

Still Part of God's Family



References

Matthew 26:31-35, 69-75; Mark 14:27-31, 66-72; Luke 22:24-34, 54-62; John 18:15-18, 25-27; *The Desire of Ages*, pp. 672-674, 710-715



Memory Verse

"I have prayed for you, . . . that your faith may not fail. And when you have turned back, strengthen your brothers" (Luke 22:32, NIV).



Objectives

The children will:
Know that even when we fail Him, God still loves us and wants us to be active in His family.

Feel grateful to be a part of God's family.

Respond by being active in God's family today.



The Message

God wants me in His family, even when I fail Him.

Monthly Theme

We are active in God's family.

The Bible Lesson at a Glance

During the Last Supper the disciples argue about who is the greatest. Peter declares that he is ready to go to prison or even die for Jesus. Jesus responds by telling Peter that he will deny Him three times before the rooster crows the next morning. Then He adds, "When you have turned back, strengthen your brothers." That night, when Jesus is arrested, Peter cuts off the High Priest's servant's ear and wants to fight, but Jesus stops him. The soldiers take Jesus to the High Priest's house. Peter follows. Three times he is identified as one of the disciples. Three times he denies it. The third time, Jesus turns and looks at him. Peter remembers Jesus' words. He goes out and weeps bitterly.

This is a lesson about community.

Peter was one of Jesus' closest friends, but when he was in a dangerous situation, he denied knowing Jesus to protect himself. Jesus still loved him. Like Peter, we remain part of Jesus' family, even when we fail Him.

Teacher Enrichment

"The disciples were terrified as they saw Jesus permit Himself to be taken and bound. . . . They could not understand His conduct, and they blamed Him for submitting to the mob. In their indignation and fear, Peter proposed that they save themselves. Following this suggestion, 'they all forsook Him, and fled' " (*The Desire of Ages*, p. 697).

"The record indicates that all three denials were made during the first trial before the Sanhedrin, which took place between about 3:00 and 5:00 A.M." (*The SDA Bible Commentary*, vol. 5, p. 531).

"John identifies Peter's third accuser as a servant of the high priest, a kinsman of Malchus, whose ear Peter had severed. Peter immediately realized the seriousness of the situation. If he should be identified as the man who had struck Malchus, there was danger of his being hauled into court as an attempted murderer. . . .

"But though it no doubt seemed to Peter that all was lost—himself included—the Saviour's love buoyed him up and brought him safely through his tragic experience" (*ibid.*, p. 532).

Room Decorations

Create a Bible-times scene, with a courtyard. Place some sticks for a fire in the courtyard.

Bulletin Boards

"We are active in God's family." Each week add pictures of ways primaries can be active in God's family. Encourage the children to bring their own pictures.

"We are part of God's family." Place a large heart in the center. Write JESUS on it or add a picture of Jesus. Place smaller hearts around it and either put pictures of the children in each heart, or let the children do a self-portrait or draw something that represents them.

Program Overview

Lesson Section	Minutes	Activities	Materials Needed
Welcome	ongoing	Greet students at door; hear pleased/troubled	Bible-times costume; pieces of wood; red, yellow, or orange paper; tape
1 Readiness Activities	up to 10	A. Pencil Relay B. Two Paths	two pencils or sticks, two chairs masking tape or thick rope and string
Any Time Prayer and Praise*	up to 10	Fellowship Songbook Mission Offering Prayer	none <i>Sing for Joy</i> <i>Children's Mission</i> box, pictures of faces of different ages and ethnic backgrounds red, yellow, or orange flame-shaped pieces of paper; basket; pencils
2 Bible Lesson	up to 20	Experiencing the Story Memory Verse Bible Study	Bible-times costumes, "fire" from Welcome, rooster sound effect, gateway to courtyard Bible, paper, marker Bibles
3 Applying the Lesson	up to 15	A. Strengthening Each Other B. Building Each Other Up	none oblong strips of paper, pencils, glue, large sheet of paper
4 Sharing the Lesson	up to 15	A. Building Bridges B. Encouraging Others	paper, pencils paper, markers, crayons

*Prayer and Praise may be used at any time during the program.

TEACHING THE LESSON

You Need:

- Bible-times costume
- pieces of wood
- red, yellow, or orange paper
- tape

Welcome

Dress in a Bible-times costume before you welcome students at the door. Ask how their week has been—what they are pleased/troubled about. Encourage them to share an experience from last week's lesson study. Invite them to go into the "courtyard" and find a piece of wood to add to a pretend fire. They may make flames by tearing shapes out of red, yellow, and orange paper.

1

Readiness Activities

Select the activity most appropriate for your situation.

You Need:

- two pencils or sticks
- two chairs

A. Pencil Relay

Form two teams. Line the two teams up a few feet away from two chairs. Give the first person in each team a pencil. Say: **The rules for this activity are simple. Each person in turn walks around the chair and back balancing a pencil on their finger like this.** Demonstrate by holding out your hand palm up. Make a fist and stick out your index finger. Place the pencil at the tip of your finger. Say: **The pencil must stay at the tip and not rest against your other fingers. If you drop the pencil, you have to sit at the side while the next person has a try.** (This is hard. Most will drop the pencil.)

Debriefing

Ask the students sitting at the side: **Was it harder than it looked? How did you feel when you failed?** (Accept answers.) **Our story today is about someone who failed. Even though he failed, Jesus still loved him. Today's message tells us that:**



GOD WANTS ME IN HIS FAMILY, EVEN WHEN I FAIL HIM.

Say that with me.

You Need:

- masking tape or thick rope and string

B. Two Paths

Make a very narrow path by putting two strips of masking tape on the floor. (Alternately, use a thick rope for the narrow road and let the students walk on top of it.) About three feet (90 cm) away make a wider path running parallel to it. Mark this out with masking tape or thin string. See how many can walk the narrow road without touching the tape (or falling off the rope). If they touch it say: **You messed up!** Have the rest of the students say: **It's OK, get back on! You can do it!** Let them try the wide road as well.

Debriefing

Ask: **Which road was the easiest to walk along? How did it feel to have someone encourage you when you failed? Sometimes it is hard to do the right thing. Even though we fail Him at times, Jesus still loves us. Today's message says:**



GOD WANTS ME IN HIS FAMILY, EVEN WHEN I FAIL HIM.

Prayer and Praise

Any
Time



Fellowship

Report the students' joys and sorrows (pleased and troubled) as reported to you at the door (as appropriate). Allow time for sharing experiences from last week's lesson study and review last week's memory verse. Acknowledge any birthdays, special events, or achievements. Give a special, warm greeting to all visitors.



Suggested Songs

"O, How He Loves You and Me" (*Sing for Joy*, no. 28)

"I Have Heard Good News Today" (*Sing for Joy*, no. 33)

"Jesus Loves Children" (*Sing for Joy*, no. 37)

"The Family of God" (*Sing for Joy*, no. 139)

"Praise Him, Praise Him" (*Sing for Joy*, no. 12)



Mission

Share a story from *Children's Mission*. Emphasize community in the mission story.



Offering

Cover the box with faces of people of all ages and backgrounds. Make a slit in the top.

Say: **Our offering today will be used to let the people in (territory where this quarter's offering will go) know that everyone is included in God's family.**

You Need:

- box
- pictures of faces of different ages and ethnic backgrounds



Prayer

Give each child a flame cutout. Ask them to write a word or draw something to represent a time they felt they let Jesus down. Gather all the flames up in a basket. Say: **When we ask Jesus, He forgives us for our failures and helps us start again and reach out to others.** Ask the children to kneel in a circle and thank Jesus that we are part of His family even when we fail Him.

You Need:

- red, yellow, or orange flame-shaped pieces of paper
- pencil for each child
- basket

Bible Lesson

You Need:

- Bible-times costumes
- “fire” from Welcome time
- rooster sound effect
- gateway to courtyard

Experiencing the Story

Characters: Peter, John, servant girl at the gate, servant girl at fire, person near the fire, crowd around fire

Setting the Scene

Dress the children in Bible-times costumes. Make sure that key characters have costumes.

Position the students in groups around the fire, one servant girl at the gate off to one side, and Peter and John at the side of the room.

Read or tell the story, prompting Peter, John, the servants, and men to act out the story as you read it and repeat their lines after you say them.

Read or tell the story.

When Jesus was arrested, the disciples ran away. Peter had been so sure that he would follow Jesus anywhere and that he was willing to die for Him. But Jesus had told him that he would deny Him three times that night. Peter shivered as he thought about it. He wondered what was taking John so long. It was cold in the courtyard. *[Peter shivers and rubs his hands.]*

John had gone to the High Priest’s house. He wanted to see where the soldiers had taken Jesus. The people at the gate knew John and let him in. John asked if his friend could come in as well. *[John mimes asking the servant girl if Peter can come in. He points to Peter.]*

At last the gate opened. John beckoned. Peter came out of the shadows. “Come in, Peter,” John whispered. Then he disappeared. *[John beckons, and Peter comes in through the door.]*

Peter hurried toward the fire in the courtyard. He tried not to attract attention. *[Peter stands by fire, not looking at anyone.]* A servant girl came over to where Peter was standing *[Girl walks over to Peter]* and said, “You also were with Jesus of Galilee.” *[Groups look at Peter.]*

“I don’t know what you’re talking about,” Peter said denying it.

Peter moved away. He went to stand near the gateway. He was trying to stay out of the way. He was hoping no one would notice him or ask him anymore questions. While he stood there another servant girl said to the people there, “This fellow was with Jesus of Nazareth.”

Peter denied it again and said, “I don’t know the man!”

Once more Peter tried to hide in the crowd. *[Peter moves to the back of the crowd.]*

After some time as Peter stood near the fire to warm himself someone said, “Surely you are one of them; your accent gives you away.” *[One student repeats the accusations.]* Everyone stared at Peter. *[All look at Peter.]* Peter shivered. He wished he was invisible. He shook his head and denied knowing Jesus. “I don’t know the man!” Peter swears. *[Peter shakes his head.]*

Immediately a rooster crowed. *[Sound of rooster.]* Jesus turned around and looked at Peter with sad eyes. Then Peter remembered what Jesus had said to him the day before: “Before the rooster crows, you will say that you don’t know Me three times.”

Peter ran out the gate. He “broke down” and “wept bitterly” because he had denied Jesus. He had failed. He hadn’t stayed true to Jesus. Peter cried for a long time. *[Peter runs out.]*

“How will Jesus ever be able to forgive

me? I'm so sorry, Lord," he likely cried.

Later, Jesus forgave Peter and after He was resurrected gave Peter a special work to do. He told Peter to encourage the other disciples and those who had become Christians.

Even when we do wrong, Jesus still loves us! When we ask Him to forgive us, He always does. He wants us to stay in His family.

Debriefing

Allow response time as you ask:

Why do you think only Peter and John followed Jesus to the High Priest's house? (The others were afraid.)
Why do you think Peter said he did not know Jesus? (He was afraid.)

What was Jesus' reaction to Peter's denial? (He was sad, disappointed, hurt, but still loved Peter.) **How did Peter feel when he heard the rooster crow?** (ashamed, sorry, sad, etc.) **What did he do?** (He left, cried.)

What do you do when you have failed Jesus? Even when we do things that make Him sad, Jesus still loves us. Remember our message . . .



GOD WANTS ME IN HIS FAMILY, EVEN WHEN I FAIL HIM.

You Need:

- Bible
- paper
- marker

Memory Verse

Write the memory verse on four separate pieces of paper, one phrase on each piece.

Divide the children into four groups, and teach them the following actions:

Group 1: "I have prayed for you" (Fold hands and bow heads.)

Group 2: "That your faith may not fail" (Shake head back and forth for "no.")

Group 3: "And when you have turned back" (Turn around once.)

Group 4: "Strengthen your brothers." (Flex arm muscles to show strength.)

Unison: Luke 22:32.

Point at each group when it is time to say their part. Repeat several times. Change the phrases until each group has said each phrase. Then have the whole group say the complete memory verse with actions.

Bible Study

Say: **We learned in our memory verse that Jesus wanted Peter to help others in His family. Let's discover some of the things that Peter did for others after this experience.**

Form three groups. Give each group one of the texts that follows. Have them read the text and tell the rest of the group what Peter did.

Acts 2:1-14 Preached at Pentecost

Acts 3:1-8 Healed the beggar at the temple gate

Acts 9:36-40 Brought Dorcas back to life

You Need:

- Bibles

Debriefing

Say: **Peter became a great worker for God. These texts tell of just a few things he did. Later in life he wrote two books of the Bible that have helped many people. Let's read what some people call Peter's Ladder because he tells us how to climb up as Christians. Help the children find and read 2 Peter 1:5-8.**

Ask: **Does Jesus want us to help others in His family? What if we make mistakes or fail Him in some way?** (He will still love us; He will forgive us; He will help us do better.) **Let's remember today's message:**



GOD WANTS ME IN HIS FAMILY, EVEN WHEN I FAIL HIM.

Applying the Lesson

A. Strengthening Each Other

Divide the children into groups of three. Have two of the children face each other and lock index fingers, while the third member of the group has to try to pull their fingers apart. Repeat by locking two, then three, four, and five fingers together. (Each time it is more difficult to pull the two people apart.)

Debriefing

Allow response time as you ask: **Why was it harder to pull the pairs apart when they had more fingers clasped?**

How did you feel when someone tried to pull you away?

Say: **The more fingers that were linked, the stronger the bond. That is like our church family. When we work together and help each other, we are stronger.**

Ask: **What are some ways we can help other members of God's family?** (Encourage responses and list them where all can see.) **What is today's message?**

Let's say it again:



GOD WANTS ME IN HIS FAMILY, EVEN WHEN I FAIL HIM.

You Need:

- strips of paper to represent bricks
- pencils
- glue
- large sheet of paper

B. Building Each Other Up

Give each child a paper brick and pencil.

Say: **We learned in our memory verse that Jesus told Peter to help strengthen others in His family. What are some of the ways that we can build up others? On your brick write or draw something that you can do. (Some suggestions to get children started: obey parents, be kind to brother or sister, help others by sending a card, visiting the sick, giving food, clothes or toys to someone in need, saying something kind.)**

Glue the responses to a large sheet of paper so they form a wall. Each child may add as many "bricks" as they want.

Debriefing

Ask: **How do you feel when you do something wrong?** (bad, sad) **How do you think Peter felt at that time?** (He probably felt sorry.) **What should we do when we do something wrong?** (Admit we are wrong and ask for forgiveness.) **How does Jesus react when we sin but ask for forgiveness?** (He loves us, forgives us, and still has a plan for us.) **Here are just some of the things we can do.** (Point to bricks.) **What is our message today? Let's say it together.**



GOD WANTS ME IN HIS FAMILY, EVEN WHEN I FAIL HIM.

Sharing the Lesson

A. Building Bridges

Use the brick wall or ideas from Applying the Lesson to help each child decide something they can do to encourage or help someone this week. Ask them to think of a specific person or persons. Help them draw a brick and write on it what they will do.

Debriefing

Allow response time as you ask:
Would anyone like to share what they

are going to do this week?

What can we do if we see that someone is feeling down because they have done something they shouldn't have done? Let's try to be like Peter this week, and do something to encourage or help someone else in God's family. You can tell them about this week's lesson and about today's message. Let's say it together:



GOD WANTS ME IN HIS FAMILY, EVEN WHEN I FAIL HIM.

You Need:

- paper
- pencils

B. Encouraging Others

Say: **Peter learned from his mistake. For the rest of his life he encouraged others in God's family. Let's make a card to share with someone. On the front, write today's message and inside write "God loves you."** Encourage the children to name a specific person. Helpers assist as needed.

Debriefing

Allow response time as you ask: **To whom would you like to give your card?**

What can we do if we see that someone is feeling sad?

Say: **We can try to be like Peter this week and do something to encourage or help someone in God's family. You can tell them about today's story and about today's message. Let's say it together:**



GOD WANTS ME IN HIS FAMILY, EVEN WHEN I FAIL HIM.

You Need:

- paper
- markers, crayons

Still Part of God's Family

References

Matthew 26:31-35, 69-75; Mark 14:27-31, 66-72; Luke 22:24-34, 54-62; John 18:15-18, 25-27; *The Desire of Ages*, pp. 672-674, 710-715

Memory Verse

"I have prayed for you, . . . that your faith may not fail. And when you have turned back, strengthen your brothers" (Luke 22:32, NIV).

The Message

God wants me in His family, even when I fail Him.

Have you ever been afraid? Or done something that you were sorry for afterward? A long time ago a man was afraid. As a result he let his best Friend down. Maybe it happened like this.

What's taking John so long? Peter thought to himself, shivering. It's cold out here. I wonder what they're doing to Jesus?

John had gone to the High Priest's house. He wanted to see where the soldiers had taken Jesus. The people at the gate knew John, so they let him in. John asked if Peter could come in too.

At last the gate opened.

"Come in, Peter," John whispered.

Then he disappeared.

Peter hurried toward the fire in the yard. He tried not to be noticed. A servant girl came over to where Peter was standing and said, "You also were with Jesus of Galilee."

"I don't know what you're talking about," Peter said denying it.

Peter moved away. He went to

stand near the gateway. He was trying to stay out of the way. He was hoping no one would notice him or ask him any more questions. While he stood there another servant girl said to the people there, "This fellow was with Jesus of Nazareth."

Peter denied it again and said, "I don't know the man!"

Peter tried to hide in the crowd. It was hard. He could see what the soldiers were doing to Jesus. They hit Him and spit on Him. Peter felt very sad, but he tried to pretend that he was like everyone else.

Time passed. As Peter stood near the fire to warm himself someone said, "Surely you are one of them; your accent gives you away." Everyone stared at Peter. Peter shivered. He wished he was invisible. He shook his head and denied knowing Jesus. "I don't know the man!" Peter swears.

Immediately a rooster crowed. Peter looked up.

Jesus turned around and looked at Peter with sad eyes.

Peter remembered what Jesus had told him the day before. "Before the rooster crows, you will say that you don't know Me three times." Peter hadn't believed he would ever say such a thing.

Peter felt terrible. He ran out the gate and hurried away. Peter "broke down" and "wept bitterly" because he had denied Jesus. He had failed.

He remembered what he had said earlier. "I'll go to prison for You, Lord!" he had boasted. "I'll even die for You!"

"How will Jesus ever be able to forgive me? I'm so sorry, Lord," he cried to heaven.

Later, Jesus did forgive Peter. He even gave him a special work to do.

"Help make everyone else strong," Jesus said to Peter. Jesus still loved Peter. He wanted Peter to remain a part of the family of God.



And Jesus loves us, even when we do wrong. He is always ready to forgive us. He wants us to be a part of His family. He wants us to help others love Him too.

Daily Activities

Sabbath

- If possible, go for a walk with your family. You probably will not hear a rooster, but listen for different sounds.
- Read the memory verse in Luke 22:32 and tell what it means.
- Sing together "The Family of God" (*Sing for Joy*, no. 139). Say a prayer of thanks for being part of God's big family.

Sunday

- For family worship, read the story in Matthew 26:31-35, 69-75. Take turns at knocking on the door and waiting for someone to answer. What is it like when you are standing outside the room? What do you think Peter was thinking about while waiting to go into the courtyard?
- See who can make the best rooster sound in the family. Say a prayer of thanks for birds and animals.

Monday

- During family worship read Mark 14:27-31, 66-72. Ask your parents to tell you about an experience they had when they made a mistake and someone treated them with love and kindness.
- Look at a Bible map and see how far it is between the Sea of Galilee and Jerusalem. Measure the same distance on a map from your hometown to another city. Do the people there speak with a different accent? (One person recognized Peter because of his accent.)
- Ask God to show you someone who needs help.

Tuesday

- During worship, ask your family to help you find at least three Bible texts that assure us that God doesn't give up on us when we make a mistake.

- Ask Jesus to forgive you for any mistakes you have made. Are you really sorry?
- Say your memory verse together, and ask Jesus to show you how you can encourage someone else today.

Wednesday

- If possible, have family worship around a fire, either inside or outside. Think of Peter standing by the fire trying to get warm. Sing together "Praise Him, Praise Him" (*Sing for Joy*, no. 12).
- Peter used some bad words because he was afraid and angry. Ask your family how to keep from doing that.
- Read Luke 22:24-34, 54-62. Who are the most important people in your country? When you pray, ask God to bless them.

Thursday

- During worship, review the lesson story. How easy was it for Peter to hide?
- Ask everyone to close their eyes while you try to hide somewhere in the room. Is it easy to hide in a room full of people? What do you think Peter was thinking?
- Find out about a country where it is hard to be a Christian today. Say a special prayer for people in that country.

Friday

- Read the story in John 18:15-18, 25-27. With the help of your family, act out what happened to Peter.
- Say your memory verse together. Have each person tell how they have "strengthened" someone this week.
- Plan a special surprise for someone who is sad and needs encouragement. Say a prayer both for them and your planned surprise.