

An rfour.org Children's Time Message

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Written for May 4, 2025

Third Sunday of Easter

Lectionary Year C

Scripture: [John 21:1-19](#) [**Summary:** *Feed My Sheep*]

Supplies Needed: One Q-tip (ear-swab). OPTIONAL: Also have three Q-tips per expected child - but I recommend bringing a whole box up front with you. You'll want to keep the Q-tips initially hidden, maybe in a paper bag or back pack..

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

- Good morning!
- I have a question for you. Can you tell me what I am holding? [*Show one Q-tip to the group. Keep it separate from the other Q-Tips so that when you pull it out, the kids don't associate it with the bag that you have with you.*]
- That's right. It *is* a ear-swab / Q-Tip. What do we use it for? (To keep our ears clean)
- That's also right! So I was thinking that the congregation could always use some more Q-tips. Not because their ears need cleaning, but because they want to *keep* their ears clean, at some point, they'll need *more* Q-tips.
- Wouldn't it be nice, then, if you went and gave them some Q-tips?
- Yes? [*Yes!*]
- OK then, go ahead. Go give the congregation some Q-tips.
- [*Pause for a child to hopefully complain/point out that they do not have any Q-Tips to give away. If no one complains, goad them on a little, maybe say "Is there a problem? Do you not want the congregation to have more Q-Tips?"*]
- [*Once a complaint is made...*] Oh! That's a good point. Are you saying you can't give them any Q-tips because you don't have any Q-tips to give away?
- In other words, if I want you to give something away, then I need to give it to you first, right?
- I want you to keep in mind this idea of needing to be given something before you can share it as we talk about today's scripture story.

TELL (a.k.a. *The Freeway*)

- In today's scripture story, we hear Jesus tell Peter (and the other disciples) to give something away.
- Jesus tells Peter to “Feed my sheep.”
- Now, you might think that Peter would have said, “But I don’t have any food to give away!”
- But, we heard in the story that Jesus had already helped Peter receive food.
- At the start of the story, Jesus helps Peter and the other disciples catch lots of fish (153 of them, the story tells us)
- And then, the story says that Jesus made breakfast for Peter and the disciples.
- So when Jesus tells Peter to “Feed my sheep,” he’s telling Peter to give to others something that Jesus first gave to Peter.
- Now, when Jesus tells Peter to “Feed my sheep,” what he is REALLY telling Peter to do is to care for and love people.
- And, for Peter to be able to care for and love people, what do you think Peter has to first receive from Jesus?
- That’s right, Peter has to first receive the love Jesus offers to Peter.

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

- Just like Jesus told Peter to care for and love the people, so too, does Jesus tell *us* to love one another.
- But, Jesus first offers that love to us, so that we then have it to share with others.
- And this is the Good News for today: The way we love one another is by first receiving the love that Jesus offers to us...
- [OPTIONAL] ...just like the Q-tips I’m going to share with you so that you can share with the congregation... *after* we pray.
- [OPTIONAL] [*After the prayer, give each child a handful of Q-tips to go pass out in the congregation*].
- 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 the gift of Jesus.

Thank you for the gift of Jesus.

...who offers us...

...who offers us...

...your love, mercy, and care...

...your love, mercy, and care...

...so that we can then share...

...so that we can then share...

...your love, mercy, and care with others.

...your love, mercy, and care with others.

Thank you and Amen