

Day 4

Bible Point: God forgives you.

Bible Story: Jesus reinstates Peter. (John 18:1–21:19)

Bible Verse: “But you are a God of forgiveness, gracious and merciful, slow to become angry, and rich in unfailing love.” (Nehemiah 9:17)

Consider This:

- ◆ Peter, whose name means “stone” or “rock,” had trouble displaying a firm faith. When Jesus first called him, Peter doubted Jesus’ wisdom (Luke 5:1-10). During a storm, he walked on stormy seas to be near Jesus...yet Jesus asked him, “Why did you doubt me?” (Matthew 14:27-31)
- ◆ Peter first denied Jesus when questioned by a seemingly powerless slave girl (John 18:15-18). Historians note that slave girls practically held the *least* amount of importance or influence in that time.
- ◆ Warming himself at a charcoal fire, Peter is questioned two more times and denies knowing Jesus each time. It’s interesting that John 21 records Jesus and Peter’s reunion after the resurrection at a charcoal fire as well!
- ◆ The first two times Jesus asks Peter “Do you love me?” he uses the word *agapeo* for “love,” which means a sacrificial love. In Peter’s response, he consistently uses the word *phileo* for “love,” which refers to an affectionate, friendly love. Scholars debate the reason the two different forms of “love” are used. Perhaps Peter is acknowledging his shortcomings compared to the overwhelming love displayed by Jesus.

Why It Matters...

Most children equate forgiveness with simply saying a hurried “I’m sorry” after they’ve wronged a friend or family member. Yet true forgiveness goes beyond mere words. It includes undeserved mercy, healing, renewal, and grace. Forgiveness means restoring brokenness and starting fresh. Kids may have *heard* about Jesus’ death on a cross, but it’s difficult to understand that God *required* such sacrifice for complete atonement.

Guide kids as they discover the life-changing truth that Jesus’ death provided a way for them to be with God forever. Use today’s lesson to show kids that God loves them enough to completely wipe away their wrongdoings, restoring a priceless friendship with our loving Father.

