

Life of Christ

Peter's Second Chance

John 21:15-25

Younger Verse

"You must follow me!" John 21:22b (NirV)

Older Verse

"You must follow me!" John 21:22b (NirV)

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.

This is our very last lesson from the book of John! Can you believe that we have already studied the entire book? Twenty-one chapters! We have learned so many things and we have seen that John wrote the book so that we can believe that Jesus is God's Son. By believing in Him we can have eternal life.

We have learned a lot about Peter, as well. When Jesus began teaching, who was it that brought Peter to Jesus that first time? (His brother Andrew. John 1:40-41) When Jesus was saying some difficult things and some of His followers left Him, He asked His disciples what they thought. Who did Peter say Jesus was? (The Christ, the Son of the Living God. John 6:68) On that last night before Jesus was nailed to the cross, when He ate a special supper with His followers, what did Jesus do to Peter's feet, as well as the others? (He washed them. John 13:5-6) And later that night, when Jesus and His disciples arrived at the garden, they were met by people who wanted to arrest Jesus. What did Peter do then? (He cut off Malchus' ear. John 18:10) While Jesus was being questioned, what happened after Peter denied three times that he knew Jesus? (A rooster crowed. John 18:27)

*Two different Greek words for *love* are used here:

Agape— unconditional, devoted love, the love God has for us

Phileo— a strong, caring feeling between good friends, "brotherly love"

Well, last week we learned about the wonderful breakfast Jesus had on the beach with His friends. After they finished eating breakfast, Jesus asked Peter something. Jesus asked, "Peter, do you love me, really love me, the way God loves? Do you love me more than these others do?"* Peter answered Jesus and said, "Jesus, you know that I love you like a brother, like the very close friends we are."* Peter could not completely say yes to Jesus and answer back the same way because He knew that he had made mistakes. But Jesus told Peter to feed His lambs. Do you remember when we talked about Jesus being the Good

Lesson Goals

Teach mercy and forgiveness.
Conclude the study of John stressing the importance of our believing.

Shepherd? If Jesus is the Good Shepherd, what are we called when we believe in Him? Sheep or lambs! So Jesus was telling Peter to make sure that the people who were following Jesus had food to eat. Jesus was giving Peter work to do.

A second time, Jesus asked Peter, "Peter, do you love me, really love me, the way God loves?" And Peter answered, "Jesus, you know that I love you like a brother, like a very close friend. I care for you a lot."* And Jesus told Peter to be a shepherd to His sheep. Jesus wanted Peter to take care of other believers, to lead them and show them the right way to go. But then Jesus asked Peter a third question. Jesus asked, "Peter, do you really care about me the way friends and brothers do?"* Peter was hurt that Jesus would ask Him this three times. Peter remembered that just a few days before he had denied Jesus. He had denied Him three times, the same number of times that Jesus asked Peter about his love for Him. This was a reminder from Jesus, but it was gentle. Jesus still loved these men, even Peter who said He had never known Him. Jesus was giving Peter a second chance.

Jesus and Peter kept talking as they walked on the beach. Jesus shared with Peter that he had been able to do what he wanted to when he was younger. But Jesus also told Peter that when he was older, things would happen to him that he would not want to happen. He would be crucified one day, just as Jesus had been! Peter noticed John following them as they walked on the beach and asked Jesus what would happen to John. Jesus told Peter not to worry about what would happen to John. But Jesus said, "Peter, you follow me!" Jesus wanted Peter to trust Him and obey no matter what happened to him or anyone else. The book of John does not tell us anything else about Peter, but if you will read the book of Acts, you will see that Peter did trust Jesus and obeyed Him until that day when he, too, was crucified.

The ending of Peter's life seems sad, but what can we learn from Peter? Was Peter perfect? No! He messed up, or sinned, didn't he? But Jesus was patient with Peter, wasn't He? And He has been patient with you, too. Maybe you have messed up and need a second chance from God. Ask Him. Or maybe you have never chosen to follow Jesus and you need to make the first step of trusting Him with your life and believing that He can change you into something amazing, just like He did with Peter. The Message version of the Bible says in John 21:25, the very last verse of John, that "There are so many other things Jesus did. If they were all written down, each of them, one by one, I can't imagine a world big enough to hold such a library of books." Will you believe in this amazing God today?

**Memory Verse
Activity**

Make "Follow Me" Footprints. Print the memory verse across the bottom or top of colored construction paper. With fairly thin white paint, allow your students to leave two staggered footprints. Set aside for drying.

Preschool Lesson

A Second Chance!

Sing: “Jesus Loves Me”

Teach: This is our very last lesson from the book of John! Can you believe that we have already studied twenty-one chapters! We have learned so many things. We have learned a lot about Peter while we have been studying the book of John. When Jesus began teaching, do you remember who it was that brought Peter to Jesus that first time? (His brother Andrew. John 1:40-41) On that last night before Jesus was nailed to the cross, when He ate a special supper with His followers, what did Jesus do to Peter’s feet? (He washed them. John 13:5-6) And while Jesus was being questioned, what happened after Peter said three times that he did not know Jesus? (A rooster crowed. John 18:27)

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A second time, Jesus asked Peter, “Peter, do you love me, really love me, the way God loves?” And Peter answered, “Jesus, you know that I love you like a brother, like a very close friend. I care for you a lot.” And Jesus told Peter to take care of the other people who believed in Jesus the way he did. Peter was to show them the right way to go. But then Jesus asked Peter a third question. Jesus asked, “Peter, do you really care about me the way friends and brothers do?” Peter was sad that Jesus would ask Him this three times. It reminded Peter that just a few days before he had said he did not even know Jesus. He had said this three times, the same number of times that Jesus asked Peter about his love for Him. This was a reminder from Jesus, but it was gentle. Peter had really messed up, but Jesus still loved Peter. Jesus was giving Peter a second chance. And He gives me a second chance and He will give you a second chance, too.

Pray: Thank you, God, for second chances.

Activities

- Provide coloring pages and word puzzles that will enhance what you have taught today.
- For older students: Dig a little deeper. After today's lesson, review the lesson of Peter's denial of Jesus in John 18:12-27. Ask them questions about the surroundings. Challenge them to find the one detail in surroundings that these two stories have in common. (Answer: A charcoal fire. John 18:18, John 21:9) Talk about our sense of smell. Ask them what they think of when they smell certain things. Share with them that it was probably the same for Peter. Smell triggers the memory. Also, think about how many times Peter denied Jesus. Then, talk about how many questions Jesus asked Peter after they had eaten breakfast.
- For older students: Share F. M. Lehman's hymn "The Love of God." The third verse that begins with "Could we with ink the ocean fill" echoes John 21:15.
- Play "Go Fish." Make and use cards in pairs according to what has been learned throughout the book of John.
- Play "Who Am I." Before class, prepare strips of paper with names of people we have studied about in the book of John. During game time, attach a strip of paper to each student's back. They must walk around trying to find out who they are by asking other students questions that can be answered with a "yes" or a "no." Once a student discovers who they are they can sit down.