

Life of Christ

Peter Will Deny Jesus

John 13:36-38

Younger Verse

Simon, I have prayed that your faith will be strong. Luke 22:32 (CEV)

Older Verse

But Simon, I have prayed that your faith will be strong. And when you have come back to me, help the others. Luke 22:32 (CEV)

Bible Story

The following is a summary of the Bible story to help supplement your preparation. In your personal study time, use this summary as a guide, and make notes to help you remember your plans for the lesson. Please do **NOT** read to the children.

Have you ever said you would do something, and really meant it, but then later, not done what you said you would do? That has happened in the Bible, too. It never happened with Jesus, because Jesus always does what He says He will do! But as we continue learning about Jesus' last hours, on that Thursday night so long ago, we read about someone who thought He was stronger than he was!

As we continue studying the book of John, we are still in chapter thirteen. What have we seen so far? We have seen Jesus eating a meal with His disciples, Jesus washing His disciples' feet, Jesus talking about His death and trying to prepare His disciples for it and Jesus giving us a "new commandment," to love one another. That's a lot for one chapter, but that is not all. John shares one more thing with us.

Jesus has been talking about His death, and has told His disciples that He is going to a place where they will not be able to follow Him for a while. He is about to go to heaven! His disciples still have work to do, but one day they will be with Jesus there. Simon Peter, one of Jesus' disciples, asked Jesus, "Lord, why can't I go with you? I'm ready to die for you!" Does that seem odd, that Peter would be ready to die for Jesus? But, do you remember that when Jesus and His disciples left Bethany that Sunday before, they knew that the leaders in Jerusalem were ready to arrest Jesus and have him killed. Peter has just said that he is ready to die for Jesus. But Jesus knows Peter very well and Jesus tells Peter something that is very sad. Jesus says, "Peter, are you really ready to die for me? Before morning, even before the rooster crows, you will have already denied me three times." What does it mean that Peter would deny Jesus? Peter would say that he did not even know Jesus and that he wasn't one of His followers!

Lesson Goals

To understand God's protection of us.
To understand God's knowledge of us.

Although we don't have anymore information in the book of John, Doctor Luke wrote more about what Jesus said to Simon Peter that night. Jesus knew what Simon Peter was going to do, even before Simon Peter knew. Jesus shared with him that the devil had come to God and had already asked permission to test the disciples and see if they were really as devoted as they said they were. But, Jesus also shared with Peter that He was already praying for him, that his faith and trust in God would be strong enough. Jesus said something else to Peter. Knowing what was going to happen, Jesus encouraged Peter that when, not if, but when, he came back to Jesus, that he would help the others to be strong.

I bet you have questions about Jesus' conversation with Simon Peter, but especially about His conversation with the devil! Let's see if I can answer a few. Did you notice that Jesus said the devil had "asked permission" to test the disciples? This is not the first time in the Bible that the devil wanted to test and try to ruin someone.* But each time, the devil needed God's permission before he could do anything to the people of God, those who love God and follow God and trust in Him. You know, sometimes things happen that make us wonder what we believe and if God is really real. But we can trust in Him and feel safe because He tells us that He holds us safely in His hand. Nothing, absolutely nothing, not even the devil, can touch us without God's permission!**

I bet you also have questions about how Jesus knew what Peter would do. Well, if you will remember from our very first lesson, in John 1:1, it says that Jesus is God. And we read in one of the psalms of King David*** that God formed us inside of our mothers and that He knew all of the days of our lives before we had lived even one of them! God knows us very well! He knows what we think before we say anything and He knows what worries us and what we have trouble with. And knowing us so well, Jesus can also do something else very well - He prays for us! Just as Jesus prayed for Peter, He prays for you and for me! So what is there to be afraid of? God is in control!

You may have noticed that when I talked about God holding us in His hand, I said that He holds those who trust Him. He holds those who let Him hold them. Have you trusted in Jesus and decided to follow Him? Are you in God's hand? If you are not, talk to me today.

On "praying hand" templates, print the memory verse, one word at a time. Scramble the words and have students order them, practicing the verse as they do.

Preparing for Next Week

Lesson 33
Jesus Is Preparing a Place for Us
John 14:1-11

*Job 1:6-12,
2:1-6

**John 10:27-30

***Psalm 139:16

Memory Verse Activity

Preschool Lesson

Jesus Knows Me

Sing: “Jesus Loves Me”

Jesus loves me this I know,
For the Bible tells me so;
Little ones to Him belong,
They are weak, but He is strong.

Yes, Jesus loves me, yes, Jesus loves me.
Yes, Jesus loves me, the Bible tells me so.

Teach: The song “Jesus Loves Me” says that we are weak but Jesus is strong. Do you feel weak sometimes? I do not mean weak when you cannot pick up heavy things. Have you ever felt weak when you wanted to do the right thing but then you just did whatever you felt like doing. Do you know what? Jesus knows you. He knows when you are having a hard time doing the right thing. Jesus also knows this about me and he knew it about His followers many years ago.

In our lesson from the Bible, Jesus and His followers have eaten together and Jesus has washed their dirty, dusty feet. Jesus talks with Simon Peter and tells him what is about to happen. Jesus knew that Peter, and the other disciples were about to have a difficult time. Jesus did not get mad at them. Jesus did not send them away. Instead, Jesus prayed for Peter. Jesus prayed that Peter would keep believing that God could do anything and that Jesus was God’s son.

Jesus will do the same for you, too. Jesus is up in heaven again. Jesus knows when difficult things happen to us or when it is difficult to do the right thing. Jesus prays for you and He prays for me. He wants you to do the right thing and He wants me to do the right thing.

Pray: Thank you, Jesus, for knowing me and for praying for me.

Activities

- Provide coloring pages and word puzzles that will enhance what you have taught today.
- Make paper plate roosters. Add a red comb and orange beak. Use moveable (wiggly) eyes if available.
- Make an origami rooster. Instructions are available on the web or in your local library.
- Make a paper bag puppet of Peter.
- Use your students' knowledge of lessons over the past couple of weeks and recreate that Thursday night, up to Jesus' prophecy of Peter's denial.
- Sing "I've Got the Joy, Joy, Joy," "Little Square Box," and "Jesus Loves Me" - especially the second verse.
- For older students: Talk about Psalm 139. Encourage your students with the knowledge that God formed us inside of our mothers. He knew our entire life before we had lived a day of it. He loves us. . . .