

6-8 YEAR OLD CLASS

Lesson 1 - Background to Peter, His Calling by Jesus

Introduction

WELCOME everyone! I am excited to be teaching you at Bible School this year. We are going to look at the life of Peter. He is such an amazing character! We are going to see him grow in his love for his Lord Jesus Christ!

Just a few classroom “rules” to start ...

- We expect everyone to listen carefully and participate.
- If you have a question or comment, please raise your hand.
- Please don't speak while others are speaking.
- Please try and go to the bathroom before class starts.
- Have fun being together and learn lots!

Background to Peter

Firstly, who knows anything about Peter?

Family

- Peter had a brother named Andrew ([John 1v40](#)).
- Peter was the son of Jona ([John 1v42](#)).
- Peter's other name was Simon ([John 1v42](#)).
- Peter means “rock”, Simon means “hearing”.
- It appears Peter was born in Bethsaida ([John 1v44](#)) but maybe later moved to Capernaum for work ([Mark 1v16-21](#)).
- We know that Peter was married because we read in [Matthew 8v14](#) that Jesus healed his mother in law.

Job

- Peter was a fisherman with Andrew his brother, and also James and John.

Characteristics

- Strong! He pulled in a net full of a 153 fish! ([John 21v11](#))
- A leader – always mentioned first in the list of disciples (eg. [Matthew 10v2](#), [Mark 3v16](#)).
- Outspoken at times.
- Often the first to act and do something, ie. walked to Jesus on the water ([Matthew 14](#)), cut off ear of the High Priest's servant ([John 18v10](#)), ran into the empty tomb ([John 20v6](#)), jumped into the water ([John 21v7](#)).
- Devoted to Jesus and really wanted to be with him.
- He was very loyal to Jesus and wanted to stay with him, even when others left ([John 6v67-68](#)). He even said he would die with Jesus ([Matthew 26v35](#)).
- He learned from the mistakes he made and didn't run away from Jesus (ie. denying Christ 3 times).

Peter the Apostle

- After Jesus' death and resurrection, Peter was very bold in preaching about Jesus.
- Peter became the apostle to the Jews ([Galatians 2v8](#)).

Death

- We aren't told in the Bible how Peter died, but other people who recorded history at the time say he was crucified upside down.

Peter's Calling as a Disciple

Peter and Andrew were disciples of John the Baptist and they were looking for the Messiah. One day, Andrew and John were with John the Baptist down in Bethabara when he pointed out Jesus walking towards them. Imagine their excitement ... seeing the Messiah they had been waiting for ... for the very first time!

Andrew ran off to find his brother, Peter, and told him that they had found the Messiah (even though Christ was the one that had found them ☺). Andrew brings Peter back to Jesus and Jesus said to him, "Simon son of Jona: thou shalt be Called Cephas (Peter), which is by interpretation, A stone".

Peter didn't start following Jesus at this point though – he went back to Capernaum and continued being a fisherman. It was probably a year later that Jesus saw Peter, Andrew, James and John again on the Sea of Galilee, fishing and mending their nets. Jesus again asked them to follow him – and they forsook their nets and followed him ([Mark 1v16-21](#)).

We also have another story about Peter just shortly have this one and it's found in [Luke 5v11](#). Jesus was preaching on the shore of the Sea of Galilee. There were lots of people crowded around to hear him speak! Jesus saw two boats that were by the beach, but the fishermen were not in the boats. They had gone to wash out their nets. Peter owned one of the boats and Jesus got into the boat. He asked Peter to come and push the boat out a little from the land. Then Jesus sat down in the boat and taught the people who were all gathered on the shore.

When Jesus finished speaking, Jesus told Peter to take his boat out into deeper water and let down his nets to catch some fish. Peter said to Jesus that they had worked hard all night and didn't catch anything! But he was still willing to do what Jesus asked, even though he thought they were going to catch nothing! But imagine how surprised they were when they let down their nets and it was FULL of hundreds of fish! The net was so full that it began to break. Peter had to call to James and John to come over and help them! There were SO many fish, that it filled TWO boats and they both began to sink. Imagine how much fish that would be!!! This was an amazing miracle Jesus was able to do with God's power.

Jesus did this miracle to teach the disciples a lesson. Here they were – disappointed and tired after fishing all night and catching nothing. They were busy cleaning their nets, while other people were crowded around Jesus to hear his words. These fishermen had been more worried about catching fish, than about the word of God. Peter felt very ashamed and fell down at Jesus' feet and said, "Depart from me; for I am a sinful man, O Lord". Peter did not feel worthy to have such a wonderful friend as Jesus. But Jesus comforted Peter, James and John and said, "Fear not, from henceforth you shall catch men". They would not need to worry about their fishing – God would provide all the food they needed day by day. Their job now was to help Jesus to teach the people about God's kingdom. So they brought their boats into the shore. The disciples left their boats and nets there and went and followed Jesus. Peter now became one of the 12 disciples of Jesus and spent lots of time with Jesus until his death.

We can also learn a lesson from this little story about the great catch of fish. Sometimes we can worry too much about what we wear, or what we eat, or where we want to go ... and forget that God will provide for us ... just like God was able to provide plenty of fish for Peter! We need to focus on the important things ... like listening to God's Word, doing our Bible readings each day, going to Sunday School, praying and obeying our parents. Who can finish this verse, "*Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you*" ([Matthew 6v33](#)).

So Peter left the life he was living, and left his job as a fisherman and became one of Jesus' 12 disciples.

Lapbook items

- *Peter flower flap in lapbook ... write the answers inside each flap and write "Peter means Rock" on the inside.*
- *"Fishermen to followers" fish flap.*
- *"Fishers of men" craft ... men in a fishing net.*

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Lesson 2 - Highlights of Peter's Life as a Disciple

Review of Day 1 and Intro

Yesterday we looked at the background to Peter and his calling to be a disciple. Who was Peter's brother? What did Peter do for a job? Where did Peter live? What was the other name that Peter was called?

Today we are going to look at a few stories from Peter's life during his time with Jesus. As we talked about yesterday, Peter was chosen to be one of Jesus' 12 special friends. Jesus had many disciples that followed him to hear him teach the word of God, but out of all these followers, he chose 12 special disciples. The word "disciple" means "follower". Were all of the 12 disciples faithful men?

When we think about Peter's life as a disciple, what stories or events do we think about? I'm going to see if you can guess what stories we might be covering today!

We are going to look at two events in Peter's life that happened during Christ's 3½ year ministry. One of the stories shows Peter's excitement and desire to be with his Lord. It also shows the way Peter was often the first one to jump into things ... sometimes without even thinking! The second event is a sad one for Peter and he felt terrible for what he did. But he did learn from his mistake and was determined to change. So let's get into the stories!

Peter Walks on Water (Matthew 14v22-33)

Our first story about Peter is when he walks on water. Here is what happened leading up to when Peter walked on water. Jesus and his disciples had been working hard, teaching the people and doing miracles. They wanted to go away quietly to pray. So they had sailed in a boat across the Sea of Galilee to a quiet lonely place, so they could be by themselves.

But, the people saw what they were doing and ran around the Sea of Galilee on the shore to be with Jesus! Jesus was not selfish though – I'm sure I would have asked them to go away so I could pray and be with my disciples! But Jesus felt sorry for them, because they were like sheep without a shepherd. Jesus spoke to them all day and later in the day he did the wonderful miracle of the five loaves and two fish!

Now the people had all left and Jesus sent his disciples to their boat and Jesus was alone. He went up into the hills to pray. He needed this quiet time to pray to his father for strength. Meanwhile though, there was a storm on the lake and the disciples' boat was being beaten by waves. They rowed hard in the strong wind. Then suddenly, they looked across the lake and saw someone walking on the water towards them. They were so scared and cried out! They couldn't believe that someone really was there, walking on the water. It was Jesus! He said to them, *"Be of good cheer; it is I; be not afraid"*.

Peter called back, *"Lord, if it be thou, bid me come unto thee on the water"*. He was the first to act and really wanted to go and be with Jesus! Jesus told Peter to come. Without delay, Peter got out of the boat and began to walk on the water towards Jesus. He actually walked on the water! But then he took his eyes off Jesus and looked around and saw the rough seas and he became afraid. He lost faith and began to sink into the water. *"Lord save me,"* he cried out. Straight away, Jesus reached out his hand and caught hold of Peter. Jesus asked Peter why he doubted.

Peter and Jesus both came into the boat and the wind stopped and the lake was calm. The disciples were so glad and amazed at what just happened. They said, *"Of a truth, you are the Son of God!"* Jesus even cared for them when he wasn't with them.

So what do we learn from this little story? Can we see Jesus now? Does he care for us, even though we can't see him? Of course he does ... just like he cared for the disciples, even though they couldn't see him up on the mountain praying. And a very important lesson we learn from Peter is that we must keep our eyes on Jesus ... our focus in life should be on the things of God and Jesus. As soon as Peter looked away from Jesus, and saw the rough waves around him, he lost faith and started to sink. But Jesus was there to save him ... just like God and Jesus are there for us in times of trouble.

Peter Denies his Lord (Matthew 26v69-75, Mark 14v66-72, Luke 22v54-62, John 18v15-27)

The second story we are going to look at briefly is a sad story that happened at the end of Christ's ministry. It is when Peter denied Jesus ... when he pretended he never knew who Jesus was. Do we ever pretend we don't know Jesus?

Jesus spent some time in the Garden of Gethsemane, praying to his father for strength to endure what lay ahead of him ... his trials and crucifixion. Now he has been betrayed by one of his very own disciples, Judas and he is on the way to his trial and crucifixion.

All the disciples had now forsaken Jesus and fled (Matthew 26v56) ... at a time that Christ needed them the most. Peter and John then decide to follow the crowds back into the city to the palace of the High Priest, where Christ was taken. It seems John goes inside, but Peter stays outside and warms himself by a fire. A damsel girl said to Peter, *"Thou also wast with Jesus of Galilee"*, but Peter answer, *"I now not what thou sayest"*. How could he pretend not to know Jesus at all? This was the first of this three denials.

Peter decided to go out to the porch for a while, and then he returns to the fire again. Another maid saw him and said, *"This fellow was also with Jesus of Nazareth"*. And again Peter argued saying, *"I DO NOT KNOW THE MAN"*. (Matthew 26v71-72). How could he say this? He had just spent over three years with his Lord, and now he was saying he didn't even know Christ!

About an hour later, another discussion starts about Peter being with Jesus in the garden. A servant of the high priest, who was also a relative of Malchus (who's ear Peter had cut off in the garden), said to Peter, *"Did I not see thee in the garden with him?"* (John 18v26) And someone else said that surely Peter must be one of the disciples, because the way he speaks / his accent confirms it. Peter began to curse and swear and said, *"I KNOW NOT THE MAN"*. And immediately after this the cock crew. It probably wasn't an actual rooster crowing, but a term that was used for when the trumpet blew to sound it was time to change guards.

Just a few hours earlier, Peter had said that he was even prepared to die with Christ (Matthew 26v35) and now he didn't even want anything to do with him! Jesus had told Peter that before the cock crow, he would deny him three times (Matthew 26v34). What a sad moment this was for Peter ... when he realised he had denied his Lord three times. And it was at this moment, that Luke tells us that *"the Lord turned, and looked upon Peter"* (Luke 22v61). It would have been a look of sadness, pain, understanding, love ... all mixed together. No doubt Peter never forgot this look from his Lord. He went out and cried bitterly. He was a very sad and depressed man.

Thinking about the way Peter denied Christ, how do you think we can deny Christ now? How can we pretend not to know Jesus?

But Peter learned from this terrible mistake he made ... and he went on to be a bold preacher of Christ, after his resurrection! No longer was he ashamed of his Lord ... he was determined to tell everyone about the good news of Jesus and the Kingdom! That's where our lessons are going to take us tomorrow.

Lapbook items

- *"Keep your eyes on Jesus" oval flap.*
- *"Peter Walks on Water" pentagon flap.*

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Lesson 3 - The Risen Lord, the New Peter

Review of Day 2 and Intro

Yesterday we looked at a couple of events that happened during Peter's time as a disciple of Christ. What was the amazing thing that Peter tried to do on the water? Was he able to walk all the way to Jesus? Why not? Did Jesus let him sink? What was the sad event that we looked at yesterday? How many times did Peter deny, or pretend not to know Jesus?

Today we are going to move onto the Acts of the Apostles. So Christ has been crucified and was laid in a sepulchre for 3 days and he has now been resurrected. Just a little story about the empty tomb first ... it's an interesting story because it shows Peter's impulsive character again, and his willingness to be with Jesus 😊 Mary Magdalene saw that the stone of the sepulchre was rolled away, so she ran and told Peter and John the news. Quickly Peter and John run to the tomb ... John runs faster and gets there first. He stooped down to look inside the tomb, but didn't go in. Then Peter comes along and bursts right inside the tomb and sees the linen clothes lying there, but no Jesus.

Later, Jesus appeared to the disciples and they could see for themselves that it really was Jesus. He was able to show him the marks in his hands from where he had been crucified. He spent 40 days with the disciples, talking with them about the Kingdom that God would one day set up on the earth.

At the end of the 40 days, Jesus was walking with his disciples towards the Mount of Olives. He had just finished telling them about the work he wanted them to do. He lifted up his hands and blessed them. The disciples were all looking at Jesus and then he was taken up from them and a cloud covered him. They could not see him anymore. They stood there looking up into heaven, wondering what had happened. Suddenly, two angels dressed in white robes stood by them and said, *"Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven."* So this is a wonderful promise ... that Jesus WILL come back to the earth in the same way. And when he comes back, he will be king of the whole earth and he will set up God's kingdom. Until then, Jesus is in heaven at God's right hand.

The Day of Pentecost – the Holy Spirit Comes to the Apostles

Jesus had told his disciples not to leave Jerusalem because God had promised to send His special power, the Holy Spirit. This special power was going to help the disciples teach the gospel to other people, speak other languages and heal people. The disciples were now called "apostles", which means "one sent". They were sent to preach the Gospel. What is the gospel? The good news about the Kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ.

On the day of Pentecost, the apostles were all together in one place. Suddenly there came a sound from heaven, like a rushing mighty wind. It filled the whole house. Tongues of fire appeared above the head of each apostle. Each one was filled with God's special power – the Holy Spirit. Now they could speak in other languages which they had never learnt before and perform wonderful miracles!

Because it was the feast of Pentecost, there were lots of people staying in Jerusalem who had come from different places. When they heard the apostles speaking in other languages, they crowded around to listen. Everyone knew the men were from Galilee and wondered how they could hear them speak in their own languages! They asked each other what it meant. Some people laughed at the apostles, and some said they were drunk! But they weren't.

Peter's Speech on the Day of Pentecost (Acts 2v14-36)

Peter stood up and told the people that they weren't drunk. Peter quotes a passage from the Old Testament book of Joel. Peter told them to listen to what he is saying! He told them that Jesus proved who he was by miracles, wonders and other signs from God. The Jews had crucified him and God raised him up just like the patriarch David wrote. Jesus was now in heaven at the right hand of his father. Peter said that this was the same Jesus who God had anointed to be their king.

When the people heard what Peter had to say, they felt sorry in their hearts. They said to Peter and the apostles, *"Men and brethren, what shall we do?"*

"Repent and be baptised, every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission (forgiveness) of sins", said Peter.

Lots of people took note of what Peter said that day. The Bible tells us that about 3,000 people were baptised! How amazing is that?! And how encouraging that would have been for the apostles. So Peter's speech resulted in about 3,000 people being baptised!

We have now followed Peter's life from a fisherman, to a follower (disciple) of Jesus and now a faithful apostle! The rest of our lessons on Peter are going to focus on his life as an apostle.

Lapbook items

- *"The Day of Pentecost" flap book and questions.*
- *Pentecost puzzle.*

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Lesson 4 - Miracles Performed by Peter

Review of Day 3 and Intro

Yesterday we looked at what happened after Jesus rose from the dead and the events that took place on the day of Pentecost. How many days did Jesus spend with his disciples after he rose from the dead? Does anyone know what the angels promised the disciples after Jesus ascended to heaven? Where did Jesus ask the disciples to stay after he ascended to heaven? What did the disciples receive on the day of Pentecost? Who gave a wonderful speech on the day of Pentecost? How many people were baptised?

Today we are going to look at a couple of miracles that Peter performed. How was Peter able to do these miracles? Was it magic? Of course not – he was able to use the Holy Spirit, God’s special power, to do these wonderful miracles. There are quite a few miracles that the Bible records Peter doing, but we are just going to focus on two of them today.

Healing the Lame Man at the Beautiful Gate (Acts 3-4)

In Jerusalem there was a Temple where the people worshipped God. One of the gates of the Temple was very beautiful ... decorated with silver, gold and brass. It was called the “Beautiful Gate”.

But not everything at the gate was beautiful! Every day a poor lame man was brought there. He was over 40 years old and had never ever walked. He was lame. Each day he lay at the Beautiful Gate as the people went into the Temple. He begged them to give him money. He could not work to earn money like other people.

Peter and John were going into the Temple one day at the hour of prayer. The lame man asked them for money. Peter said to the man, “Look on us”. The lame man looked up at Peter and John because he thought they were going to give him some money! Peter was going to give him something, but it wasn’t what the man was expecting!!

Peter said to the lame man, *“Silver and gold have I none; but such as I have give I thee: In the name of Jesus Christ, or Nazareth rise up and walk”*. Peter took him by the right hand and lifted him up. Immediately his feet and ankle bones got strength in them and he leaped up and could walk ... for the very first time!! He went into the temple, leaping and walking and praising God! He was a very happy man and so excited that he had been healed! Peter was able to make him better by the power of the Holy Spirit.

When everyone saw the man leaping and praising God, they were amazed! They knew he was the man that used to sit at the Beautiful Gate begging for money. They wondered what had happened to him and how he had been made better! Everyone ran to see the man in the porch of the Temple called “Solomon’s Porch”.

Peter used this opportunity to speak to the people. He told them that it was God who had healed the lame man and it wasn’t by their own power. The people had delivered up and killed Jesus, but God had now raised him from the dead! Peter did this miracle in front of them, to prove to them that the words he spoke were true, and that God had really raised Jesus from the dead.

Peter said to the people that he knew they had crucified Jesus not realising what they were doing, but now they knew what they had done. They needed to repent and change their ways and God would forgive them. Peter also told them that Jesus was going to come back to the earth and that those who would not obey him would be destroyed. Many people believed what Peter said because of what they had seen and heard – about 5,000 (Acts 4v4).

Sadly, not everyone was happy to see the lame man healed. The priests and Sadducees and rulers of the Temple were not happy at all. They did not like Peter and John preaching about the resurrection of the dead either. They came and arrested Peter and John and put them in prison to the following day. The next day, they told Peter and John not to speak or teach in the name of Jesus, but Peter and John said it was more important for them to obey God rather than man. They were only speaking the things they had seen and heard ... they weren't making any lies up! So they let Peter and John go free. They couldn't think of a way to punish them.

What has God given us that is more precious than gold and silver? It's the Bible – God's Word. If we believe what God has written in the Bible and get baptised when we are older, than we will have opportunity to live forever in God's kingdom. That is greater than gold and silver!

Peter Raises Tabitha to Life (Acts 9v36-42)

In the ecclesia at Joppa, there was a lady named Tabitha, or in the Greek language, Dorcas. Everyone knew and loved Tabitha because of the wonderful things she did for other people, especially people in need. She was a true follower of Jesus, and not only believed the words, but showed by her actions that she was a believer!

How can we be helpful? What are some things we can do for Dad and Mum to help them? How can we help our friends in the meeting? What can we do at Sunday School to be helpful?

To continue with our story ... Tabitha became very sick and she died. The brothers and sisters were sad. But they remembered that Peter was staying in a nearby town called Lydda. They knew that Peter could do wonderful miracles and they thought he could help them now. They sent two men to go and tell Peter to come straight away.

Peter left for Joppa right way and went up to the upper room where they had laid Tabitha. The widows stood around crying. They showed Peter the clothes that Tabitha had made and told him about the good things she had done.

Peter sent everyone out of the room and kneeled down to pray to God. He knew that it was only by God's power that he could raise Tabitha to life again. He then turned to the body lying there and said, "*Tabitha, arise!*" She opened her eyes and when she saw Peter she sat up! Peter reached out his hand and helped her stand up.

Peter called everyone back into the room again! How happy they were to see Tabitha alive and well again! They rejoiced and praised God for His mighty power. They also told lots of people in Joppa what had happened, so more people believed the gospel now!

What an amazing miracle! Peter had faith in God that He could raise Tabitha to life again. It wasn't by his own strength that he could do a miracle like this ... it was only by the power of God. Imagine seeing someone come to life again! When will we see dead people come to life again? In the kingdom! This is called the resurrection. We pray this time will be soon.

Lapbook items

- *Beautiful Gate craft for the back of the lapbook.*
- *"Peter Raises Tabitha" wheel with Tabitha questions. Glue dress cut out on front of wheel.*
- *"Tabitha helped others, so can _____" accordion flap.*

<p style="text-align: center;">6-8 YEAR OLD CLASS Lesson 5 - Peter's Vision and the Conversion of Cornelius</p>

Review of Day 4 and Intro

Who remembers the two miracles that we looked at yesterday? Where did the lame man sit every day to beg for money? What did Peter and John give the lame man? Where did Tabitha live? What did Tabitha do for other people?

Today we are going to look at the story of Cornelius and a vision that was given to Peter to teach Peter a lesson.

Cornelius Sends for Peter (Acts 10v1-8)

Cornelius lived in Caesarea and he was a Roman Centurion (in charge of 100 men). Even though he wasn't a Jew, he was a faithful man and feared God. He gladly gave gifts to the poor and prayed a lot.

One day, Cornelius had a vision of an angel of God. The angel told him that God had heard his prayers and knew of his good works. He told Cornelius to send men to go and get Peter who was staying with Simon the tanner. Peter would tell him what he needed to do. Cornelius immediately sent two of his servants and a faithful soldier, to Peter in Joppa.

Peter's Vision (Acts 10v9-23)

Meanwhile, Peter went up to the rooftop at Simon's house to pray. As he prayed, he became hungry. Then suddenly he saw a vision. He saw the heavens open and a large sheet full of unclean animals being lowered down. A voice commanded him, *"Get up, Peter. Kill and eat."*

"Surely not, Lord!" Peter replied. *"I have never eaten anything impure or unclean."* In the Law of Moses, God had said that His people were only to eat clean animals.

The voice spoke to him a second time, *"Do not call anything impure that God has made clean."* This happened three times, and immediately the sheet was taken back to heaven.

Peter was very confused by the vision! While Peter was thinking about the meaning of the vision, the messengers from Cornelius arrived. God told Peter that three men were looking for him and he was to go with them because God had sent them. Peter invited them in to stay and the next day they travelled to Caesarea.

Peter Meets Cornelius (Acts 10v24-43)

Cornelius was waiting for them. He had called his friends and relatives to gather at this house. Never before had Peter, the Jew, had anything to do with the Gentiles, but now he went right inside the house of a Roman Centurion! Now Peter was beginning to know the reason why God had sent the strange vision. Peter and the Jews thought that the Gentiles were like unclean animals and had no hope of being in God's Kingdom. Peter needed to understand that Gentiles would learn and obey the gospel too. They were not to be thought of as "unclean" any more.

Cornelius explained about the angel and the message he gave to him. Peter said that now he understood that God does not show favoritism ... He does not make any difference between Jews and Gentiles, but would accept anyone who worships Him in truth.

Peter went on to tell Cornelius all about the things which Jesus did and how he was killed and how God raised him from the dead. He told them how Jesus had commanded them to preach to the people so that everyone who believes on Jesus can have their sins forgiven.

Cornelius is Baptised (Acts 10v44-48)

As Peter spoke these words, the Holy Spirit came on Cornelius and on all who heard his words. Peter was amazed, for they could speak in different languages too! Now he knew for certain that God had accepted these Gentiles. He said that they should be baptised, so they were!

They asked Peter to stay with them for a while. What a happy time it would be for them to speak together of the wonderful things God had done for them and of His coming Kingdom.

So Cornelius had to learn that even though he prayed to God and was kind to the poor, he still needed to believe the gospel and be baptised. This is how he could have his sins forgiven, and find a place in God's Kingdom. The same is for us as well. It isn't enough just to be nice to people – we have to believe the Bible and when we are older we must be baptised and follow Christ.

Lapbook items

- *“Cornelius Sequencing Game”.*
- *Craft – sheet of unclean animals.*

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Lesson 6 - Peter is Delivered from Prison

Review of Day 5 and Intro

What was the name of the Roman Centurion that we learnt about yesterday? Was he a Jew or a Gentile? Did he believe in God? What was the vision that Peter had while he was in Joppa? What was God teaching Peter in the vision?

Today is our last day and we are going to talk about the amazing thing that happened to Peter while he was in prison!

Peter is put in Prison (Acts 12v1-5)

Herod was a very cruel and wicked king and he liked to please the leaders of the people. He had taken the apostle James and killed him with the sword. What a mean man! The rulers of the Jews were very happy about Herod doing this. They did not like the apostles, because they spoke about Jesus. Herod thought that he would make the rulers even happier by killing Peter as well!

So Herod sent his soldiers to arrest Peter and put him in prison. He was guarded by 16 soldiers ... they took it in turns ... four at a time! Herod wanted to make sure that Peter did not get away.

When the brothers and sisters found out about Peter, they gathered together and prayed for Peter. They knew that God could protect him and save him.

An Angel comes to Save Peter (Acts 12v6-11)

Then ... on the very night before Peter was to be killed, an amazing thing happened!!! Peter was fast asleep and two soldiers were chained to him, and two more soldiers were at the door keeping guard. Suddenly an angel appeared in the prison and the room was filled with light. The angel hit Peter on the side and woke him up and said, "*Arise up quickly*". The heavy chains that were on his hands fell off ... and the soldiers still didn't wake up!

The angel told Peter to get his clothes together and get dressed. He followed the angel, but it all seemed like a dream to him! They passed the first and second guards and then came to the big iron gate that lead out into the city. Amazingly, it opened all by itself! The angel continued to lead Peter out of the city and after walking down one street, the angel suddenly disappeared!

Peter suddenly realised that he had been freed from prison! It had not been a dream at all. God had sent his angel to free him from the wicked Herod.

Peter Goes to the Brothers and Sisters (Acts 12v12-17)

Peter hurried to the house of Mary, the mother of John Mark. This is where the brothers and sisters were gathered together, praying for him.

Peter knocked on the outside gate and a girl named Rhoda came to see who it was. When she heard Peter's voice she was so excited that she ran back inside to tell everyone that Peter was safe and standing outside. Meanwhile, Peter is standing there waiting for the gate to be opened!

The brothers and sisters thought Rhoda was mad! Even though they had all been gathered together to pray for Peter's safety, they didn't really believe that God could answer their prayers just like that! But Rhoda was determined that it was Peter. The people thought it must be a messenger for Peter.

Peter is still standing outside knocking and no doubt wondering what is happening inside! When they finally opened the door, they found it was Peter, just as Rhoda had told them! They were totally amazed but excited that God had delivered him out of prison.

Peter told everyone about the miraculous escape from prison. Peter told them to tell the other brothers and sisters as well. He then had to leave to go to another place where he would be safe from Herod.

Back at the Prison... (Acts 12v18-25)

So the next morning, you can imagine the commotion that was happening at the prison. What had happened to Peter? How could he possibly get away when two soldiers were chained to him, and more soldiers were right outside the door keeping guard??! Plus how did he get out of the prison gates??!

Herod even searched for Peter and when he couldn't find him, he questioned the guards. He then ordered that they be put to death.

Sometime later, Herod was wearing his royal robes and he gave a public speech. The crowd that was listening shouted, *"This is the voice of a god, not of a man"*. Immediately an angel struck him down and he died. He was eaten up by worms!

What an amazing story!! We saw Peter locked up in prison and about to be killed. It seemed as though there was no way he could escape. But the prayers of the brothers and sisters were heard, and God sent one of his angels to deliver Peter from prison! We must remember that God hears our prayers and He answers them in the way that He knows best.

So we have followed the life of Peter from when he was a fisherman, to when he gave that all away to follow his Lord as one of his disciples. We looked at a couple of stories that happened while Peter was a disciple. We then moved forward to the Acts of the Apostles and saw how Peter was so confident to preach about his risen Lord! He had changed from being the self confident Peter, to being confident in God!

Lapbook items

- *"Peter is Freed from Prison" mini book.*