

Peter

Bible Verse: The LORD will protect you on your journeys—whether going or coming. (Psalm 121:8)

Bible Story: Matthew 26:57-58, 69-75

Bible Background

When Jesus called Peter to be his disciple, Peter warned him that he was a sinful man (Luke 5:8). Jesus called Peter to follow him anyway, saying, “Don’t be afraid. From now on, you will be fishing for people” (5:10).

Last week, when we heard the story of Jesus praying in the garden, we learned that Jesus told Peter that Peter would deny Jesus three times before the rooster crowed. Although Peter was determined to prove Jesus wrong, he did not.

Unlike Judas, whose betrayal of Jesus was planned, Peter did not set out to deny Jesus—it just happened. Peter was trying to follow Jesus. After Jesus was arrested, Peter followed at a distance. As he sat around a fire in the courtyard, the accusations began to come: “You were also with Jesus the Galilean.” “This man was with Jesus, the man from Nazareth.” “You must be one of them.”

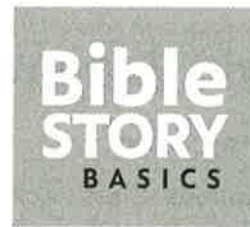
Put yourself in Peter’s place. The Roman soldiers had arrested Jesus, and things were starting to get ugly. Peter was scared. He may have feared that his life was in danger—and it might have been. When the accusations began, Peter acted out of self-preservation. He denied his association with Jesus. And then Peter heard the rooster crow and remembered Jesus’ words. Peter had failed Jesus, even before Jesus’ trial had begun. Peter cried uncontrollably.

Peter did redeem himself. After the Resurrection, Peter became one of Jesus’ most enthusiastic evangelists, spreading the good news far and wide.

Devotion

It can be helpful to remember Peter’s fear. We often see the followers of Jesus as some sort of super humans and think we can never be like them. But Peter and all the rest were very human—they had the same doubts and fears we encounter. Because he was afraid, Peter denied that he knew Jesus. We sometimes don’t do what is right, because we are afraid. The good news is that just as Peter was given another chance, so are we. Jesus never denies us.

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Bible Beginnings

Welcome

Supplies: Class Pack—Attendance Chart, p. 7; CD-ROM; CD player; tape; offering basket

- Display the attendance chart (Class Pack) and “Unit 1 Bible Verse Picture” (Class Pack—p. 7) at eye level.
- Play “The B-I-B-L-E” from the CD-ROM (lyrics on p. 92) as you welcome each child.
- Have each child mark his or her attendance.
- Show the children where to place their offerings on the worship table.

SAY: Today, we will hear about how one of Jesus’ closest friends made a mistake.

Bible Puzzle

Supplies: Bible Story Leaflets—Session 5, p. 4; crayons, markers, or colored pencils

- Give each child today’s Bible Story Leaflet. Encourage each child to find and circle the roosters hidden in the picture. Then they may color the picture.

SAY: When Peter heard a rooster crow, he knew that Jesus loved him even though he wasn’t perfect.

Bible Play

Supplies: sand or finger labyrinths OR copies of Leader Guide—p. 12 for each child and colored pencils

- Display the sand or finger labyrinths, or photocopy “Finger Labyrinth” for each child.
- Encourage the children to trace the labyrinth with a finger or to use a colored pencil to trace the path to the center and back out until they have filled the path.

SAY: In today’s story, we follow Peter’s journey through a difficult time.

Into the Bible

Time for the Bible Story

Supplies: CD-ROM, CD player

- Play “I Will Be with You” from the CD-ROM.

SAY: A rooster shows up in our story today. Let’s cock-a-doodle-doo our way over to our Story Area.

- Have the children sit down.

Read the Bible

Supplies: CEB Bibles

- Help the children find Matthew 26.

SAY: We pick up in Matthew right where we left off last week. Jesus had just been arrested, and the disciples had all run away.

- Have a child read Matthew 26:57-58 out loud.

SAY: Peter was waiting to see what happened to Jesus. Meanwhile, Jesus was being questioned by the chief priests, who wanted to prove that Jesus had broken the law. It was not going well for Jesus.

- Have another child read Matthew 26:69-72 out loud.

ASK: Why was Peter pretending he didn't know Jesus? How do you think he felt when the people questioned him?

- Have a third child read Matthew 26:73-75 out loud.

ASK: How did the people know that Peter was one of Jesus' friends? Why do you think Peter cried?

SAY: Peter reminds us that even the disciples were human and made mistakes.

Experience the Bible Story

Supplies: Bible Story Leaflets—Session 5, pp. 2-3; pens

SAY: Peter was a complicated man. Given how he let Jesus down, you might be surprised to hear that he became an important leader in the church. We don't know much about what Peter did after he ran away from the courtyard, but we know he was with the disciples when Jesus appeared to them after Jesus' resurrection.

- Have the children consider what Peter might have done in the days between his denial and Jesus' appearance to the disciples.
- Encourage the children to record their ideas in the Leaflet to complete the story.
- When the children have finished the story, encourage them to share their story with the group or with a partner.

ASK: What do you like about Peter? What do you dislike? How is he like or unlike us?

Bible Connections

Do I Know You?

Supplies: none

SAY: Peter was recognized and called out because his accent revealed that he was from the same geographic area as Jesus. You're probably familiar with most of our voices and can recognize who is speaking without even looking. But let's make it a little more difficult.

- Select one child to be Peter.

- Have Peter sit in a chair, facing away from the group, and close his or her eyes.
- Select another child to be the Speaker. Have the Speaker select an accent to use to ask, “Is that you, Peter?” Give Peter three guesses to determine who is speaking.
- If the Speaker fools Peter, have the Speaker take Peter’s place. If not, Peter remains in the chair.
- Repeat until each child has had a chance to be either Peter or the Speaker.

SAY: Our voices might reveal something about us, but they don’t explain everything.

Forgiveness Scribbles

Supplies: plain paper, pencils, and erasers

- Distribute a piece of paper, a pencil, and an eraser to each child.

SAY: Even Peter made mistakes—big ones. And Jesus still loved him. We make mistakes too. And Jesus still loves us!

- Have each child write a sentence or two about a time she or he made a mistake or made a poor choice.

TIP: Remind the children that they won’t be sharing what they wrote. Encourage them to give one another privacy while writing.

- Have the children scribble over their words until they can’t be read at all.
- Then encourage the children to use their eraser to draw a heart in their scribbles.

SAY: When we make mistakes and ask God for forgiveness, Jesus takes our guilt and shame away and replaces them with his love.

Learn the Bible

Memorize the Bible Verse: Draw It

Supplies: Class Pack—p. 7, plain paper, markers or colored pencils

- Show the children the Bible verse picture.
- Read the Bible verse together.
- Give each child a piece of paper.

SAY: Journeys in Bible times usually meant walking a long way to get to the nearest village or town. The journeys were tiring and dangerous, so knowing that God was with you on your journey was especially comforting. Our journeys are a bit different these days. Think about a kind of journey you have taken, then draw a picture of it.

- Have each child illustrate a journey (literal or figurative) they have taken.
- Encourage the children to write the Bible verse on their journey picture.

SAY: Our journeys can be quite different now, but it’s still good to know that God is with us wherever or however we go.

Bible Tool: Chapters and Verses

Supplies: CEB Bibles, Leader Guide—pg. 36, pens

- Photocopy “Not-So-Trivial Peter” for each child.

SAY: Apart from today’s story, we haven’t talked a lot about Jesus’ disciple named Peter. He turned out to be a pretty big deal in the Gospels and the rest of the New Testament. Peter was one of the most passionate disciples—rushing to Jesus and jumping to his defense—but he also missed the mark pretty often too—like in today’s story. Let’s see what else we can learn about Peter.

- Distribute “Not-So-Trivial Peter” to each child.
- Encourage the children to look up each Scripture reference and circle the correct answer (answers on p. 94).

SAY: Over the next few months, we’ll hear more and more about Peter. Knowing a little bit about him will help us understand these stories.

Express Praise

Praise and Pray

Supplies: CD-ROM, CD player

- Sing with the children the song “Hear Us As We Pray” from the CD-ROM (lyrics on p. 92).
- Encourage the children to name any prayer requests.

PRAY: Thank you, God, for believing in us and our ability to do better next time. Amen.

Blessing

Supplies: none

- Have all the children face one side of the room.

SAY: If you journey this way, God is with you. (*Have the children turn to face the opposite side of the room.*) If you journey this way, God is with you.

- Call each child by name.

SAY: (*Child’s name*), God is always with you.

- Continue until you have blessed each child.

Not-So-Trivial Peter

What was Peter's job before he became a disciple of Jesus? (Matthew 4:18)

- a. Carpenter
- b. Fisherman
- c. Gardener
- d. Teacher

What did Peter recognize Jesus to be? (Mark 8:29)

- a. The Christ
- b. His best friend
- c. A genius
- d. The Holy Spirit

Which person's ear did Peter cut off? (Don't worry; Jesus fixed it.) (John 18:10)

- a. Judas
- b. John
- c. Soldier
- d. Servant

What curious surface did Peter walk on? (Matthew 14:29)

- a. Table
- b. Water
- c. Donkey's back
- d. Wall

For what did Peter get put in jail (this time)? (Acts 4:1-3)

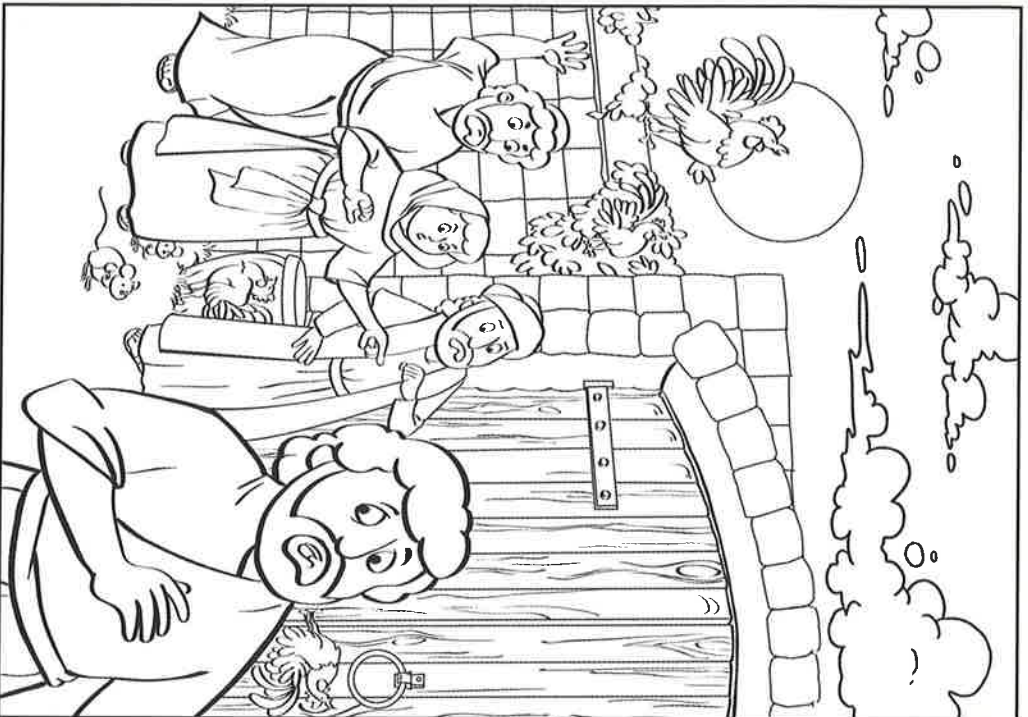
- a. Stealing
- b. Cutting off someone's ear
- c. Teaching
- d. Lying

Who helped Peter escape from jail (this other time)? (Acts 12:7)

- a. Angel
- b. John
- c. Paul
- d. Jesus

Birds in Hiding

Circle the four roosters in the picture.



Talk About It

Use these questions to talk about today's Bible story with your child.

- Have you ever felt like Peter did after letting down a friend?
- Is it hard for you to forgive others? Why or why not?

PRAY: Thank you, God, for Peter, who reminds us that we all mess up sometimes and that you love us anyway. Amen.

Peter

Matthew
26:57-58, 69-75

The Lord will protect you on your journeys—
whether going or coming.

Psalms 121:8

Bible
STORY
BASICS

Peter

Imagine what might have happened between these two important parts of Peter's story.

Then Peter heard the rooster crow. Peter remembered what Jesus had said to him: "Before the rooster crows tonight, you will pretend you don't know me three times." Peter ran away, crying.

God sent the Holy Spirit to be with Peter. Peter traveled around, preaching and teaching about Jesus and healing many people. Peter became the leader of the early Christian church in Jerusalem.

