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An rfour.org Children's Time Message

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Written for August 30, 2026

Fourteenth Sunday after Pentecost

Lectionary Year A

Scripture: [Matthew 16:21-28](#) [**Summary:** *Peter Gets Turned Around*]

Supplies Needed: A smart phone or tablet (with side buttons)

ASK (a.k.a. [The On-Ramp](#))

- Good morning!
- I'm hoping you might be able to help me.
- I have a phone, here, but it's not working for me.
- But maybe you can fix it for me.
- [*Hold the phone with the screen facing down*] So, here's the thing - I push the buttons on the side and then I tap on it, but I can't see anything.
- [*Tap on the back of the phone (with the screen facing downwards) a couple of times; then show the back of the phone to the kids and say "See? Doesn't work." Then let them explain to you that you are using the wrong side of the phone - that you have it facing the wrong way.*]
- I can't believe I've had the phone turned the wrong way this whole time!
- Thank you so much for helping me out!

TELL (a.k.a. [The Freeway](#))

- You know, my confusion with the phone is a lot like what happens in today's scripture story.
- Except, instead of the phone getting turned around, Peter gets turned around.
- It all starts when Jesus is telling Peter and the other disciples about certain things that are going to happen to him.
- And, the things Jesus was saying that were going to happen to him were not good things.

- It's at this point that Peter then tells Jesus to make different choices.
- But that's not what students are supposed to do with teachers in Jesus' time and place
- Students were meant to ask questions and follow the teacher. And teachers were meant to lead the way.
- But when Peter tells Jesus to change his choices, he's acting like the teacher and is treating Jesus like the student.
- Peter has gotten turned around, just like I had the phone turned around.
- Which is why Jesus tells Peter to get behind him.
- Jesus tells Peter that to help Peter get turned the right way, just like you helped me get the phone turned the right way.

SHARE the Good News (a.k.a. *The Destination*)

- The phone is much more useful once it is turned the right way, right?
- And, in today's story, Peter is more helpful once he's facing the right direction.
- Jesus knows that Peter has gotten turned around because he is afraid of what's going to happen.
- The same thing can happen for us.
- Sometimes we get scared and confused and turned around.
- When that happens, we start to make mistakes.
- But today's story reminds us that when we're afraid and confused, one of the first things we can do is to turn our attention towards Jesus.
- By turning our attention towards Jesus, we are reminded of what Jesus teaches about God and God's way which helps us face in the best direction.
- And when we are facing the right direction, towards God, we are more likely to act in a helpful way for ourselves and others.
- That's the good news for today. Let's pray.
- This is a repeat-after-me prayer.

CLOSING Prayer

Dear God,

Dear God,

Thank you for Jesus...

Thank you for Jesus...

...who teaches us...

...who teaches us...

...how to face your way...

...how to face your way...

...and better know how to be your gift.

...and better know how to be your gift.

Thank you and Amen