display of styling through a heavy lineup. As Cash watched in awe, he realized that Jesus wasn't just walking; He was showing them the very first display of divine surfing.

As God in human form, Jesus had absolutely zero fear of his own Sea. Instead of fighting the elements, He was in complete control, in triumphant splendor in the middle of the tempest, in full dominion over the wild creation He had spoken into existence. He was effortlessly navigating the chaotic swells, treating the dangerous storm as His playground.

While the others were completely wrecked with terror, paralyzed by the howling wind, Peter noticed Jesus' confident smile and fearless energy. The sight of his Master matching the rhythm of the waves was so infectious that Peter's fear began to melt away into a wild desire to join Him. He didn't just want to be safe; he wanted to join in.

That was exactly when he cried out, "Lord, if it's you, tell me to come to you on the water!" Peter wanted to share in the glorious, fearless fun his Lord was having right out in the middle of the storm.

"Come," Jesus said.



Cash watched, breathless, as Peter gripped the side of the boat and swung his leg over the edge. Cash wanted to yell a warning, even though he knew that Peter would walk on water too! His knowledge of physics of the water, the lack of traction on a moving fluid surface, the sheer impossibility of it! In that moment, wisdom conquered knowledge because the Bible is true, from Genesis to Revelation. Peter's foot met the water, and instead of sinking, the water held solid and secure. Peter stepped completely out of the boat. He was standing on the raging sea.

Cash felt a surge of pure adrenaline, the same thrill he got when watching someone drop into a massive, perfect barrel. It was a flawless equilibrium of faith and supernatural physics.

Peter's athletic fisherman's frame matched the Lord's dynamic moves for a second, sliding down the first wave he encountered as he felt the rush of mastering his first wave, but as the second massive wave came blustering down toward him and he lost sight of His Master, Peter began to doubt.

A massive wave clipped the side of the boat, spraying high into the air. The wind roared with a sudden, vicious gust. Peter's eyes rushed back to the rest of the disciples and remembered what was really happening, his focus and faith were completely shattered in that instant. He looked away from all things that could save him and glanced down at the deep, black, churning vortex beneath his feet and the whitecap rushing toward him.

The moment Peter's focus shifted to the raging storm, the physics of the natural world reclaimed their powerful hold. His feet broke through the surface tension. Gravity began her powerful pull downward into the raging spinning circle in the stormy sea below.

"Lord, save me!" Peter cried out as he plunged beneath the freezing surface, only his grasping hand was left visible as the crew on the boat screamed out in terror.

Cash was one of those voices on the boat screaming. Seconds felt like eternity. This used to be just a story inside His head, but now the reality of the circumstances seemed so overwhelming, all of his senses were bathed in fire in spite of the drenched water logged clothing he was wearing.



"Help him Jesus," Cash screamed out again, without a sound, his voice completely drowned by the rushing of the waves and the deafening roar of the wind whipping around the torn sail above his head.

Instantly, Jesus was there.

His loving hand reached down into the dark water, locking onto Peter's wrist, and effortlessly pulled him back up onto the surface of the water. Peter was safe as he stood again on top of the water with his Lord by his side.

"You of little faith," Jesus said, his face filled with an expression of profound, gentle sorrow. "Why did you doubt?"

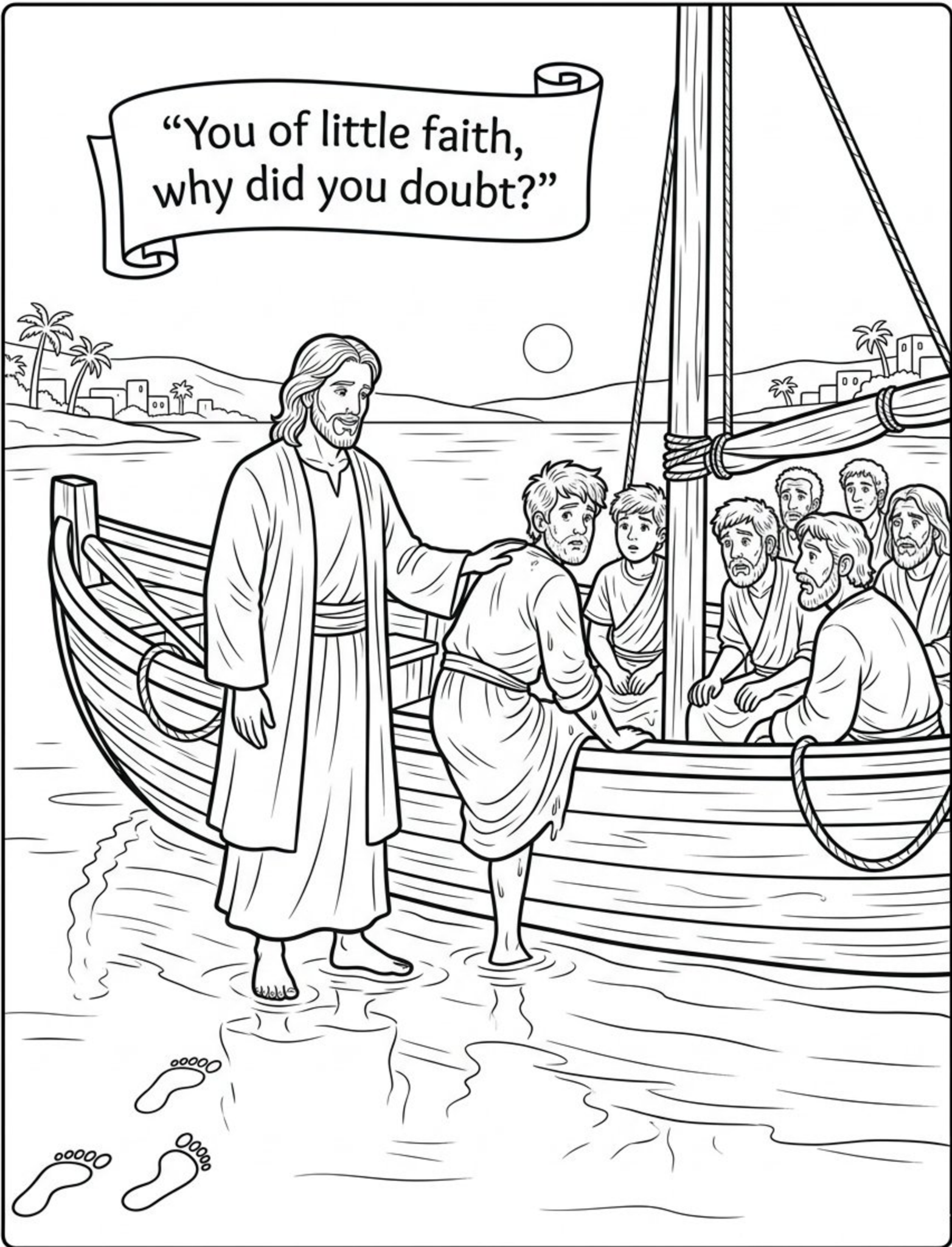
Jesus guided Peter back to the boat, and as they climbed over the wooden side, the crew observed that the wind and the waves had instantly stopped as the Lord was speaking to Peter out on the water. They had walked to the boat on peaceful, gentle water. The air had grown silent and still so that all of the disciples and Cash could clearly hear the words that have been chiseled into the hearts of so many for 2000 years.

"You of little faith, why did you doubt?"

Cash looked down at the water, mesmerized by its stillness and clarity. He reached out his hand and touched it, ripples of tiny waves started expanding out onto the Sea of Galilee. He observed the result of his touch, the result of his faith, the result of his doubt. So much had happened in such a short period of time. He also observed that it is one thing to read the Bible, but it is a totally different thing to actually be in the story!

The verse in James popped into Cash's head at that moment. *Don't just read the word, do as it says.* Use the amazing imagination that God has given you. Relish each word, experience it all as if you were there. Take in the smell, the sweet smelling aroma from the Lord. *For the word of God is alive and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart.* The Bible is Alive.

“You of little faith,
why did you doubt?”



In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning. Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made. In him was life, and that life was the light of all mankind. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.

All of these memory verses were playing tag in Cash's head as he rested on the side of the boat as it gently rocked back and forth. Realizing he had just witnessed the Ultimate Creator rewrite the laws of the universe was amazing and overwhelming. He felt tired again and closed his big beautiful blue eyes.

Cash blinked as the California sun shone through his window, and suddenly the smell of rain and old wood vanished. He gasped, sitting bolt upright. He was back in his bedroom in Oceanside. There was his favorite shortboard resting in the corner. He sat there for a moment, his heart still hammering against his ribs. Cash sat still and took a deep relaxing breath and closed his eyes, the adrenaline of the dream slowly giving way to a deep, settling peace.

The storm on the Galilean sea had felt incredibly real—the terrifying roar of the wind, the heavy weight of the waterlogged boat, and the sheer impossibility of what he had witnessed. But what struck him deepest wasn't just the miracle itself; it was the sudden, profound realization of who held that power.

He looked over at his surfboard, thinking about the invisible physical forces he studied in his Science of Surfing workbook—gravity, ocean currents, and wind patterns. Surfers spent their whole lives trying to read, respect, thrive and survive the ocean. Yet, Jesus hadn't just survived the storm; He had completely masterminded it, surfing through the chaotic swells with the joyful ease of a creator playing in his own backyard.

CASH WAS BACK IN HIS BEDROOM
IN OCEANSIDE. THE MORNING SUN WAS STREAMING
THROUGH HIS WINDOW, ILLUMINATING HIS FAVORITE
SHORTBOARD RESTING IN THE CORNER.



The very voice that had instantly flattened giant whitecaps into a sheet of smooth glass was the exact same voice he could hear inside while he spent time with Jesus everyday, reading his Bible, listening to Pastor Matt in Sunday School, at his desk at home doing school with Madison and his friends, and at Christian Surfers every Monday night. Jesus was always with him, no matter where he was.

Cash knew that middle school would bring its own kinds of storms—difficult classes, changing friendships, and moments where fear would try to wreck his focus, just like it did to Peter. But as he swung his legs out of bed, and before his feet touched the floor, he smiled as he considered his life.

His mind was changing, beginning to understand that he didn't have to face the rough waters of growing up on his own strength. The ultimate Creator of the ocean, the one who navigated the wildest waves with absolute joy and reached down to catch Peter, was the very same Lord walking right beside him through every single lineup in his own life.

Before he took his first step, he stopped to pray.

"Lord Jesus, thank You for the reminder this morning of who You are. You created the ocean, You rule the waves, and You are completely fearless. Forgive me for the times I look at the storms around me instead of keeping my eyes locked on You. Thank you for showing me that I am a lot like you because you are God and Man all in One. Thank you for showing me that you own the waves and you find joy in your Creation, it all surrenders to you and you are as wonderful as you are powerful. I am blown away by you Jesus. As I start this new school year and step into everything today has waiting for me, I want to share in Your joy. Give me the courage to step out in faith, and thank You for always being there to catch me if I start to sink. Guide my path today. In your powerful name, Amen."



Monday night at the harbor,
the offshore breeze was cool
The Swank family was driving home,
kicking off a week of school
Cash was humming a surfer's tune,
completely exhausted from the day
Infinite energy running hot,
until his head on the pillow lay
He wrapped himself in his cozy blankets,
his hyperactive mind at rest
And drifted off to a midnight sea,
to live out the ultimate test!

(Chorus)

Oh, look out on the water,
who's that
styling through the lineup?
Gliding down the heavy swells,
filling every beat
with stoke and love!
It's the Ultimate Creator,
surfing the waves,
yeah no board
Displaying perfect,
fearless joy—
He is the supernatural
Jesus my Lord!

(Verse 2)

The fishing boat was waterlogged,
the Galilean storm was wild
The crew was wrecked with heavy fear,
but Jesus looked at them and smiled!
Peter saw the Master's face,
infectious joy began to bloom
he asked the lord before his step,
and leapt out, out into the gloom!
His feet locked onto the churning sea,
a flawless balance born of faith
Until he looked down
at the whitecap wave,
peter's faith began to cave

(Chorus)

Oh, Oh, look out on the water,
who's that
styling through the lineup?
Gliding down the heavy swells,
filling every beat
with stoke and love!
It's the Ultimate Creator,
surfing the waves,
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Displaying perfect,
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He is the supernatural
Jesus my Lord!

"Lord, save me!" Peter cried,
plunging down into the cold
Immediately Jesus reached His hand,
with a strong and steady hold
"Why did you doubt, you of little faith?"
the Savior gently said
They climbed aboard
and the wind calmed down
as he spoke, stillness spread all around
The crew bowed to worship Him,
Knowing the God
who rules the sea
is the One who conquers
fears in me!

Cash woke up to the Oceanside sun,
streaming bright across his floor
Looking at his shortboard resting
right beside his bedroom door
Before he took his first morning step,
he stopped right there to pray
"Give me your joy
and fearless faith
and guide my path today!"
Because the same power
controlling Galilee
is the one who leads me

Oh, look out on the water,
who's that
styling through the lineup?
Gliding down the heavy swells,
filling every beat
with stoke and love!
It's the Ultimate Creator,
surfing the waves,
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