

Life of Christ

Peter Denies Jesus

John 18:15-18, 25-27

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.

Who remembers where we are in the story of Jesus from the book of John? What night have we been talking about? Thursday night, the last night of Jesus' life! And what has been happening? Jesus ate supper with His disciples and then washed their feet. Jesus told them to love one another. Jesus told Peter that he would deny Him before morning. Do you remember how many times Jesus said Peter would deny him? Three. Then, Judas left the upstairs room to betray Jesus, and Jesus and His disciples left that room and walked through the city. While they were walking, Jesus taught them to stay close to Him through prayer and study, just like a grape must stay connected to its vine to grow. And Jesus prayed. Then, they crossed over a valley and went into a garden, the Garden of Gethsemane where Jesus was arrested and taken away.

Jesus was taken away from the garden to the home of the high priest. The high-priest was a very important man in Israel and there was a different high-priest chosen every year. This year, the high-priest was a man named Caiaphas. It was Caiaphas who had said about Jesus that it was better for one man to die so that the whole nation would not perish, or be done away with. Caiaphas' house, and many other houses back then, was built in the shape of a rectangle, around a courtyard. The courtyard was open to the sky with the walls of the house all the way around it.

Caiaphas' courtyard is where the people gathered as Jesus was taken in to talk with the high-priest and others. Simon Peter and John, two of Jesus' disciples, had followed Jesus and the soldiers. The high-priest knew John and let him come in to where Jesus was being questioned. Peter was left standing at the door to the house. When John realized that Peter was outside, he asked for him to be let in. There was a slave girl who was guarding the door, and as Peter entered, she asked him, "Aren't you one of Jesus' disciples?" Peter could have told her the truth, but he did not. Instead, Peter said, "No, I am not." Peter had denied knowing Jesus!

Lesson Goals

Introduce the idea that Jesus prays for us.
Explain that there is forgiveness for sin.

It was a cold night and there was a charcoal fire. Officers and slaves were gathered around the fire. Peter also stood there to keep warm. While he was warming himself, one of those who was also keeping warm around the fire, asked if he had walked with Jesus, if he were one of Jesus' disciples. Again, Peter answered, "No, I'm not." That is the second time Peter denied knowing Jesus.

There was a certain slave there, a relative of Malchus. Peter had cut off Malchus' ear while they were still in the Garden of Gethsemane. This relative was also standing around the fire and asked Peter, "Didn't I see you in the garden with Jesus?" This servant remembered Peter, but all Peter did was lie again. Then Peter heard a sound; "Cock-a-doodle-doo!" As soon as Peter lied the third time, as soon as Peter denied knowing Jesus three times, the rooster had crowed, just as Jesus said it would happen.

How awful! Earlier that same night, Peter had said he was ready to fight and even die for Jesus. And now, he wouldn't even speak up and say he knew Jesus! Peter wasn't as strong as he thought he was, but Jesus had known it all the time. Do you remember what Jesus told Peter earlier that same night when He let him know that he would deny Jesus? Jesus said, "Peter, I'm praying for you, that your faith will be strong, that you will not stop believing. When you come back, help the others." Jesus knew Peter would deny him. Jesus knows everything. He also knew that Peter would come back to Him. Jesus knew that Peter would one day help the other disciples and that he would do many wonderful things to help thousands of other people to know about Jesus and become a part of the church!

Peter did an awful thing when he lied about knowing Jesus. But there is something even worse than knowing Jesus and saying you do not. It is worse not to know and follow Jesus at all. Peter made a big mistake, but Jesus forgave Peter because Peter really did know Jesus. If you do not know Jesus and follow Him, you don't have the friendship with Him, yet, that allows you to communicate with Him. The only way to start that is to tell Him that you know you have done lots of bad things; the Bible tells us everyone has. Tell Him that you believe He was punished for you because of all those bad things we do deserve to be punished for! And tell Him that you want Him to take all of that away and come into your life. Tell Him that you want to follow Him and obey Him. If you do this, believing, you will begin a sweet friendship with Jesus that will never end!

Memory Verse Activity

Make rooster-shaped puzzles! Print a rooster template and use it to cut poster board rooster shapes. Allow older students to write the memory verse on their posters. Pre-print a few for younger students. Cut the roosters into random puzzle shapes. Practice the memory verse as puzzles are put together again.

Preparing for Next Week

Lesson 41
Jesus is Questioned
John 18:19-24, 28-40

Preschool Lesson

Peter Says He Doesn't Know Jesus

Sing: "Everybody Ought to Know"

Everybody ought to know, Everybody ought to know,
Everybody ought to know, Who Jesus is.

He's the Lily of the Valley, He's the Bright and Morning Star.
He's the Fairest of ten thousand, Everybody ought to know.

Teach: What do you remember from our lesson last week? What happened to Jesus? Some men and soldiers came to the garden where Jesus and His friends were. Those soldiers tied Jesus up and carried Him away.

He was taken away from the garden to the home of a very important man who wanted to ask Him a lot of questions. The man's name was Caiaphas. Caiaphas' house was built in the shape of a rectangle, around a patio. The patio was open to the sky with the walls of the house all the way around it, like an opened box!

Many people were out in Caiaphas' patio. Two of Jesus' disciples, Simon Peter and John, had followed Jesus and the soldiers. The high-priest knew John and let him come in to where Jesus was being questioned. As Peter entered the patio, there was a slave girl guarding the door. She asked him, "Aren't you one of Jesus' disciples?" Peter said, "No!" That was the first time Peter said He did not know Jesus. (Hold up one finger.)

It was a cold night and someone had built a charcoal fire out in the middle of the patio. There were many people around the fire. Peter stood there to keep warm. One of the people around the fire asked if he had walked with Jesus. Again, Peter answered, "No." That was the second time Peter said He did not know Jesus. (Hold up two fingers.)

There was someone else around the fires who had been there when Jesus was arrested. He asked Peter, "Didn't I see you in the garden with Jesus?" This servant remembered Peter, but all Peter did was lie again. Then Peter heard a sound; "Cock-a-doodle-doo!" This was the third time Peter said that He did not know Jesus. (Hold up three fingers.) When he did, the rooster crowed, just as Jesus said it would happen.

But just like Jesus had said, He prayed for Peter. Even after doing a bad thing, he would do good things for Jesus again. And just like Peter, when we do bad things, Jesus can help us do good things again, too.

Pray: Thank you, God, for praying for me!

Activities

- Provide coloring pages and word puzzles that will enhance what you have taught today.
- Provide each student with several un-lined index cards. Have them illustrate today's lesson, frame by frame. End with the memory verse. Connect the pages, making a book.
- Make your own cards, illustrating the lesson. Scramble the cards and let your students put them in the correct order.
- Make origami roosters or beak-shaped folded paper finger puppet roosters.
- Reenact the story. Bring robes, a stuffed rooster, a fake camp fire, etc. Let your students tell the story.
- Make masks of Peter, John, Malchus' relative, the slave girl, etc. Choose students to represent each of the characters. Read a line from the story or say what one of the character's might have said. Allow your students to choose the correct character. For example: for John, say, "My friend, Peter, is outside. Can you please let him in."