

CHURCH SCHOOL LESSONS

MARCH 29, 2020

Our lesson this week is about how one of Jesus' closest friends made a mistake. When Peter heard a rooster crow, he knew that Jesus loved him even though he was not perfect. In today's story we are going to follow Peter through this difficult time. We are going to pick up our story in Matthew right where we left off last week. Look up Matthew Chapter 26 in your Bible. Jesus had just been arrested and the disciples had all run away. Read verses 57 and 58.

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.

Continue reading verses 69 to 72. Why was Peter pretending that he did not know Jesus? How do you think he felt when the people questioned him?

Read verses 73 to 75. How do you think the people knew that Peter was one of Jesus' friends? Why did Peter cry?

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

What do you think Peter did in the days between when he denied Jesus and when Jesus appeared to the disciples? Can you complete this story?

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

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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.

What do you like about Peter? What do you dislike about him? How is Peter like or unlike us?

Peter was recognized and called out because his accent revealed he was from the same area as Jesus. We are probably pretty familiar with most of our voices and can recognize speakers without even seeing them. Let's play a game with our families. One person sit in a chair facing away from the rest of your family. This person will be Peter. Have someone from your family say "Is that you Peter?" in a different accent than they normally use. If "Peter" can identify who is speaking, then that person become Peter. Continue until everyone has a chance to be Peter.

Our voices might reveal somethings about us, but they don't explain everything. Peter made some mistakes, big ones. And Jesus still loved him. We make mistakes too. And Jesus still loves us. When we make mistakes and ask God for forgiveness, Jesus takes our guilt and shame away and replaces them with his love.

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 very comforting. Our journeys are different today, but it is still good to know that God is with us wherever and however we go.

Before today's story we haven't talked a lot about 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 missed the mark pretty often too – like in today's story.

Finally, one last exercise. I am going to ask you some questions about Peter and I want you to tell me the answers. I will give you the scripture verses to look up for the correct answers.

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

- a. Carpenter
- b. Fisherman
- c. Gardner
- 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 eat 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 eat
- c. Teaching
- d. Lying

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

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

Let us close with a prayer. Dear Lord, be with us as we travel on our journey of life. Help us remember that God is with us on that journey wherever and however we travel. Help us to remember that even when we make mistakes, Jesus still loves us. If we ask for forgiveness, Jesus takes our guilt and shame away and replaces it with his love. Keep us safe in these troubling times. Amen.