

Year 1: Session 7 – After Resurrection

Class 21: Acts 3:1-11; 4:1-4, 18-22 – *Peter and John do like Jesus*

CONCEPTS / Questions the lesson will cover and explore

- Highlight the process the disciples go through that enables them to do what they do in this story
- Point out that the process the disciples went through then starts over, but that the disciples have a new role in it
- Mention that this process is still available today – available for us to choose

Materials needed:

- Youtube clip of Tobey the rescue dog being “transformed” (can be seen on rfour.org)
- Electronics that show the video clip
- Playing cards – need a full deck per every 5 people. Remove the joker cards.

THE LESSON

OPENING PRAYER

OPENING QUESTION

- Here’s the opening question for today’s class. I [the teacher] will ask the question and then to give you some time to think of an answer, I will answer first.
- Once I answer the question, we’ll go around the circle.
- When it’s your turn, start with your name and then answer the question to the best of your ability.
- *Here is this week’s question:* What’s a skill that someone else has that you would also like to have?

TRANSITION TO Video Clip

- Last week, we read the story of Pentecost
- Since this week’s story is really a continuation of the Pentecost story, we’re going to watch a video clip that captures the overall feel for what’s happening for the disciples.
- And to be honest, it is not very easy to find a movie clip that summarizes what the disciples are going through in this Pentecost story.
- The best clip I could find/think of was used in a lesson from last year, from the Karate Kid remake (<http://www.rfour.org/pagems390.html>).
- But, I try to not re-use video clips, so -- if the internet has taught me anything, that when in doubt...use cute animals!
- So here’s we go – a brief video clip about a dog who is transformed...

WATCH Video clip

ASK

- Where was Tobey the dog living? (a shelter)
- What kind of shelter? (a high-kill shelter)
- Looking all beat-up and scraggly mostly doesn't make a dog very attractive to someone looking to adopt a dog – so what was the dog given? (a make-over: a bath, haircut, and bandana)
- Do you think the dog looked better afterwards?
- And what happened to the dog after the makeover? (was adopted soon after)
- So, do you think this was a life-saving event, then? (yes)

TELL

- So, a happy ending and not dissimilar to (our friends) the disciples.
- The disciples often acted like the dog looked in the beginning of the clip.
 - They were a little shaky.
 - A little rough around the edges.
 - A little unsure of themselves.
- But then Jesus provided some instruction and loving care, first as a teacher, then again during the Resurrection period.
- And it *changed / transformed* the disciples to the point where, as we saw in last week's story, they were acting very differently – in a way that attracted the attention of lots of other people.
- They didn't do it in a cute way, they weren't like the dog who looked better and therefore attracted his new owner's attention in a physical "oh how cute" sort of way.
- But they DID attract the attention of others because of how they had been changed.
- In a lot of ways, this week's story is a continuation of last class' story of Pentecost.
- Because, as you'll see, the disciples are still acting very differently and attracting people's attention because of it.
- Let's see what happens

READ Acts 3:1-11; 4:1-4, 18-22

(recommend class reads it out loud; one person per verse, including teachers)

3:1 One day Peter and John were going up to the temple at the hour of prayer, at three o'clock in the afternoon. **2**And a man lame from birth was being carried in. People would lay him daily at the gate of the temple called the Beautiful Gate so that he could ask for alms from those entering the temple. **3**When he saw Peter and John about to go into the temple, he asked them for alms. **4**Peter looked intently at him, as did John, and said, "Look at us." **5**And he fixed his attention on them, expecting to receive something from them. **6**But Peter said, "I have no silver or gold, but what I have I give you; in the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, stand up and walk." **7**And he took him by the right hand and raised him up; and immediately his feet and ankles were made strong. **8**Jumping up, he stood and began to walk, and he entered the temple with them, walking and leaping and praising God. **9**All the people saw him walking and praising God, **10**and they recognized him as the one who used to sit and ask for alms at the Beautiful Gate of the temple; and they were filled with wonder and amazement at what had happened to him. **11**While he clung to Peter and John, all the people ran together to them in the portico called Solomon's Portico, utterly astonished.

4:1 While Peter and John were speaking to the people, the priests, the captain of the temple, and the Sadducees came to them, 2much annoyed because they were teaching the people and proclaiming that in Jesus there is the resurrection of the dead. 3So they arrested them and put them in custody until the next day, for it was already evening. 4But many of those who heard the word believed; and they numbered about five thousand.

18So they [*the Jewish rulers, elders, and scribes*] called them [*Peter and John*] and ordered them not to speak or teach at all in the name of Jesus. 19But Peter and John answered them, “Whether it is right in God’s sight to listen to you rather than to God, you must judge; 20for we cannot keep from speaking about what we have seen and heard.” 21After threatening them again, they let them go, finding no way to punish them because of the people, for all of them praised God for what had happened. 22For the man on whom this sign of healing had been performed was more than forty years old.

ASK

- Verse 3:1 – Where did Peter and John go? (to the Temple)
- What do you suspect they were planning to do there? (pray – due to it being the hour of prayer)
- What can the man in 3:2 **not** do? (walk; he is carried by others)
- Verse 4:22 – How old is the man? (more than 40 yrs old – his age is given to help us know that this man is not faking it – he’s been doing this his whole, long life)
- What is the man asking people for? (alms / handouts / money)
- Verse 3:6-7 – What does Peter offer the man instead of gold or silver? (healing; walking)
- Does it surprise you to see Peter and John were able to heal like Jesus did? Why/why not?
- Verse 9 and 11 – How does the man respond? (excited / jumps around; praises God; clings to Peter and John)
- Verse 3:10-11 and 4:4 – How do the people (aka the crowd) respond to what’s happened? (wonder, amazement, astonished, and about 5k “believed”)
 - See first comment in the TELL section about *believing*
- Verse 4:2, we haven’t heard much about the Sadducees – they were less excitable than the Pharisees, in general, it seems, but they *are* a section of the Jewish religious leaders. According to the Gospels and Acts, it seems that the main thing that gets them riled up is resurrection. They maintained that there was no type of resurrection -- on the last day or otherwise. So...why do they arrest Peter and John? (for talking to the people about resurrection)
- What do you think – Do you agree with the arrest of Peter and John? Why?
- Verse 4:18 – What do the religious leaders tell Peter and John? (To stop teaching about Jesus)
- Verse 4:19 – In response to the leaders, Peter and John say they will obey someone other than the religious leaders – who do they say they are going to obey? (God)
- Verse 4:21 – What do the religious leaders do to Peter and John (let them go because they are afraid of the people)
- What do you think...will the religious leaders leave Peter, John, and the other disciples alone now?

TELL

- In verse 4:4, it says that 5000 *believed*.
 - First, let’s be clear that these people are Jews who already believe that God exists – *and* they mostly share the same beliefs as the disciples do.
 - So when it says that they *believed*, what the story is trying to tell us is that the people are somehow believing in Peter and John – meaning, they find what Peter and John are teaching and offering about God to be better/more attractive than what the religious leaders are offering.
 - In other words, they want to learn what Peter and John are teaching.

- So last lesson, we saw how Pentecost was really the disciples finally understanding what Jesus had been teaching them and they then receive God’s Holy Spirit.
- In other words, the disciples were changed – even more than the dog was in the video we watched.
- And in today’s story, we see the result of that change: ***The disciples start to do the same things that Jesus did.***
 - They heal people
 - A crowd gathers around them
 - From the crowd, individuals choose to become disciples
 - The religious leaders get upset
- In other words, the cycle of Jesus’ ministry is starting all over, only this time, instead of there just being one teacher (Jesus), there are a bunch of teachers (the original disciples).
- To help us think a little bit more about this process that the disciples go through and then repeat, we’re going to do the following activity called “Thirty-one.” (or thirty-two if we have more than 6 people playing or thirty-three if we have more than 10 people playing).

EXPLAIN ACTIVITY

- We’re going to play a card game called, “Thirty-one”
- The goal of the game is to get the highest score in the round faster than anyone else. Here’s how you do that:
 - Everyone is dealt three cards
 - You may look at them, but you don’t want to show them to anyone else
 - Dealer then flips over a card from the draw pile (ie the rest of the cards).
 - That flipped-over card is the start of the discard pile
 - Person to the left of the dealer goes first – they can do 1 of 3 things.
 1. Pick a card from the draw pile and then discard a card from their hand (you may only hold 3 cards – never more or less)
 2. Pick the card up from the discard pile and then discard *a different* card
 3. Knock on the table/playing surface
 - If the person knocks, what they are saying is that they will not be taking a card, because they think they have a higher hand than everyone else.
 - However, play will continue until it is once again the turn of the person who knocked.
 - At that point everyone will lay down their hand and compare points. More about points in a moment.
 - So, no matter what happened with the first player, play continues to the left.
 - The next person can do options 1, 2, or 3 as well, unless the previous person knocked, then there’s no reason to knock again.
 - Also, and this is important, know that you can ONLY grab the *top* card on the discard pile
 - How points work:
 - Each card is worth the number that is on it, except the ace – the ace is worth 11 points.
 - All face cards are worth 10 points
 - To be able to add the points of the cards together, **they must be the same suit** (the shapes on the cards must be the same)
 - The highest score you can get, then is 31 (an ace and two face cards)
 - [Note: If you play with more than one deck, you have to change the name of the game to 32 or 33 because there’s the possibility of getting more than one ace at that point]

- If no one knocks before 4 times around the circle, then we'll lay down our cards after going around the circle 4 times.
- We'll play a few rounds. Once you get the hang of it, the game should go pretty quickly.
- It's really fairly simple.
- Any questions?

DO CARD GAME

ASK

- For those of you who knocked, why did you feel confident enough to knock? (hopefully they say something about holding a good hand)
- For those of you who didn't knock, why didn't you feel confident enough to knock?

TELL

- Let's think about today's scripture story, in the context of this card game.
- What we saw in today's story is that the disciples *finally* have a good set of cards – they finally have a good hand.
- They are finally confident enough to knock, put their cards down, and show the world what they have.
- And the three matching “cards” that they have that are giving them the confidence to knock are:
 1. The choice to be a disciple/learn from Jesus
 2. That led to the experience of going through the crucifixion AND resurrection
 3. That led to greater trust God and receiving God's Holy Spirit
- So then, after they show everyone their hand, some of the people say “Nice hand!” Other people said, “Boo!”
- Then, the cycle starts over again. A new round begins.
- The disciples now have their own disciples, about 8,000 or so (according to the numbers from this story and the story from the last lesson) and the religious leaders are already showing their dislike / resistance towards the disciples, just like they did to Jesus.
- The reason I point out this cycle is because that's how it still works today:
 - Choose to be a disciple / learn about and from Jesus
 - Experience setbacks and new life from this decision
 - Learn from experience to trust God enough to follow God's promptings
 - Eventually, you'll find yourself helping others do the same thing
- Next lesson, we'll start looking at some stories of how that last part looks – some other characters in the Bible who made it to the similar stage as the disciples did.

CLOSING PRAYER