

LESSON 1

PETER: WHAT HAPPENS WHEN WE ARE ASHAMED OF THE LORD?

John 18:15-18, 18:25-27, 21:15-19(NIV)

Peter's First Denial - 18:15-18

v15 Simon Peter and another disciple were following Jesus. Because this disciple was known to the high priest, he went with Jesus into the high priest's courtyard, v16 but Peter had to wait outside at the door. The other disciple, who was known to the high priest, came back, spoke to the girl on duty there and brought Peter in. v17 "You are not one of his disciples, are you?" the girl at the door asked Peter. He replied, "I am not." v18 It was cold, and the servants and officials stood around a fire they had made to keep warm. Peter also was standing with them, warming himself.

Peter's Second and Third Denials - 18:25-27

v25 As Simon Peter stood warming himself, he was asked, "You are not one of his disciples, are you?" He denied it, saying, "I am not." v26 One of the high priest's servants, a relative of the man whose ear Peter had cut off, challenged him, "Didn't I see you with him in the olive grove?" v27 Again Peter denied it, and at that moment a rooster began to crow.

Jesus Reinstates Peter - 21:15-19

v15 When they had finished eating, Jesus said to Simon Peter, "Simon son of John, do you truly love me more than these?" "Yes, Lord," he said, "you know that I love you." Jesus said, "Feed my lambs." v16 Again Jesus said, "Simon son of John, do you truly love me?" He answered, "Yes, Lord, you know that I love you." Jesus said, "Take care of my sheep." v17 The third time he said to him, "Simon son of John, do you love me?" Peter was hurt because Jesus asked him the third time, "Do you love me?" He said, "Lord, you know all things; you know that I love you." v18 Jesus said, "Feed my sheep. I tell you the truth, when you were younger you dressed yourself and went where you wanted; but when you are old you will stretch out your hands, and someone else will dress you and lead you where you do not want to go." v19 Jesus said this to indicate the kind of death by which Peter would glorify God. Then he said to him, "Follow me!"

GOAL OF LESSON

- To help learners to realise that Jesus is not ashamed to associate with us, and even to give us a special purpose, even if we do something really bad.
- To help learners see that Jesus is ready to forgive even when we deny him.
- To learn to love others after they've done bad things just like God loves me.
- To know that Peter failed by denying Jesus, but Jesus always loved him anyway.

1. TEACHER'S PREPARATION

(a) Looking at Scripture

Bible Passage	Comments
John 18:1-14	
<p>1 When he had finished praying, Jesus left with his disciples and crossed the Kidron Valley. On the other side there was a garden, and he and his disciples went into it.</p> <p>2 Now Judas, who betrayed him, knew the place, because Jesus had often met there with his disciples.</p> <p>3 So Judas came to the garden, guiding a detachment of soldiers and some officials from the chief priests and the Pharisees. They were carrying torches, lanterns and weapons.</p>	<p>The officials from the chief priests and Pharisees were probably members of the temple guard; they were Jews given authority by the religious leaders to make arrests for minor infractions. The soldiers may have been a small contingent of Roman soldiers who did not participate in the arrest but accompanied the temple guard to make sure matters didn't get out of control.</p>
<p>4 Jesus, knowing all that was going to happen to him, went out and asked them, "Who is it you want?"</p>	<p>John does not record Judas's kiss of greeting (Matthew 26:49; Mark 14:45; Luke 22:47, 48), but Judas's kiss marked a turning point for the disciples. With Jesus' arrest, each one's life would be radically different. For the first time, Judas openly betrayed Jesus before the other disciples. For the first time, Jesus' loyal disciples ran away from him (Matthew 26:56). The band of disciples would undergo severe testing before they were transformed from hesitant followers to dynamic leaders</p>
<p>5 "Jesus of Nazareth," they replied. "I am he," Jesus said. (And Judas the traitor was standing there with them.)</p> <p>6 When Jesus said, "I am he," they drew back and fell to the ground.</p>	<p>The men may have been startled by the boldness of Jesus' question, or by the words "I am he," a declaration of his divinity (Exodus 3:14). Or perhaps they were overcome by his obvious power and authority</p>
<p>7 Again he asked them, "Who is it you want?" "Jesus of Nazareth," they said.</p> <p>8 Jesus answered, "I told you that I am he. If you are looking for me, then let these men go."</p> <p>9 This happened so that the words he had spoken would be fulfilled: "I have not lost one of those you gave me."</p> <p>10 Then Simon Peter, who had a sword, drew it and struck the high priest's servant, cutting off his right ear. (The servant's name was Malchus.)</p>	<p>Trying to protect Jesus, Peter pulled a sword and wounded the high priest's servant. But Jesus told Peter to put away his sword and allow God's plan to unfold. At times it is tempting to take matters into our own hands, to force the issue. Most often such moves lead to sin. Instead we must trust God to work out his plan. Think of it – if Peter had his way, Jesus would have gone to the cross, and God's plan of redemption would have been thwarted.</p>

<p>11 Jesus commanded Peter, “Put your sword away! Shall I not drink the cup the Father has given me?”</p>	<p>The cup means the suffering, isolation, and death that Jesus would have to endure in order to atone for the sins of the world</p>
<p>12 Then the detachment of soldiers with its commander and the Jewish officials arrested Jesus</p>	<p>Jesus was immediately taken to the high priest’s residence, even though this was the middle of the night. The religious leaders were in a hurry – they wanted to complete the execution before the Sabbath and get on with the Passover celebration. This residence was a place whose outer walls enclosed a courtyard where servants and soldiers would warm themselves around a fire.</p>
<p>They bound him 13 and brought him first to Annas, who was the father-in-law of Caiaphas, the high priest that year 14 Caiaphas was the one who had advised the Jewish leaders that it would be good if one man died for the people.</p>	<p>Both Annas and Caiaphas had been high priests. Annas was Israel’s high priest from A.D. 6 to 15, when he was deposed by Roman rulers. Caiaphas, Annas’s son in law, was appointed from A.D 18 to 36/37. According to Jewish law, the office of high priest was held for life. Many Jews therefore still considered Annas the high priest and still called him by that title. But although Annas retained much authority among the Jews, Caiaphas made the final decisions</p>
<p>John 18:15–18 Peter’s First Denial</p>	
<p>15 Simon Peter and another disciple were following Jesus. Because this disciple was known to the high priest, he went with Jesus into the high priest’s courtyard,</p>	<p>The other disciple is probably John, the author of this Gospel. He knew the high priest and identified himself to the girl at the door. Because of his connections, John got himself and Peter into the courtyard. But Peter refused to identify himself as Jesus’ follower. Peter’s experiences in the next few hours would change his life. For more information about Peter, see his Profile in Matthew 26.</p>
<p>16 but Peter had to wait outside at the door. The other disciple, who was known to the high priest, came back, spoke to the servant girl on duty there and brought Peter in. 17 “You aren’t one of this man’s disciples too, are you?” she asked Peter. He replied, “I am not.” 18 It was cold, and the servants and officials stood around a fire they had made to keep warm. Peter also was standing with them, warming himself.</p>	<p>During the night, Jesus had a pre-trial hearing before Annas before he was taken to Caiaphas and the entire Sanhedrin (Mark 14:53-65). The religious leaders knew they had no grounds for charging Jesus, so they tried to build evidence against him by using false witness (Mark 14:55-59)</p>

John 18:25–27 Peter’s Second and Third Denials	
<p>25 Meanwhile, Simon Peter was still standing there warming himself. So they asked him, “You aren’t one of his disciples too, are you?” He denied it, saying, “I am not.”</p>	<p>The other three Gospels say that Peter’s three denials happened near a fire in the courtyard outside Caiaphas’s place. John places the first denial outside Annas’s home and the other two denials outside Caiaphas’s home. This was very likely the same courtyard. The high priest’s residence was large, and Annas and Caiaphas undoubtedly lived near each other.</p>
<p>26 One of the high priest’s servants, a relative of the man whose ear Peter had cut off, challenged him, “Didn’t I see you with him in the garden?” 27 Again Peter denied it, and at that moment a rooster began to crow.</p>	<p>This fulfilled Jesus’ words to Peter after he promised he would never disown him (Mark 14:31; John 13:38)</p>
John 21:15 – 19 Jesus Reinstates Peter	
<p>15 When they had finished eating, Jesus said to Simon Peter, “Simon son of John, do you love me more than these?” “Yes, Lord,” he said, “you know that I love you.” Jesus said, “Feed my lambs.” 16 Again Jesus said, “Simon son of John, do you love me?” He answered, “Yes, Lord, you know that I love you.” Jesus said, “Take care of my sheep.”</p>	<p>In this beach scene, Jesus led Peter through an experience that would remove the cloud of his denial. Peter had disowned Jesus three times. Three times Jesus asked Peter if he loved him. When Peter answered yes, Jesus told him to feed his sheep. It is one thing to say you love Jesus, but the real test is willingness to serve him. Peter had repented, and here Jesus was asking him to commit his life. Peter’s life changed when he finally realized who Jesus was. His occupation changed fisherman to evangelist; his identity changed from impetuous to “rock;” and his relationship to Jesus changed – he was forgiven, and he finally understood the significance of Jesus’ words about his death and resurrection.</p>
<p>17 The third time he said to him, “Simon son of John, do you love me?” Peter was hurt because Jesus asked him the third time, “Do you love me?” He said, “Lord, you know all things; you know that I love you.” Jesus said, “Feed my sheep.</p>	<p>Jesus asked Peter three times if he loved him. The first time Jesus said, Do you truly love (Greek agape: volitional, self-sacrificial love) me more than these? The second time, Jesus focused on Peter alone and still used the word translated into Greek, agape. The third time, Jesus used the word translated into Greek, phileo (signifying affection, affinity, or brotherly love) and asked, in effect, “are you even my friend? Each time Peter responded with the word translated into Greek as phileo. Jesus doesn’t settle for quick, superficial answers. He has a way of getting to the heart of the matter. Peter had to face his true feelings and motives when Jesus confronted him. How would you respond if Jesus asked you, “Do you truly love me? Do you really love Jesus? Are you even his friend?</p>

<p>18 Very truly I tell you, when you were younger you dressed yourself and went where you wanted; but when you are old you will stretch out your hands, and someone else will dress you and lead you where you do not want to go.” 19 Jesus said this to indicate the kind of death by which Peter would glorify God. Then he said to him, “Follow me!”</p>	<p>This was a prediction of Peter’s death by crucifixion. Tradition indicates that Peter was crucified for his faith – upside down because he did not feel worthy of dying as his Lord did. Despite what Peter’s future held, Jesus told him to follow him. We may be uncertain and fearful about our future. But if we know God is in control, we can confidently follow Christ.</p>
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(b) Looking inwardly

1. MAIN IDEA: Jesus loves us and has chosen us for his glory. Even though we may be ashamed to associate ourselves with him, he will never leave us or forsake us.

2. KEY VERSE: John 21:19 Jesus said this to indicate the kind of death by which Peter would glorify God. Then he said to him, “Follow me!”

3. BIBLE BACKGROUND:
See Above

4. UNDERSTANDING YOUR STUDENTS:

Following Jesus’ example is not always easy to do. Children have a strong sense of right and wrong. They can easily identify when rules favour one group over another. One of the most frequently used phrases in play is, “That’s not fair.”

5. DEVELOPING YOUR FAITH: - Lessons for Disciples

This short scene in the high priest’s courtyard offers a number of lessons for perceptive disciples:

1. We must remain humble, not boastful, for the line between courage and cowardice can be a very thin line. Paul cautions us, "So, if you think you are standing firm, be careful that you don't fall!" (1 Corinthians 10:12).
2. Without the spiritual preparation of prayer, we are no match for the devil's sifting. We must live in constant prayer, depending upon the Lord for strength.
3. Fear and faith cannot easily co-exist. When we start to give into our fears, we become subject to the deceiver, who would undermine our faith with his lies.
4. Jesus looks upon his disciples when they fall into sin. And at that moment, we see in his eyes disappointment, rebuke, and love.
5. Guilt can be a terrible taskmaster. But guilt itself cannot help us conquer sin. Guilt is the burglar alarm of our conscience, and while it can ring incessantly, it cannot heal. Only the love of Jesus for us and our love for Jesus can heal us. A desire not to disappoint him and let him down is stronger than the fear of guilt. This is what the Apostle John meant when he said, "There is no fear in love. But perfect love drives out fear, because fear has to do with punishment. The one who fears is not made

perfect in love" (1 John 4:18). As Jesus looks at Peter, he sees afresh the necessity of the cross that lies before him. His love determines to redeem from sin the Peters among his worldwide band of disciples -- by forgiving our offenses, taking our penalty, healing our sin-damaged souls, and restoring us to fellowship with God. Jesus looks at Peter and knows that his life's work lies just ahead. His hour has come.

2. CONNECT

Here are some suggestions to introduce the lesson. Choose one (or more) that is appropriate for your class.

NO 1

Peter is such an interesting guy, isn't he? At other times in the bible, we learn that he says that he's willing to follow Jesus into prison and even death—but now this time, he denies knowing him three times! There's another time that Peter walked out onto the water to walk to Jesus, and the next moment he's panic-stricken and drowning. Peter is so...human. So like the rest of us. Are we like that? Do you ever do that? Say you love Jesus one minute, and then the next minute you're gossiping about someone in school? Well, I know I do that, and I really don't like it. But Jesus knows it and that's why this story is so important.

The reality is that Peter, and the other disciples, were the only people Jesus had to teach the Good News to. Jesus needed his disciples to spread the good news to others. But all Jesus had was people like Peter, people who make mistakes. People who, even though they knew Jesus and lived with him for three years, were afraid.

NO 2

Jesus asking Peter three times if he loved Jesus. One important thing to remember here is that at this point in the story, Jesus has already died and gone to heaven, but he comes back to talk with the people that he loved. He appears to them in human form a few more times to make sure they got all the final information that he needed them to understand. So I'm sure that Peter was just so happy to see Jesus and to talk with him again. Maybe he even forgot about how he denied that he knew Jesus before he died. But now Jesus turns his attention to Peter. Almost like your dad does when he wants to have a conversation about how you didn't talk the right way to your mom. Let's see what happens.

So Jesus asks Peter three different times if Peter loves Jesus. And by the third time Peter is getting annoyed. How do we know that? Because John wrote this down in his story...and that's cool, because we don't always know how people reacted to things Jesus say.

So let's talk about this for a minute. Do you get annoyed when your parents ask you more than once or twice about something? Dani, did you clean up your room? Dani did you really clean up your room? Dani, seriously, yesterday you didn't clean up your room, did you do it today? [Or substitute one of the older kids names to make a point.] So Peter got annoyed, just like we would, right?

But why do you think Jesus asked three times? [Ask for ideas.] Maybe because Peter denied him three times? Maybe he was trying to make a point. Who knows? But Jesus wanted to impress on Peter that he really wanted Peter to take care of his sheep.

3. CONTENT

Question: "What was the reason behind Peter's denial of Jesus?"

Answer: The story of Peter's threefold denial of Christ is found in all four Gospel accounts: Matthew 26:69–74, Mark 14:66–72, Luke 22:55–62, and John 18:15–18, 25–27. But why would the chief of the disciples deny even knowing Him? There were two main reasons why Peter denied Jesus: weakness and fear.

Peter's denial was based partially on weakness, the weakness born of human frailty. After the Last Supper, Jesus took His disciples to the Garden of Gethsemane to await His arrest. He told them to stay awake and pray while He went off to pray alone. When He returned to them, He found them sleeping. He warned Peter to stay awake and pray because, although his spirit might be willing, his flesh was weak. But he fell asleep again, and, by the time the soldiers had come to arrest Jesus, it was too late to pray for the strength to endure the ordeal to come. No doubt his failure to appropriate the only means to shore up his own weakness—prayer—occurred to him as he was weeping bitterly after his denials. But Peter learned his lesson about being watchful, and he exhorts us in 1 Peter 5:8, "Be on the alert, because your adversary, the devil, prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour." Peter's weakness had caused him to be "devoured" momentarily as he denied his Lord because he hadn't been prepared through prayer and he underestimated his own weakness.

A second reason for Peter's failure was fear. To his credit, although all the others had fled (Mark 14:50), Peter still followed Jesus after His arrest, but he kept his distance so as not to be identified with Him (Mark 14:54). There's no question that fear gripped him. From the courtyard, he watched Jesus being falsely accused, beaten, and insulted (Mark 14:57–66). Peter was afraid Jesus would die, and he was fearful for his own life as well. The world hated Jesus, and Peter found that he was not prepared to face the ridicule and persecution that Jesus was suffering. Earlier, Jesus had warned His disciples as well as us today, "If the world hates you, keep in mind that it hated me first" (John 16:18; cf. Matthew 24:9). Peter quickly found he wasn't nearly as bold and courageous as he had proclaimed, and in fear he denied the One who had loved him.

We might well wonder why Jesus allowed Peter to fail so miserably and deny his Lord three times that night. Jesus revealed to Peter that Satan had asked for permission to sift Peter like wheat (Luke 22:31). Jesus could have easily protected Peter and not allowed Satan to sift him, but Jesus had a higher goal. He was equipping Peter to strengthen his brothers (Luke 22:32). Not only did Peter strengthen the other disciples, but he became the pillar of the early church in Jerusalem, exhorting and training others to follow the Lord Jesus (Acts 2). And he continues to this day to strengthen us through his epistles, 1 and 2 Peter. As with all our failures, God used Peter's many failures, including his three denials of Christ, to turn him from Simon, a common man with a common name, into Peter, the Rock.

4. CHALLENGE

1. Does the clause, "Peter followed at a distance," reflect positively or negatively upon his character? Why is he there at all?
2. Who is seated around the fire in the courtyard? Was Peter's danger real or imagined? What evidence do you have to support your answer?
3. Why do you think Peter's courage melts so quickly?
4. What does Peter's denial consist of? Why is it so serious? In what ways do modern-day Christians deny Christ in similar way?
5. What effect does it have on Peter when Jesus turns and establishes eye contact with him? What do you think is communicated in that look?
6. Why does Peter weep bitterly?
7. Only a few stories are told in all four Gospels. Why do you think Peter's denial is one of these? Why do you think Christians can relate so easily to this story?

Ways of Denying

Why does the story of Peter's denial strikes such a chord in us? Why can relate so easily to Peter? Probably because each of us has in some way been false to our friendship with Christ.

- By disassociating ourselves from our allegiance to Christ in the presence of belligerent unbelievers or vocal critics -- sometimes by open disavowal, but too often by our silence.
- By professing Jesus with our mouths, but excusing ourselves when we do things we know are contrary to Jesus' teachings. It's this kind of dual life that gives unbelievers the "hypocrite" excuse, and, like David with Bathsheba, "you have made the enemies of the Lord show utter contempt" (2 Samuel 12:14).

The Holy Spirit within us is grieved, we feel guilty (so long as our conscience is not utterly callused by repeated, flagrant sin), we are ashamed. When we are in this condition, we are out of fellowship with God and are subject to (1) the pounding of the enemy and (2) beating ourselves up. If Satan can't destroy our faith, he tries to destroy fellowship, joy, and hope, so that we live in misery, are ineffective, and are neutralized so far as furthering the Kingdom of God and diminishing Satan's sphere of influence.

5. ACTIVITIES

Choose an activity that is age appropriate

6. HELPQUEST

Use the questions in this section to help you plan a revision quiz.

1. Who betrayed Jesus?
 - a. James
 - b. Judas
 - c. John

2. Where did the soldiers find Jesus?
 - a. in the house
 - b. in the garden
 - c. at the gate

3. What happened to the soldiers when Jesus said "I am he"
 - a. they fell on the ground
 - b. they stood still
 - c. they were amazed

4. The name of the high priest's servant Simon Peter cut off his ear was.....
 - a. Andrew
 - b. Mark
 - c. Malchus

5. What Jesus commanded Peter to do with his sword?
 - a. "Put your sword away!"
 - b. "Hide your sword away!"
 - c. "Draw your sword!"

6. Who was Annas?
 - a. the father of Caiaphas
 - b. the brother of Caiaphas
 - c. the father in law of Caiaphas

7. What advice Caiaphas gave to the Jewish leaders?
 - a. it would be good if three men died for the people
 - b. it would be good if two men died for the people
 - c. it would be good if one man died for the people

8. "You aren't one of this man's disciples too, are you?"
 - a. the servant girl on duty asked Peter
 - b. the soldier on duty asked Peter
 - c. the man on duty asked Peter

9. What was Peter's response?
- "Yes, I am"
 - "I am not"
 - "I am not sure"
10. How many times did Peter deny Jesus Christ?
- one time
 - two times
 - three times
11. What happened when Peter denied Jesus Christ?
- a rooster began to crow
 - a donkey began to bray
 - a snake began to hiss
12. Jesus said to Simon Peter.....
- "Simon son of John, do you hate me more than these?"
 - "Simon son of John, do you love me more than these?"
 - "Simon son of John, do you like me more than these?"
13. How many times did Jesus ask Peter this question?
- three times
 - two times
 - one time
14. What was Peter's response to Jesus?
- "Lord, you know all things; you know that I love you."
 - "Lord, you do not know nothing; you know that I love you"
 - "Lord, you know all things; you know that I like you"
15. What Jesus said to him?
- feed my goats
 - feed my sheep
 - feed my horses

Answers: 1-b, 2-b, 3-a, 4-c, 5-a, 6-c, 7-c, 8-a, 9-b, 10-c, 11-a, 12-b, 13-a, 14-c, 15-b