

1 Lesson

Still Part of God's Family

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

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."

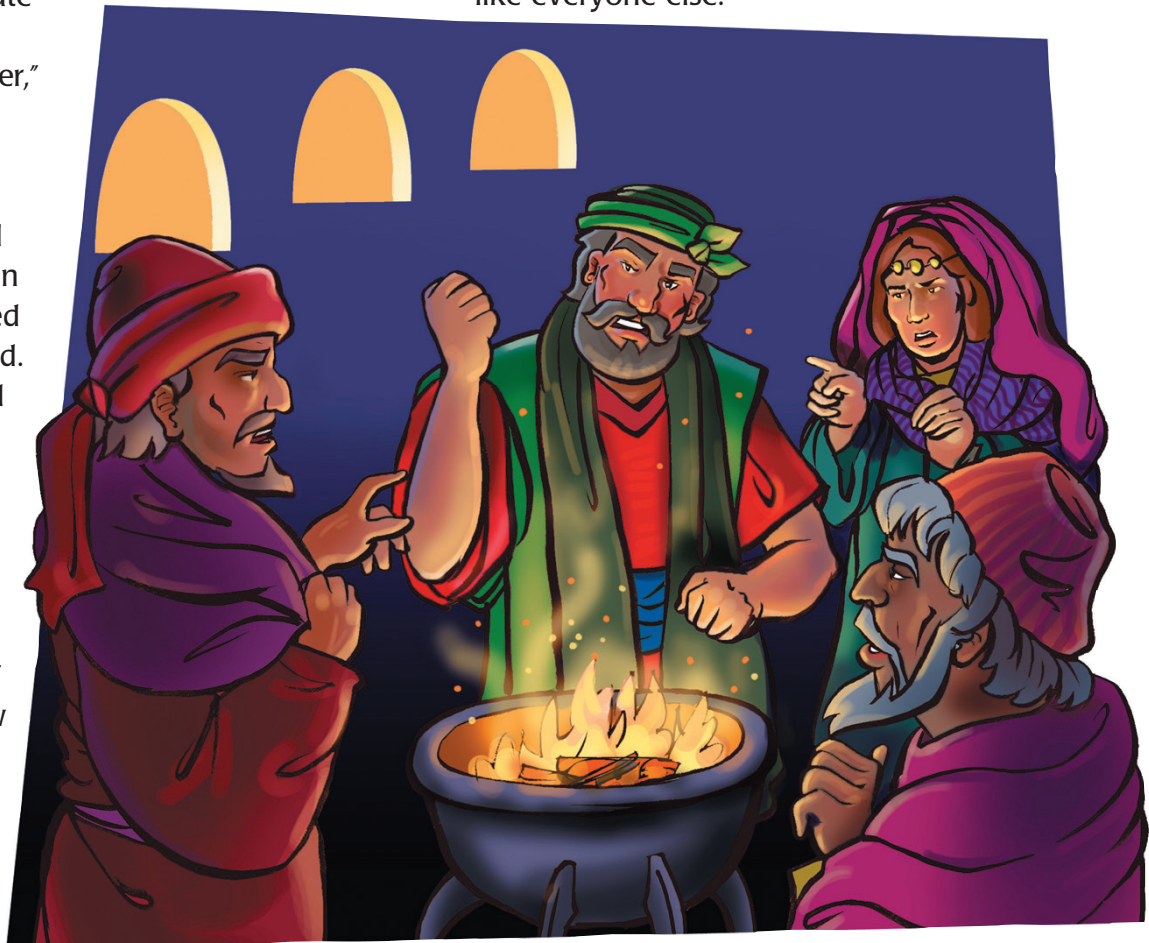
"I don't know what you're talking about," Peter said denying it.

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.



The Message

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

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).

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.



S A B B A T H

DO If possible, go for a walk with your family. You probably will not hear a rooster, but listen for different sounds.

READ Read the memory verse in Luke 22:32 and tell what it means.

SING Sing together "The Family of God" (*Sing for Joy*, no. 139). Say a prayer of thanks for being part of God's big family.

S U N D A Y

READ 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?

DO See who can make the best rooster sound in the family. Say a prayer of thanks for birds and animals.

M O N D A Y

READ 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.

DO 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.)

PRAY Ask God to show you someone who needs help.

The book of Mark comes from Peter's sermons. So Peter himself tells the story of denying Jesus and being forgiven. (See Mark 14:66-72.)



T U E S D A Y

ASK 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.

PRAY Ask Jesus to forgive you for any mistakes you have made. Are you really sorry?

DO Say your memory verse together, and ask Jesus to show you how you can encourage someone else today.

W E D N E S D A Y

SING 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).

ASK Peter used some bad words because he was afraid and angry. Ask your family how to keep from doing that.

READ 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

DO During worship, review the lesson story. How easy was it for Peter to hide?

ASK 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?

DO 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 Read the story in John 18:15-18, 25-27. With the help of your family, act out what happened to Peter.

DO Say your memory verse together. Have each person tell how they have "strengthened" someone this week.

DO Plan a special surprise for someone who is sad and needs encouragement. Say a prayer both for them and your planned surprise.

Peter's Denial

PUZZLE

Directions: Like Peter, we sometimes deny knowing Jesus. To straighten out the denial, lightly cross out every other letter beginning with the second letter. Write the uncrossed letters on the lines provided. Then write the crossed out letters in order on the remaining lines.

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