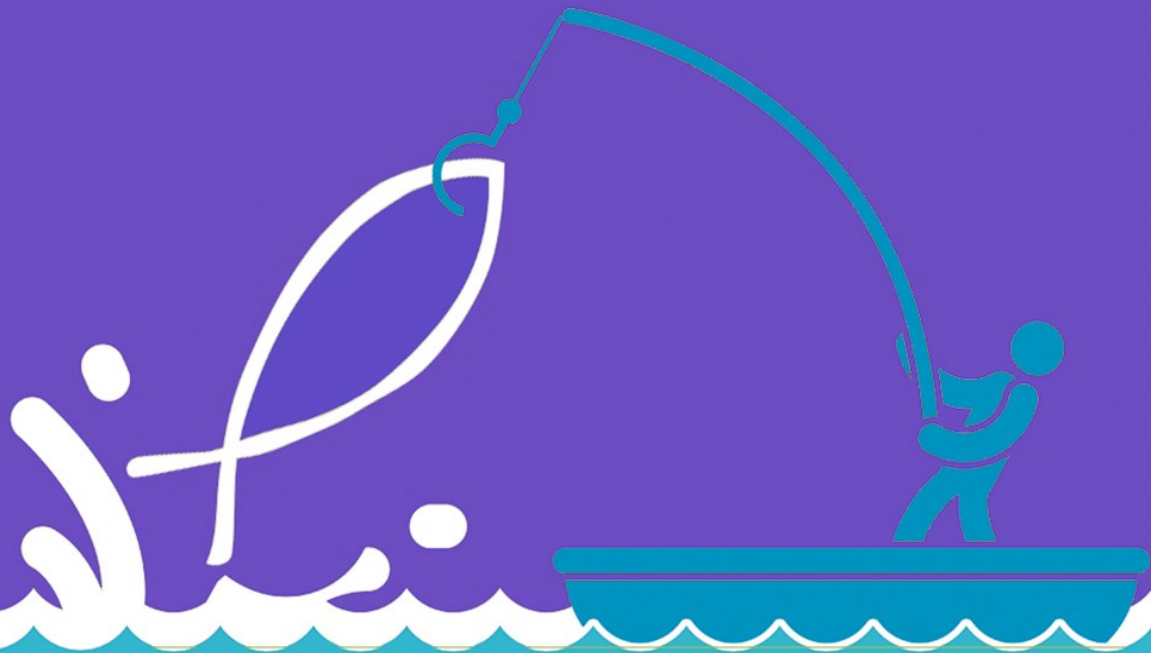


VBS
2018

Wednesday



FOLLOW ME!

Lessons from the Life of Peter

1st-5th Grade

Peter's Denial

The Objective is the key concept for this weeks lesson. It should be the main focus of the study

These are the key verses that you will find helpful in teaching your study this week. The "Main passage" is the basis of the study, where the other verse support the objective of the lesson.

There is a memory verse for the students that relates to every study. If a student can memorize the verse for the following week you may give them a prize from the "reward box" found on your cart.

An introductory activity or question that will settle the class, draw their attention to the study and prepare their hearts for God's Word

Objective This lesson will demonstrate the importance of our actions matching our claim to follow Christ using the story of Peter's denial.

Key Verses

Mark 14:18-21, 27-31, 54, 66-72—Main Teaching Passage
Matthew 26:21-25, 31-35, 69-75; Luke 22:31-34, 54-62; John 13:37-38, 18:15-18, 25-27 (Parallel passages)
Mark 14:10-11; Matthew 26:14-16

Memory Verse - Matthew 10:32-33

"Therefore whoever confesses Me before men, him I will also confess before My Father who is in heaven. But whoever denies Me before men, him I will also deny before My Father who is in heaven."

Hook

Review yesterday's memory verse, Psalm 121:1-2.

Have the class follow you in a tightly-packed group. Tell one student to attempt to go through the crowd in the opposite direction of the rest of the students. Then tell them to follow along with everyone else. Have every sit down and ask whether it was easier to go the same way as the crowd or the opposite.

When everyone around you is doing one thing, it can be difficult to do something else and go "against the crowd." Today, we are going to learn about when we should go against the crowd.

What does the Bible say? This is where we will read a passage or series of passages that teach on the subject of the day.

BOOK

On the night before his death, Jesus made two shocking predictions about His disciples. In Mark 14:18-21, He announced that one of them would betray Him. We know from verses 10-11 that this traitor would be Judas Iscariot. The second prediction is in verses 27-31. At this point, Judas had already left, and Jesus told the rest of the disciples that they all would abandon Him that night. When Peter heard this, he answered that even if all the other disciples left Jesus, he never would. Jesus responded by saying that before the rooster crowed twice that night, Peter would deny knowing Him three times, but Peter insisted that he wouldn't deny Jesus even if that meant he had to die for Jesus.

Later that night, just as Jesus predicted, Judas brought a group of men sent by the chief priests to arrest Jesus. The rest of the disciples ran away, but Peter followed the group that arrested Jesus to the house of the high priest, though he stayed far away (verse 54). While Jesus was on trial inside, Peter sat in the courtyard, warming himself by the fire. As he sat there, one of the high priest's servant girls came up to him and said that he was one of Jesus' followers. Peter responded that he didn't know what she was talking about, and the rooster crowed. Later, the servant girl saw him again and told those who were with her that he was one of Jesus' disciples, but Peter said he didn't know who Jesus was. Then another man said that Peter must have been a disciple because of his Galilean accent. Peter began to curse and swear, insisting he did not know Jesus. As soon as that happened, the rooster crowed again, and Peter remembered what Jesus had predicted. When he realized what he had done, he left weeping bitterly.

LOOK

The Peter we read about in the beginning of this story is a different man from the one we see in the end. At first, Peter was bold. When he was with Jesus and the other disciples, he boasted that he would follow Jesus anywhere. He said that he was even willing to die for Jesus. But when his faith was put to the test, he failed and ended up denying Him to a servant girl. Peter's actions did not match his bold claim of commitment to Jesus, and he left a broken man.

Peter sinned because he faced a temptation many Christians go through in their walks with the Lord: pressure from other people. It's easy to follow Jesus around other Christians, but around unbelievers, obeying the Lord becomes more difficult. Peter was bold in front of his fellow disciples, but when his faith was tested in front of those who did not follow Jesus and might want to hurt him, he failed and denied his Lord. Pressure from others can often cause us to do the wrong thing, even when we know what's right.

The interpretation/exegesis of the passage. What does this passage mean? How does this passage apply to my life?

LOOK (Continued)

It is easy for us to say we are a Christian and claim we want to live for Jesus at VBS or church, but sometimes in our schools, neighborhoods, or other activities, we might be around people who don't believe in Jesus. When we are in those situations, we may be tempted to act like we don't follow Jesus. That might mean denying that we know Jesus using our words, just like Peter did, or by doing bad things that other people are doing even though we know it's wrong. We might do that because we are just trying to fit in, or are afraid of being made fun of, or even because we think we could lose a friend if we take a stand for Jesus. But no matter who we are with or what the consequences might be, Jesus calls us to follow and obey Him. That may lead to difficulty in our lives, but that's nothing compared to the blessing of following the Lord and the pain of denying Him. Peter learned about that pain the hard way, having to experience the guilt and shame of failing the One who did so much for him.

Every day, we face all sorts of situations where we have the choice Peter had. We can choose to follow Jesus, or we can choose to deny Him. If your friends are pressuring you to do something you know is wrong or are making fun of you for believing in Jesus, you can either deny Him, or you can do what's right. No matter what everyone else is doing, we must choose to follow Jesus and stand up for Him.

What is my response to this passage of Scripture? How should my life change according to what this passage teaches me? What are the practical things I can do throughout the week to make this true in my life?

TOOK

As a class, memorize Matthew 10:32-33.

Review the lesson by asking the class how Peter's faith was challenged and how he responded. How can we avoid similar mistakes?

Pray: Ask the Lord for strength to follow and obey Him even when our faith is challenged. Pray that we would be faithful not to deny Him.

Parent Question: Why did Peter deny Jesus? How can we avoid doing the same thing?

FURTHER STUDY

Commentary on Mark 14:17-21, 26-31, 66-72 by David Guzik

2. ([Mar 14:17-21](#)) Jesus gives Judas a chance to repent.

In the evening He came with the twelve. Now as they sat and ate, Jesus said, “Assuredly, I say to you, one of you who eats with Me will betray Me.” And they began to be sorrowful, and to say to Him one by one, “Is it I?” And another said, “Is it I?” He answered and said to them, “It is one of the twelve, who dips with Me in the dish. The Son of Man indeed goes just as it is written of Him, but woe to that man by whom the Son of Man is betrayed! It would have been good for that man if he had never been born.”

a. **He sat down with the twelve:** At the first Passover, God commanded them to eat the meal standing and ready to leave Egypt ([Exodus 12:11](#)). Since Israel came into the Promised Land, they believed that they could eat the Passover sitting or reclining, because now they were at rest in the land God gave them.

b. **One of you who eats with Me will betray Me:** The disciples heard many surprising things from Jesus, but certainly this was one of the most surprising things they ever heard. Not one of them suspected Judas, and the idea that one of them would seek to **betray** and kill Jesus must have seemed absurd.

c. **It is one of the twelve, who dips with Me:** In saying **who dips with Me**, Jesus did not single out Judas (though Judas, sitting in the place of honor, would have been given the special portion). All the disciples dipped with Him, so this phrase identified the betrayer as a *friend*.

i. In Middle Eastern culture, betraying a friend after eating a meal with him *was* and *is* regarded as the worst kind of treachery.

d. **Woe to that man by whom the Son of Man is betrayed!** Judas is rightly regarded as one of the most notorious sinners of all time. Even though his actions fulfilled prophecy (**the Son of Man indeed goes just as it is written of Him**), his own wicked motive condemned him. Judas will never be able to justify himself before God on the Day of Judgment by claiming, “I was fulfilling prophecy.”

i. In the warning of Jesus we see a profound love for Judas. This was his last, fleeting opportunity to turn back from his evil plot. A remarkable thing to remember is that Jesus loved both Mary and Judas. We almost want to think that He loved Mary and hated Judas, but that isn't the case. If we miss His love towards Judas – rejected love, to be sure – if we miss that love, we miss the whole story.

4. ([Mar 14:26-31](#)) Jesus predicts the desertion of the disciples and Peter's denial.

And when they had sung a hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives. Then Jesus said to them, “All of you will be made to stumble because of Me this night, for it is written: ‘I will strike the Shepherd, and the sheep will be scattered.’ But after I have been raised, I will go before you to Galilee.” Peter said to Him, “Even if all are made to stumble, yet I will not be.” Jesus said to him, “Assuredly, I say to you that today, *even* this night, before the rooster crows twice, you will deny Me three times.” But he spoke more vehemently, “If I have to die with You, I will not deny You!” And they all said likewise.

a. **When they had sung a hymn:** We don't often think of Jesus singing, but He did. He lifted His voice in ado-

ration and worship to God the Father. We can endlessly wonder what His voice sounded like, but we know for certain that He sang with more than His voice, and He lifted His whole heart up in praise. This reminds us that God *wants* to be praised with singing.

i. It is remarkable that Jesus could sing on this night before His crucifixion. Could you sing in such circumstances? Will you let Jesus be your worship leader? “What! A Christian silent when others are praising his Master? No; he must join in the song. Satan tries to make God’s people dumb, but he cannot, for the Lord has not a tongue-tied child in all his family. They can all speak, and they can all cry, even if they cannot all sing, and *I* think there are times when they can all sing; yea, they must, for you know the promise, ‘Then shall the tongue of the dumb sing.’ Surely, when Jesus leads the tune, if there should be any silent ones in the Lord’s family, they must begin to praise the name of the Lord.” (Spurgeon)

ii. This means we should sing to God our Father – *just as Jesus did* – because this is something that pleases Him, and when we love someone we want to do the things that please *them*. It really doesn’t matter if it does or doesn’t please *us*.

iii. “What is singing but emotional expression? Oh! The value and the power of emotion. Evil emotion slays the Lord of life and glory! Pure emotion makes possible the saving of the slayers.” (Morgan)

b. **Sung a hymn:** It is wonderful that Jesus sang, but *what* did He sing? A Passover meal always ended with singing three Psalms known as the *Hallel*, [Psalms 116-118](#). Surely the words of these Psalms ministered to Jesus as He sang them on the night before His crucifixion.

i. “When Jesus arose to go to Gethsemane, [Psalm 118](#) was upon his lips. It provided an appropriate description of how God would guide his Messiah through distress and suffering to glory.” (Lane)

c. **They went to the Mount of Olives:** “Jesus tarried with them in the Upper Room for the wonderful discourse and prayer in [John 14](#) to [John 17](#). They may have gone out to the street after [John 14:31](#).” (Robertson)

i. “Our Lord knew that his time was now come when he must be actually delivered into the hands of his enemies. That he might not therefore cause any disturbance either to the master of the family wherein he was, or to the city, though it was now midnight, he goeth out of the city.” (Ironsides)

d. **All of you will be made to stumble:** Jesus said this not to condemn His disciples, but to show them that He really was in command of the situation, and to demonstrate that the Scriptures regarding the suffering of the Messiah *must* be fulfilled.

i. This was not the first time Jesus warned Peter and the other disciples that they would forsake Him. From a careful reconstruction of the Gospels, we find that Jesus first warned them about this in the upper room, now again in the Garden of Gethsemane.

e. **After I have been raised:** This shows that Jesus was already looking beyond the cross. He had His eyes fixed on *the joy set before Him* ([Hebrews 12:2](#)).

f. **Even if all are made to stumble, yet I will not be:** We wonder how Peter could ever say such a thing. Tragically, Peter was unaware of both the spiritual *reality* and the spiritual *battle* that Jesus clearly saw. Peter only looked to how he felt at the moment, and at the moment he felt pretty brave.

i. “It is sometimes easier to bear a great load for Christ than a small one. Some of us could be martyrs at the stake more easily than confessors among sneering neighbors.” (Maclaren)

g. **Assuredly, I say to you that today, even this night, before the rooster crows twice, you will deny Me three times:** Peter, despite his bold proclamation that he would never be made to stumble, would fail in what

he thought was his strong area – courage and boldness. Through this solemn warning Jesus gave Peter an opportunity to take heed and consider his own weakness.

i. Sadly, it was an opportunity that Peter did not take: **he spoke more vehemently, “If I have to die with You, I will not deny You!”** Jesus knew Peter far better than Peter did, and in overestimating himself, Peter was set up for a fall.

ii. **He spoke more vehemently:** “This strong compound adverb [is found] only in Mark and probably preserves Peter’s own statement of the remark.” (Robertson)

iii. The rest of the disciples also overestimated their strength and did not rely on the Lord in the critical hour: **And they all said likewise.** The Apostle Paul warned us against falling where we think we are strong: *Therefore let him who thinks he stands take heed lest he fall* ([1 Corinthians 10:12](#)). When we think we are beyond the reach of some sins, we are ready for a fall.

5. ([Mar 14:66-72](#)) Peter’s denial.

Now as Peter was below in the courtyard, one of the servant girls of the high priest came. And when she saw Peter warming himself, she looked at him and said, “You also were with Jesus of Nazareth.” But he denied it, saying, “I neither know nor understand what you are saying.” And he went out on the porch, and a rooster crowed. And the servant girl saw him again, and began to say to those who stood by, “This is one of them.” But he denied it again. And a little later those who stood by said to Peter again, “Surely you are *one* of them; for you are a Galilean, and your speech shows *it*.” Then he began to curse and swear, “I do not know this Man of whom you speak!” A second time *the* rooster crowed. Then Peter called to mind the word that Jesus had said to him, “Before the rooster crows twice, you will deny Me three times.” And when he thought about it, he wept.

a. **Now as Peter was below in the courtyard:** As Mark concludes the story of Peter’s denial in [Mark 14:66-72](#), he does it as a flashback. This didn’t happen as Jesus was beaten, but as He was on trial.

i. Peter’s first problem was that he *followed Him at a distance* ([Mark 14:54](#)). When we distance ourselves from Jesus, it is hard to make a proper stand for Him at the critical time.

ii. Next, Peter *sat with the servants and warmed himself at the fire* ([Mark 14:54](#)). Peter found fellowship and warmth in the company of the ungodly, having forsaken the fellowship of the fleeing disciples. Peter wanted to seem just one of this crowd, not a follower of Jesus.

iii. The *officers* of [Mark 14:65](#) who struck Jesus are the same people as the *servants* of [Mark 14:54](#), because the same ancient Greek word is used of both groups. Peter sat and associated himself with the same men who beat Jesus, and they beat Him just because someone else told them that Jesus was a wicked man.

b. **I neither know nor understand what you are saying:** A hostile man of authority interrogated Jesus. Peter did not face this kind of interrogation, only **one of the servant girls**. But she was enough to make Peter deny Jesus. “A silly wench daunteth and dispiriteth this stout champion.” (Trapp)

i. **I neither know nor understand:** “Peter denied the charge, using the form common in rabbinical law for a formal, legal denial.” (Lane)

ii. “Yet all this evil sprung from the *fear of man*. How many denials of Christ and his truth have sprung since, from the same cause!” (Clarke)

iii. Thinking it might help distance himself from association with Jesus, Peter **began to curse and swear**. When we hear that kind of language, we assume the person is not a follower of Jesus Christ.

c. **And when he thought about it, he wept:** Peter finally **called to mind the word that Jesus had said to him**, but he remembered it too late – it was *after* he had sinned. Then all Peter could do was to weep bitterly – but he will be restored.

i. “It was not the crowing of the cock that convicted Peter; it was the remembering of Christ’s words.” (Wiersbe)

ii. There is a significant contrast between Judas and Peter. Both of them denied Jesus in one way or another, but one was restored and the other was not. Restoring Peter was important to Jesus; after His resurrection, Jesus had a private meeting with Peter ([Luke 24:34](#)) and a public restoration with Peter ([John 21](#)). Judas ended up as an apostate, and Peter was a backslider who suffered spiritual decline from an experience he once enjoyed.