

JESUS FORGIVES PETER

All Activity Sheets

KEY WORDS

FORGIVE SINS CREATION OLD NEW DENY FAIL FAILURE

BIBLICAL REFERENCE

Mark 14:66-72 and John 21:1-19

LESSON OBJECTIVE

To help the students understand that, just as Jesus forgave Peter when Peter denied him, Jesus can also forgive their sins.

MEMORY VERSE

"Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here!" (2 Corinthians 5:17, NIV*).

PREPARE YOURSELF TO TEACH

The fear of failure is acquired from an early age. The world cries out that by our triumphs, or failures, we will be judged. This does not only happen at work, or with adults, but also happens in elementary classes, in the playground and playrooms, and in school cafeterias. Elementary students are familiar with success and failure. Sadly, they are also used to the popular belief that says: "If I do not succeed on the first attempt ... I'll give up".

Today's lesson shows students the truth that Jesus is not focused on our mistakes, but that he is willing to forgive us if we sin. Peter denied Jesus. That was sin. The children will discover in this lesson that Jesus forgave Peter when he came to him repentant. If we sin, Jesus will forgive us. We only need to go to him with true repentance for our sin. Peter did so, and as an apostle became a leader of the early Church.

Your students should feel encouraged by this lesson when they hear about Peter's journey of faith. They should be encouraged to know that if they are wrong or they sin, Jesus will forgive them. They should feel happy knowing that God transforms them and works through them to bring salvation to other people, family and friends.

BIBLICAL COMMENTARY

Read Mark 14:66-72 and John 21:1-19. Remember a time when you failed Jesus? Do you remember when you “denied” the Lord in one way or another? I do! For some of us, our failures have not been as dramatic as Peter’s. We have not failed Jesus in a public market as happened to the apostle. But we know our faults very well. And Jesus does too. It is easy to relate to Peter. Despite his swagger, Peter collapsed by the fire. Moments earlier, he had promised to fight for Jesus. But it took him by surprise to see angry men, with clubs and swords, arresting his Master, and he panicked.

It is very easy to take a position in favor of the Lord in the middle of a worship service. In that situation, it is not difficult to be Jesus’ allies. We’re happy when we sing and pray, and we may even raise our hands. There are no problems!

The difficult thing is to live the Christian life in the real world, in the street. It becomes difficult when it is not popular to be a Christian. It is not easy to be loyal to Jesus when others mock or threaten us. If you failed Jesus, you know how bad you felt. You betrayed the most important person in your life. You made a promise and broke it. Your firm commitment collapsed under the pressures. And you ask yourself, “How can Jesus trust me again?”

Still, he continues to trust us. He waits for us on the beach and prepares us breakfast. He does not do it to then give us a beating because of our bad attitudes. He does it because he loves us and wants to spend time with us. And there comes the question of Jesus, “Do you love me?” And we thought ... “I knew it! He still remembers what I did! He’s angry or offended!” But it is not like that. In the question there is an opportunity to say, “Yes, I still love you.”

Without the question, we have no way of answering him. If he does not ask us, we cannot let him know, from our heart, that we still love him. The question gives us the opportunity to express what we desperately want to say. “I was wrong, but I still love you.” At first we think that it would have been better for Jesus to say: “I love you.” But that phrase was not necessary. The fact that Jesus loved Peter and loves us is understandable. He proved then, and continues proving today, his love in so many ways, not to mention his journey to the cross. Jesus never failed us, nor will he. His love for us should never be questioned.

Jesus loved a leper enough to touch him and heal him. Jesus loved a sinner like Levi enough to call him to be one of his disciples. Jesus loved the children enough to give them his time and use them as the center of an illustration of how we should be if we want to enter into His Kingdom. Jesus loves you and me enough to touch us and find us in our sinful state. He loves us so much that he draws us to him. He loved us enough to die on the cross. He continues to love us, even when we do wrong. And now, he prepares us breakfast and invites us to sit down to eat with him. Just a timely question: “Do you love me?”

INTRODUCE THE LESSON

Important words

Since this is the last session of this unit, do the envelope game with the important words. Children should already know the words and their meaning: forgiveness, disciples and Savior.

TEACH THE LESSON

Peter finds forgiveness

The night was calm and dark. Peter had never been so sad in his life as he was at the moment. A few hours earlier, the soldiers had arrived and taken the Master. Peter knew that the men wanted to hurt Jesus. Peter was confused and angry. While he was stopped in the courtyard of the palace where Jesus had been taken, Peter warmed his hands by the fire. He was trembling with cold! He had been at Jesus’ side in exciting situations when teaching about God’s love for his people. He had learned a lot from him and loved him.

But that night, Peter was afraid. “Jesus was arrested,” he thought. “What can I do?” Peter was startled when he heard someone approaching where he was. Although there were many people out there, he wanted no one to bother him. “You were with Jesus of Nazareth!” said a woman. “I do not know what you’re saying, or who you mean!” said Peter. He turned around and headed for another place. He wanted to be alone. It was not long, when the woman approached Peter again. But this time she did not speak to him, but to all who passed by and to the curious who had stopped. “He is one of them!” she shouted, pointing at him with her finger. But once again, he again denied it, “No, no!” A group of people approached Peter. He was terrified.

Others who were there insisted, “You are truly one of them, because you are a Galilean and your way of speaking is similar.” Peter exploded with anger and began to curse and swear, “I do not know this man!”

Suddenly, a shuddering noise was heard in the air. It was the crowing of a rooster close by. It not only crowed once, but twice. Peter was frozen ... listening. He could not believe it! At that moment he remembered the words of Jesus, who loved him so much.

“Before the cock crows twice, you will deny me three times!”

It was too much for Peter. He had never felt so badly. Jesus was right. Peter had denied him, and not only that, he had lied saying that he did not know him. He had denied Jesus three times! The apostle fell to the ground in deep weeping.

A few days after Jesus was crucified, died and had been resurrected, Peter was with his friends, trying to fish in the Sea of Galilee. The men were tired. They had been fishing all night but had not caught a single fish. Everyone felt very badly, they were discouraged and sad.

The morning sun shone and it was a splendid day. The glare did not let them see clearly. But one of them spotted someone who was on the beach, as if spying on them. It was Jesus, but the fishermen did not recognize him. He asked them, “Have you caught anything?” “No, we have not!” they replied. “Put the net on the right side of the boat and you will find some fish,” he replied. Soon, the net was filled with beautiful fish. Nobody could believe it!

The men rubbed their eyes and wondered who could be shouting at them from the beach. One of them told Peter, “It is the Lord!” Immediately, the disciple put on some clothes and threw himself into the water. Peter could not wait anymore, he was so excited that he went swimming to the shore. The others came to the shore with the boat dragging the net full of fish.

When they all reached the shore, they noticed that there was a small fire, with fish roasting and there was also bread. Then Jesus told them to bring more fish from what they had just caught. Peter ran and brought the heavy net. The fish were big, beautiful. There were 153 and the net did not break. Jesus invited them to eat. How wonderful! The tired and hungry men had a breakfast ready for them! But the most wonderful thing was who had prepared it for them.

After eating and being satisfied, Jesus began to speak to them. He turned to Peter and said, “Simon, do you love me more than these?” “Yes Lord; You know I love you,” he answered. Jesus asked Peter if he loved him twice more. “Yes,” Peter said both times.

Jesus forgave Peter for what he had done. While they were talking on the beach, Jesus told him some important things to do. He asked him to feed his sheep and take care of them. Jesus did not ask Peter to look after real sheep, but to take care of people, and to tell them about Jesus’ love. The last thing the Master said to Peter was a short phrase, perhaps the most important phrase in the whole universe: “Follow me!” Peter followed Jesus until his death. But before that, he was one of the greatest preachers and leaders of the early church.

CONNECT THE LESSON

The forgiven sinner

You will need: scissors, glue and pencils.

Give the children Student Activity Sheet #218-A and #218-B. Explain the instructions. Ask: “How did Peter fail Jesus? (He denied him.) What did Jesus do for Peter? (He forgive him). How did Peter change? (Peter became a great preacher and leader of the early church). How did your life change when you were forgiven by Jesus?” (Allow the children to respond.)

Ask the children to complete Student Activity Sheet #218-C: A gift from God, and sign the letter addressed to God.

Encourage the children to take home their activity sheets to share today’s lesson with their families and friends.

PRACTICE THE MEMORY VERSE

[Download Additional Memory Verse Activities PDF](#)

[Download Suggestions for Bible Memorization PDF](#)

Sweet verses

You will need: Student Activity Sheet #214-C and #214-D, a (candy) jar, scissors, construction paper larger than the jar, and colored pencils or crayons. Throughout the year, you will find additional cut-out sections, such as the memory verse for each unit, in candy or candy forms with the verses written on each one. When a child has memorized the memory verse, allow him/ her to cut out the candy from that unit and stick it inside or around the jar. At the end of the year, they will be able to take the jar with “sweets” to their homes. That way they can repeat to their families the verses they learned.

Since you’ve reached the end of this unit, you can do a competition. Divide into two groups. Ask that 2 or 3 children chosen by them (or by you) in the respective groups recite the text. The group that said the passage without error will receive special applause, or leave the room first at the end of the session, etc. Use your own creativity to reward children. Maybe cookies, or a piece of fruit.

WRAP-UP

Pray

Pray especially for those who accepted Jesus during this unit. Allow them to tell what they feel now that Jesus lives in their hearts and forgave them of their sins.

Encourage

Encourage the children to go home and tell about their new experience with the Lord to their family and friends.

Invite

Tell them something interesting about the next session and the new unit so they will want to attend. Tell them that this is a good time to invite others to join this discipleship group.