

JESUS, A FORGIVING KING

All Activity Sheets

KEY WORDS

FOLLOW SIN FORGIVENESS BOW

BIBLICAL REFERENCE

John 13: 36-38; 18:15-18, 25-27; 21:15-17

LESSON OBJECTIVE

To help children understand that Christ always offers forgiveness to those who sin, and he invites them to follow him

MEMORY VERSE

"At the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth" (Philippians 2:10, NIV*).

PREPARE YOURSELF TO TEACH

Peter was sometimes an impulsive and violent disciple. Most of the time he seemed willing to obey and follow Jesus. Before being arrested, Jesus talked with him. Peter was so sure of his love and dedication for his Master that he wanted to follow him, and thought that he was capable of even giving his life for Jesus.

Jesus, confronting Peter's confidence, announced that Peter would deny him three times. What did that mean in Peter's life? Was he not always the tenacious and courageous disciple who stood beside Jesus? The other Gospels tell us that Peter was offended by this question, and immediately responded that he would gladly die for Jesus, but he would never deny him. Peter was sure of his faith in Jesus! But the Lord knows beyond our thoughts.

Luke shines a little more light on this situation (Luke 22:31-34). Jesus said that Peter's faith would be tested, but that he himself would help strengthen Peter's faith and that Peter should then help the other disciples. How great is the love of God for our feeble humanity!

Now, when Jesus had been taken prisoner and Peter's courage was not enough, he stayed far away from his Master. When confronted by a maid standing near the door of the high priest's residence, he lied, saying, "I do not know this Jesus." A second and third time Peter was asked the same thing: "Do you know Jesus?" And each time he lied. When he gave the same answer for the third time, the rooster crowed and Peter remembered the words of his Master. What a difficult situation for him! When his

own life was threatened, fear seized him and his faith was diminished. When Jesus was resurrected, the disciples again regained their composure. But shortly before his ascension, Jesus had a personal conversation with Peter. There, Jesus showed him his forgiveness and asked him to continue being his disciple.

In the conversation between Jesus and Peter, we find the excitement of having reconciliation with Jesus. Some of His followers had already accepted Jesus as their Savior and learned to follow Him. But when they failed, they felt guilty and perhaps were tempted not to continue. This lesson helps us understand that God is generous and offers forgiveness, even when we fail.

INTRODUCE THE LESSON

Give the group Student Activity Sheet #275-A entitled "How Could You?" Ask, "What do you think happened to this girl to make her feel rejected by her friend? What kinds of things can happen between good friends that can harm their friendship? How do you feel when a friend does something that offends you?" Encourage your children to answer honestly and accept all answers.

TEACH THE LESSON

You can ask a young man to dress up, as Peter and read Peter's part, and you can be the narrator. To get your children's attention, act out the parts indicated and use the tone of voice indicated in the lesson.

Narrator: Peter took a stone, threw it hard and saw it fall into the sea.

Peter: Ah, the Sea of Tiberias! (Use crumpled paper wadded up to be the stone and do what is indicated.) What beautiful memories I have of the times I came to fish on these beaches! So many things have happened lately! The arrest of Jesus, his crucifixion . . . final, terrible things.

I will never forget what happened. Jesus appeared to us a third time in this same place. He even served us breakfast.

Then he said to me, "Simon, son of John, do you love me more than these?" (Use a soft tone of voice.) I was surprised by the question, but I said, "Yes Lord, you know that I love you!" (Use a tone of voice that represents security.)

Jesus said to me, "Feed my lambs."

I miss the company of Jesus a lot. But you know? Again, he asked me, "Do you love me?" I could not understand why he asked me again, but I replied firmly, "Yes Lord, you know that I love you!" Jesus said to me, "Take care of my sheep." However, after the second question I began to remember things that had happened recently, when suddenly Jesus fixed his eyes on me and asked me again, "Simon, son of John, do you love me?" I could not answer. I remembered that I had not been a loyal friend to him. I had denied him! (Now the tone of voice should reflect despair.) I did not deny him once, but three times. In the most difficult moments, I was not with him. I got up quickly and stretched out my arms for his forgiveness and said, "Lord, you know everything; you know that I love you." But this time, I said it with great humility, recognizing that Jesus' love for me was much greater than what I felt for him. Jesus said to me, "Feed my sheep."

Narrator: Peter always remembered this scene, but not with sadness, but with deep gratitude to the Lord for his mercy. He became one of the disciples who worked hard to spread the gospel.

CONNECT THE LESSON

Activity: Quiz time?

Make sure each one has Student Activity Sheet #275-B. At the bottom of each activity sheet, read the questions and have your children underline the correct answer for each question.

1. When did Jesus and Peter have this conversation?
 - a. Before the crucifixion.
 - b. After the resurrection. (Correct)
2. What did Jesus mean when he asked Peter, "Do you love me more than these?"
 - a. That Peter loved Jesus more than he loved anyone else. (Correct)
 - b. That Peter was the best disciple.

3. What was Jesus asking of Peter when he said, "Feed my sheep?"

- a. To guide his followers. (Correct)
- b. To represent Christ on earth.

4. How many times did Jesus ask Peter a question?

- a. six
- b. three (Correct)

Activity: Let's talk with God

Distribute Student Activity Sheet #275-C. To begin this activity, tell your children to think about a time when they have done something wrong (taking something that was not theirs, telling a lie, disobeying their parents, etc.). Then, give them each the worksheet entitled "Let's Talk with God." Have each child write in the section below the words "Dear God" a prayer to the Lord asking for forgiveness for the sin they mentioned.

Teach them that, as Christians, we should not fail Christ, but if we do, we can immediately ask for his forgiveness, and trust that he will forgive us.

Talk to your children about how they can experience God's forgiveness through Christ, the forgiving King. Explain that they must first recognize that they have disobeyed God (sinned) and that they need to be forgiven.

We should approach God in prayer with a sincere heart and ask him to help us to be obedient.

Lead your children in a time of prayer. Some may wish to accept Jesus as their Savior, or perhaps those who have already accepted him need to ask for his forgiveness for some things.

Encourage them to ask Jesus for forgiveness and to ask him for help to overcome temptations to sin. Close the session by thanking God for His love and forgiveness, even when we have strayed from his path.

PRACTICE THE MEMORY VERSE

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It is very important that your children are memorizing the verse. Tell it to them: "At the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth" (Philippians 2:10). Then, ask them to repeat it with you a couple of times.

WRAP-UP

Pray

To finish the session, have the group share their prayer needs. Then pray for your children aloud.

Encourage

Encourage the children to ask Jesus for forgiveness and to ask him for help to overcome temptations to sin.

Invite

Thank your children for their attendance and announce something about the next lesson to increase their interest. Remind them that visitors are also welcome.