

Jesus Restores Peter

John 21:15-19

MEMORY VERSE

PSALM 23:1-3

The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want. He makes me to lie down in green pastures; He leads me beside the still waters. He restores my soul; He leads me in the paths of righteousness for His name's sake.

WHAT YOU WILL NEED:

Several items from home to illustrate ways children can help around the house. A broom, a bucket and sponge, a dust rag, and table settings will work well.

Masking tape and two cards reading “YES” and “NO.”

Cheerios and string to make necklaces for each child.

ATTENTION GRABBER!

Helping!

Bring several items from home to illustrate ways children can help. A broom, a bucket and sponge, a dust rag, and table settings are a few examples. Ask for several volunteers to help with these various items and have the class clean and set the table for “dinner.”

When the help time is over, ask your students to share how it felt to work together and “help.” Ask them to come up with other ideas of how they can help in their homes, their neighborhoods, and their schools.

LESSON TIME!

Have you ever felt like a complete failure? You had good intentions but you didn't measure up. Or have you done something really wrong and didn't know how to make things right again? Maybe you had a fight with your best friend, talked back to your parents, or took something that didn't belong to you. You felt really bad about it but what could you do? How could you restore (or make right) your relationship again?

Peter was in this position. Jesus had been arrested. Peter had denied Jesus three times. He loved Jesus and was feeling really terrible about what he had done. He didn't know what to do.

Jesus had died on the cross and had risen from the dead. Peter was very excited; Jesus was there with him. But he didn't know how to make it up to Jesus. How could the relationship between Peter and Jesus be restored?

Our story today shows that Jesus forgave and restored Peter and passed on to Peter the leadership of the church. Even though Peter failed we see that Jesus still had a plan for his life and he went on to be a very strong and great leader in the church. Let's take a look at how Jesus restored Peter.

JOHN 21:15

So when they had eaten breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, "Simon, son of Jonah, do you love Me more than these?" He said to Him, "Yes, Lord; You know that I love You." He said to him, "Feed My lambs."

Remember that Peter had denied Jesus just before His death on the cross. Jesus asked Peter if he loved Him more than the things of the world. Peter told Jesus that He knew that he loved him. Peter made some mistakes, some very serious, but he did have a sincere love for Jesus.

Sometimes we may make mistakes or do things wrong. The important thing is what is in our hearts. Did you know that Jesus is always faithful to forgive us of our sins when we ask Him? We are not perfect because we are human. So we often need to ask for forgiveness. But the interesting thing is that this just makes us love Jesus all the more and do those things that please Him. That is what grace is all about.

Jesus then instructs Peter to teach His little ones, the children and new believers. Did you know that you have a special place in Jesus' heart? He desires for you to be fed. How are we fed? Through the word of God. Jesus was telling Peter that the best way

to show his love for Jesus was to feed His lambs. Lambs are the youngest of the sheep. Why do we come to church and listen to Bible stories? Because Jesus wants you to be fed His word. It is because Jesus loves you and wants you to grow up knowing Him. We can show we love others by sharing God's word with them. **We show our love for Jesus by helping others.**

Feed My Lambs!

Have your class prepare snacks for one another. Cheerios necklaces are fun. Divide enough Cheerios for each student to make approximately the same size necklace on string. Then have them exchange the necklaces with one another saying, "Feed my lambs."

JOHN 21:16

He said to him again a second time, "Simon, son of Jonah, do you love Me?" He said to Him, "Yes, Lord; You know that I love You." He said to him, "Tend My sheep."

To get Peter's attention, Jesus again asked Peter if he truly loved Jesus and then told him to take care of His church. Why do you suppose that Jesus repeated Himself? Actually we will see that Jesus asked Peter the same question three different times. Can you remember how many times that Peter denied Jesus? It was three times. Peter would now declare his love for Jesus three times in being restored.

Jesus was not trying to embarrass Peter, but He wanted Peter to know the importance of confessing Him before others. Jesus loved Peter very much and wanted to see him used in His kingdom. **We show our love for Jesus by helping others.**

JOHN 21:17

He said to him the third time, "Simon, son of Jonah, do you love Me?" Peter was grieved because He said to him the third time, "Do you love Me?" And he said to Him, "Lord, You know all things; You know that I love You." Jesus said to him, "Feed My sheep."

Peter had denied Jesus three times so Jesus restored Peter three times by asking him how much he loved Jesus. At first Peter didn't understand, so he felt hurt. After Peter firmly declared his love and allegiance he was restored and forgiven.

In John 10:11, Jesus declared, "I am the good shepherd." We are His sheep. Jesus wanted Peter to take care of and teach the new believers how to follow Him. As we study the book of Acts we will see that Peter truly is a changed man. What is the

difference? He was filled with the Holy Spirit. And when he was under the influence of the Holy Spirit God used him greatly.

God wants to use our lives greatly to reach others for Him. Sometimes we need to learn a hard lesson like Peter, but there is always forgiveness in Jesus. God is never done with us. He will use our lives greatly if we will only let Him. **We show our love for Jesus by helping others.**

What is Love?

Divide the classroom into two by putting a piece of masking tape down the center. Place one card reading “YES” on one side and another reading “NO” on the other. Prepare several statements that you will read to your class and have them move into the side of the room that best describes love.

Some examples of the phrases you might use are: “My sister took my best airplane and broke it, but I will help her with her homework anyway”; “Mom knows I love her, so I don’t need to do my chores”; “Grandma sure was grouchy today, but I should mow her lawn anyway”.

Explain to your class that “agape” love, the love of Christ, is an “anyway” love. God’s love is not a “because” love; He loves us no matter what and that’s the way He wants us to love others.

Jesus next told Peter what his future would be. He loved Peter very much, so He shared with him what would happen someday.

JOHN 21:18-19

"Most assuredly, I say to you, when you were younger, you girded yourself and walked where you wished; but when you are old, you will stretch out your hands, and another will gird you and carry you where you do not wish."

This He spoke, signifying by what death he would glorify God. And when He had spoken this, He said to him, "Follow Me."

Peter had denied Jesus because he was afraid of death. Here Jesus told him the future and how he was going to die. He was telling Peter that he would be killed because of his belief in Jesus, and his death would honor God. When this happened, he was not to be afraid because God is always in control, even when we can't see it. He was to follow Jesus no matter what happened.

We also need to obey and follow Jesus. If we fail, we need to confess and ask forgiveness each time and be restored so that God can use us. When we love and help others too, we will also find true happiness in our own lives. It feels good to help someone in need and to know that we have made someone else happy. **We show our love for Jesus by helping others.**

PRAYER

Lead the children in a prayer of commitment to help where ever the Lord shows. If any children have not yet responded to the gospel, give them an opportunity to do so.