

WARM-UP

- Have you ever had something fixed so that it became as good as new? What happened?
- How do you show your family members or friends that you love them?
- Have you ever had a relationship with a family member or friend that was restored after an issue? What happened?

WORD

He said to him the third time, "Simon, son of John, do you love me?" Peter was grieved because he said to him the third time, "Do you love me?" and he said to him, "Lord, you know everything; you know that I love you." Jesus said to him, "Feed my sheep." JOHN 21:17

(Read also **JOHN 21:1-16.**)

Peter was among the first of Jesus' apostles to be called by Him. And yet, when the religious leaders and authorities came to arrest Jesus, Peter was among those who ran away. More than that, Peter also denied that he knew Jesus, three times. Jesus was crucified, but then He rose back from the dead. He then asked Peter three times, "Do you love me?" and Peter answered every time, "You know that I love you." Peter betrayed Jesus by running away and denying Him, but here we will see how Jesus restored the relationship and how, as a result, Peter preached to thousands.

1 Jesus sought Peter out despite what he had done.

³Simon Peter said to them, "I am going fishing." They said to him, "We will go with you." They went out and got into the boat, but that night they caught nothing. ⁴Just as day was breaking, Jesus stood on the shore; yet the disciples did not know that it was Jesus.

JOHN 21:3,4

Even though Jesus was back, Peter and the disciples went back to what they did best: fishing. But Jesus, despite Peter's denial, revealed Himself to the disciples. When we have hurt or betrayed Jesus, sometimes we feel guilty and don't know what to do except go back to how we lived before. But Jesus seeks us out despite what we have done. Have you ever done something you felt Jesus would not forgive you for? How has Jesus sought you out despite that?

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2 Jesus restored Peter.

And after saying this he said to him, "Follow me." **JOHN 21:19**

Jesus asked Peter three times, "Do you love me?" It was the same number of times Peter had denied ever knowing Him. And three times, Peter answered, "Lord, You know that I love You." Each time, Jesus restored Peter in the relationship by requesting him to look after the disciples (and, eventually, the church). Then Jesus ended with the same words He used to call Peter the first time: "Follow me." Even when we have failed Him, Jesus calls us to return to Him, follow Him again, and continue to fulfill His call in our lives. Have you ever been in a similar situation? What happened?

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3 Peter preached the gospel to thousands.

But Peter, standing with the eleven, lifted up his voice and addressed them: "Men of Judea and all who dwell in Jerusalem, let this be known to you, and give ear to my words." ACTS 2:14

Jesus ended His earthly ministry, ascended to heaven, and asked His disciples to wait for His Spirit to come to them. His Spirit came with the *sound of a mighty rushing wind*, and it drew Jews from all over the area who had come for the Feast of Pentecost. When Peter saw the multitudes, he *lifted up his voice and addressed them*, preaching the good news of Jesus Christ. Three thousand believed in Jesus and followed Him. Peter, because of the restored relationship with Jesus, continued to follow Him and ultimately fulfilled His call in his life. Have you ever experienced the grace of God to do something you'd never imagined as you continued to follow Him? What happened?

APPLICATION

- Do you believe that Jesus is a God who restores relationships, no matter what you have done or how you have behaved? How can you come to a deeper understanding of this starting this week?
- Is there an area in your life that Jesus is asking you to let Him restore? What are two action steps you can take for this?
- Is there anyone you know who needs to have their relationship with Jesus restored? How can you encourage them with Jesus' compassionate and restorative love this week?

