

Middle/High School Sunday School Lessons by

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Year 4: Session 8 – Peter

Class 24: Acts 1:13-14; 2:1-8; 11-15, 22-24, 29-47 – Pentecost and Peter

CONCEPTS that will be covered in the lesson

- Review stories about Peter that we've looked at during this year
- Focus on the learning curve that Peter displays on his "day of graduation"
- Compare some of the other details of story with other stories we've previous read

Materials needed:

1. Video clip (available on rfour.org) from *Imagine That*
2. Electronics that show the video clip
3. For the activity
 - List of words to guess (located at end of lesson)
 - You will need a copy of each word for HALF of your expected # of students (so, if you have 10 students, then you should have 5 slips of paper for each word on the list of words)
 - Have a way to track the scoring (paper and pencil, at least)

THE LESSON

OPENING PRAYER

OPENING QUESTION

- One of the things we do every class is ask and answer the opening question at the beginning of class – because it helps us 1. Learn more about each other and 2. Helps "warm us up" for some of the ideas in the upcoming lesson. So we're going to do that now.
- So 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 and each of us will answer.
- When it's your turn, start with your name and then answer the question to the best of your ability.
- *Here's this week's question:* What's something you hope to be able to do really, really well, someday?

INTRO

- Today's story is known as Pentecost. It's considered the birth / start of the Church.
- In it, we're going to see Peter, who we've been talking about these last couple of classes, act in a very different way.

- But before we talk about Peter, let's get started with an activity that will help us better appreciate another situation in the story that we'll read
- And that situation is this: "Words are hard." Meaning: Using words to *clearly* communicate with one another is very difficult
- You probably already know this, but to help us get in the right frame of mind to really appreciate how difficult it can be to communicate, we're going to do an opening activity called "Password."

EXPLAIN ACTIVITY

How to do the activity

- We will get into groups of two
- And then one person will be the clue-giver and the other person will be the guesser
- Once your team has had a turn, the roles on your team will switch
- Each round starts with a new word and 10 points
- When a new round starts, each clue-giver is given the same word
- The clue-giver looks at the new word and thinks of a one word clue to give THAT DOES NOT CONTAIN any word that is in the word that needs to be guessed (For example, you cannot say "gas" as a clue for "gasoline")
- That first team clue-giver gives a one-word clue. Guesser then guesses.
 - If guesser gets it right, then TEN points goes to that team and a new round with a new words starts
 - If guesser gets it wrong, then the next team's clue-giver gives a different clue to their teammate (for the same word)
 - If the 2nd team gets it right, then that's EIGHT points for that team and a new round starts
 - If the 2nd team gets it wrong, then the 3rd team gives another clue (for 6 points) and so on
 - Round ends if we run out of points (5 guesses) or if a team gets it right
- Each subsequent round is started by the team that received the score from the past round.
 - Note: Very first team/turn is determined by teacher or coin flip or something
- As the clue-giver, you can't move your body to help with the clue giving and you can only say the one word you give as a clue. But you can use inflection to help – for instance, if the clue is "surfer," you could say "gnarly" in a "surfer accent." Probably not the best example, but you get the idea.
- We'll play for 10 minutes or so and then we can do more at end of class, if we have time

DO ACTIVITY

TELL / TRANSITION to SCRIPTURE

- During the activity, did team members ever tell their clue-giver, "Why didn't you say this?" or "Why did you give *that* clue?"
- As the clue-giver were you ever frustrated with your team's inability to understand what you were telling them?
- Keep these frustrations and moments in mind as we read today's story about Peter and Pentecost
- As a reminder, here are the things we've seen happen with Peter this year (which all took place in his life before this story):
 - He interrupted Jesus during the transfiguration and was then scolded by the voice of God from a cloud
 - He walked on water like Jesus did, but then sank because he paid attention to the chaotic situation instead of keeping his focus on Jesus

- He told Jesus to not go to Jerusalem and then Jesus told him to get his priorities in order (by saying, “Get behind me, Satan”)
 - He told Jesus that he thought Jesus was the messiah and Jesus replied with, “I’m going to call you “Rock” and build my church upon you.”
 - We also read a story where we saw Peter go up on a roof and pray and his understanding about outsiders was changed – but that story happens *after* today’s story, so we won’t be referencing that story so much in today’s lesson.
- So, overall, we see that Peter, up to this point, is enthusiastic, but mostly make mistakes
 - He’s still learning from Jesus and making a lot of mistakes in the process
 - But in today’s story, we see that Peter *has* learned what Jesus was teaching him.
 - Today’s story happens after Jesus’ resurrection and after Resurrected Jesus’ ascension (where Resurrected Jesus physically leaves the physical realm)
 - So let’s see what happens with Peter in this Pentecost story...
 - Note: It’s a long passage and we’ve tried to cut-down on some of the length while keeping the general gist – but it’s still long.

READ Acts 1:13-14; 2:1-8; 11-15, 22-24, 29-47 (*recommend class reads it out loud; one person per verse*)

1:13 When they had entered the city, they went to the room upstairs where they were staying, Peter, and John, and James, and Andrew, Philip and Thomas, Bartholomew and Matthew, James son of Alphaeus, and Simon the Zealot, and Judas son of James. 14All these were constantly devoting themselves to prayer, together with certain women, including Mary the mother of Jesus, as well as his brothers.

2:1 When the day of Pentecost had come, they were all together in one place. 2And suddenly from heaven there came a sound like the rush of a violent wind, and it filled the entire house where they were sitting. 3Divided tongues, as of fire, appeared among them, and a tongue rested on each of them. 4All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other languages, as the Spirit gave them ability.

5Now there were devout Jews from every nation under heaven living in Jerusalem. 6And at this sound the crowd gathered and was bewildered, because each one heard them speaking in the native language of each. 7Amazed and astonished, they asked, “Are not all these who are speaking Galileans? 8And how is it that we hear, each of us, in our own native language? 11Cretans and Arabs—in our own languages we hear them speaking about God’s deeds of power.” 12All were amazed and perplexed,

saying to one another, “What does this mean?” 13But others sneered and said, “They are filled with new wine.”

14But Peter, standing with the eleven, raised his voice and addressed them, “Men of Judea and all who live in Jerusalem, let this be known to you, and listen to what I say. 15Indeed, these are not drunk, as you suppose, for it is only nine o’clock in the morning. 22“You that are Israelites, listen to what I have to say: Jesus of Nazareth, a man attested to you by God with deeds of power, wonders, and signs that God did through him among you, as you yourselves know— 23this man, handed over to you according to the definite plan and foreknowledge of God, you crucified and killed by the hands of those outside the law. 24But God raised him up, having freed him from death, because it was impossible for him to be held in its power. 29“Fellow Israelites, I may say to you confidently of our ancestor David that he both died and was buried, and his tomb is with us to this day. 30Since he was a prophet, he knew that God had sworn with an oath to him that he would put one of his descendants on his throne. 31Foreseeing this, David spoke of the resurrection of the Messiah, saying, ‘He was not abandoned to Hades, nor did his flesh experience corruption.’ 32This Jesus God raised up, and of that all of us are witnesses. 33Being therefore exalted at the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, he has poured out this that you both see and hear. 34For David did not

ascend into the heavens, but he himself says, 'The Lord said to my Lord, "Sit at my right hand, 35until I make your enemies your footstool.'" 36Therefore let the entire house of Israel know with certainty that God has made him both Lord and Messiah, this Jesus whom you crucified."

37Now when they heard this, they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and to the other apostles, "Brothers, what should we do?" 38Peter said to them, "Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ so that your sins may be forgiven; and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. 39For the promise is for you, for your children, and for all who are far away, everyone whom the Lord our God calls to him." 40And he testified with many other arguments and exhorted them, saying, "Save yourselves from this corrupt generation." 41So

those who welcomed his message were baptized, and that day about three thousand persons were added.

42They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers.

43Awe came upon everyone, because many wonders and signs were being done by the apostles. 44All who believed were together and had all things in common; 45they would sell their possessions and goods and distribute the proceeds to all, as any had need. 46Day by day, as they spent much time together in the temple, they broke bread at home and ate their food with glad and generous hearts, 47praising God and having the goodwill of all the people. And day by day the Lord added to their number those who were being saved.

ASK

- Verse 1:13-14: Who is present and where are they? (the disciples, including women and the mother of Jesus. They are in Jerusalem – the city – in the upper room of where they are staying)
- Verse 1:14: And what are they doing together (devoting themselves to prayer)
- Verse 2:2-4 – While they are all together and praying ... what happens? (the Holy Spirit arrives, like flames, and they are able to speak different languages)
- Verse 2:8 – What (new) ability by the disciples is being confirmed by the crowd? (that the disciples are speaking different languages and being understood in those different languages – it's like the disciples suddenly became very skilled professional at our opening activity of *password*)
- Verse 2:13 – What is one proposed reason from the crowd for the disciples' ability? (that the disciples are drunk)
- Verse 2:14 – Who then addresses the crowd? (Peter)
- Verse 2:22-36 – What is Peter doing throughout those verses? (speaking to the crowd)
- How does he sound to you? Does he sound like the usual Peter to you? Or does he seem to be talking and acting differently?
- Verse 37 – What is the crowd's response to Peter's words? (they ask what they can do)
- Verse 38 – What does Peter say to the crowd that they can do and receive? (repent, get baptized, receive the Holy Spirit)
- Verse 41 – How many people do what Peter says? (3000)
- Verse 42 – What do those 3000 then do? (they become students of the disciples – "devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and fellowship")
- Verse 43 – 47 – How do things seem to be going after Pentecost for the disciples? (pretty good!)

TELL

- The word "disciple" means, basically, a really dedicated student
- And that's exactly what Peter was. He was a dedicated student
- As this dedicated student, though, he made lots of mistakes
- He also had a lot to learn: Like how to focus and what to focus on (aka priorities)

- But he was enthusiastic and he was committed; he kept being a student even after some pretty bad failures and losses of confidence
- And in today's story, we see him follow through with what he was taught:
 - He spends quite a bit of time with the other disciples in prayer
 - Another way to think about this: He's focused on divine things, not human things. And, he *stays* focused on the divine things
- The result, then, is that he and the others receive the Holy Spirit -- just like Jesus received God's Holy Spirit when he was baptized.
- And at that point, his training in many ways is complete. He graduates from student to *apostle*
- Did you see that word in verse 42? Apostle means "sent out."
 - This is like when we graduate from high school and/or college, we then go out into the world (in theory)
- In other words, in this story, we see Peter the student become Peter the teacher.
- Peter has learned what he needed to learn from Jesus and because of this learning, he's putting God first, receiving God's help/spirit, speaking with authority and focus, telling others what's going on in a way that a lot of people understand.
 - Peter does all of that and does it in a way that is attractive and that others want to be a part of.
- Peter does so well that 3000 people sign up – that number of 3000 is pretty rare in the Bible. It doesn't show up often, but it DID show up in a story we read early in the year – can you remember where that number showed up? (it was in the golden calf story ... 3000 people were killed by the Levites that day)
- So, Peter has indeed become the rock that Jesus built his church on AND in so doing, we see a reversal in numbers. Instead of 3000 being removed from God's community, we see 3000 being added to God's community.

Transition to Video

- In general, the church tends to talk about Jesus as someone who did "magical, superhero types of things," who did things that no one else could possibly do
- But that's not how Jesus thought about himself.
- Jesus had students that he taught to do exactly what he was doing
- And his most-important student was *Peter* – mistake-ridden, slow-to-learn Peter.
- In today's story, we see that Peter finally *gets it*
- Because of who Peter is, then, we can very clearly see that if *Peter* can do what Jesus did, then so can *we*
- Often, someone who is a master at the thing they've learned seems like they can do something that the rest of us can't do.
- Like a professional sports player or a professional musician
- But what Jesus did was show his students (including, you, me, and Peter) what he had learned that allowed him to do the things he did.
- To help us think about how an end result can be broken down into smaller, less scary components that can be learned, let's watch the following video clip from the movie, *Imagine That*
- In it, a dad teaches his daughter how to sing

WATCH VIDEO CLIP

ASK

- What is the daughter afraid of? (singing her solo that she can't sing and it'll mess everyone up)

- What are some of the things that the dad teaches his daughter about singing? (that you speak the words then stretch the last word -- and then you change the pitch)
- What method did the dad use to teach the daughter about singing? (he did it first and then she copied it)
- And, according to the dad, was the daughter singing by the end of the clip? (yes!)

TELL

- This is the same way Jesus taught Peter how to connect and be in relationship with God
- Then, once Peter trusted Jesus enough and learned enough from Jesus, he went out and did what Jesus did, just like the daughter learned from her father in the video clip
- The result, then, is that both Peter and the daughter from the video clip are ready to share what they've learned with others
- And, if Peter can learn what he learned from Jesus, that means we can also learn what Jesus was teaching
- And that's the good news for today

CLOSING PRAYER

(see below for list of words for activity)

List of words for password activity

Sheet	Laugh	Mink
Lamp	Robe	Sushi
Skateboard	Team	Pancakes
Glide	Hornet	Bake
Money	Seagull	Meat

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