



## Jesus Forgives and Restores

**Bible Passage:** John 21:1-19

**Key Passage:** “ Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.” **Matthew 28:19-20**

**Big Picture Question:** What is our mission as believers? Our mission as believers is to make disciples of all nations by the power of the Spirit.

**Bottom Line:** I can always come to Jesus and be forgiven.

**Christ Connection:** Jesus prepared His disciples for a life of ministry. Jesus sent the Holy Spirit to be with us until He returns.

**LARGE GROUP:** Communicating God’s truth in engaging ways.

**Say This:** This time of year is always so busy! With all the student council elections, I hear one question repeated again and again: “Will you vote for me?” I think I must hear others ask that three or four times each day. Why do you think people running for office might ask that so many times? [Allow responses.] Good idea, that could be it. I think part of it comes from a desire to know for sure.

In today’s lesson we will see that Jesus asked Peter the same question three times in a row. Jesus knew the answer, of course, but I think He wanted to help Peter know for sure.

Jesus asked Peter a certain question three times before sharing an important mission with Peter. Do you remember the answer to our big picture question? ***What is our mission as believers? Our mission as believers is to make disciples of all nations by the power of the Spirit.*** Let’s see what mission Jesus had for Peter.

### **Watch Video:**

When Jesus was arrested, the disciples ran away. Then Peter—who had promised to die for Jesus—lied and said he didn’t even know Him. Now that Jesus was alive again, Peter wanted to be with Jesus so badly that he jumped in the water and swam to shore before the boat even landed. Denying that you know a friend when he is alone in a difficult situation could really hurt a friendship. How would you feel if your friends abandoned you when you got in trouble at school? Jesus still loved Peter and wanted Peter to know that He was healing their relationship. In fact, **Jesus forgave Peter and gave him a mission.**

Jesus asked Peter three times, “Do you love Me?” One time for each of the three times Peter had denied Jesus. We don’t know for sure if that’s why Jesus asked three times, but Peter almost certainly noticed the connection. Each time Peter said that he loved Jesus, Jesus commanded Peter to care for others.

These men were fishermen, but God wanted to use them as fishers of men, just as Jesus promised them when He first called them to be His disciples. Instead of catching fish, they would tell others about Jesus.



### Christ connection

Even though the disciples had left Jesus when He was arrested and even denied Him, Jesus still wanted to use them in God's plan. Jesus showed Peter forgiveness and restored him in order to use Peter as a leader in the early church. Peter did not deserve to be forgiven—none of us do! But Jesus doesn't forgive us based on what we deserve. Jesus forgives and restores people based on His love and the sacrifice He made on the cross to defeat sin. Jesus rose again to show that death had no power over Him, and that the way back to God was complete. Jesus is the Lord who forgives and makes things right again. When we trust in Jesus, we are forgiven and restored to God. He sends us the Holy Spirit to help us live holy lives and live on mission to tell others about Jesus!

**Let's pray together and head out to small group.**

### **Groups: Creating a Safe Place to Connect (Small Groups, 40 minutes)**

Create a safe place to connect and learn how the Bible story applies to real life experiences, through interactive activities and discussion questions.

#### 1. Bible skills

**What You Need:** Bibles, Story Point Poster, poster board cut in large circle attach metal brad in middle with an arrow

**What You Do:**

- Create a large circle on poster board with a poster board arrow in the middle attached by a brad fastener.
- Use a marker to divide the circle into 6 to 8 different sections, and write a point value in each section.
- Form two teams of kids.
- Help kids find John 21 in their Bibles so they can use it as a reference in the Bible story review game.
- Alternate between teams, allowing each player to spin the spinner to determine a point value for the question, and then ask one of the following questions
- If a player gets his question wrong, the next player on the opposing team has a chance to answer to win half the points.

**What You Say** **Jesus forgave Peter and gave him a mission.** Peter was called to be a fisher of men and share the love of Jesus with others. We too have a mission. ***Our mission as believers is to make disciples of all nations by the power of the Spirit.***

#### 2. Discussion Questions:

Ask the following questions. Lead the group to discuss:

- **What were the disciples doing when Jesus appeared to them?** (*fishing, John 21:3*)
- **How did Peter get to Jesus first?** (*He jumped out of the boat and swam to Him, John 21:7*)
- **What was the question Jesus kept asking Peter.** (*Do you love Me? John 21:15,16,17*)



- **Why do you think Jesus asked Peter the same question three times?** (*Answers will vary.*)
- **What was the job Jesus had for Peter?** (*Feed My sheep, tell others about Him; John 21:17*)
- **Can we ever mess up so badly that Jesus will not love us?** (*no*)
- **How can we show we love Jesus?** (*by following Him*)
- **How does God offer us forgiveness?** (*through faith in Jesus Christ*)

### **3. Memory Verse Activity**

**What You Need:** Memory Verse Poster, paper plates, marker

**What You Do:**

- Write the memory verse in phrases on paper plates.
- Make 2 sets.
- Form 2 teams.
- Position each stack of paper plates at one end of the room.
- Each team should line up across from its stack.
- One player from each team must walk to the paper plates, pick one up, and place it on his head.
- Then, he must walk back to the group with the paper plate balanced on his head.
- If the plate falls off, the player must start over.
- Players take turns until a team collects all its plates.
- Then the team must put the memory verse in order and shout “The Great Commission!”
- The first team to shout is the winning team

**What You Say:** “Our Memory verse has a special name, the Great Commission. The Great Commission is great for a lot of reasons. Joining God in His work of adding more people to the Kingdom is a great privilege. Another great reason the Great Commission is great is because it is a huge task! Taking the message of the gospel to every nation is a very big job. We can be thankful Jesus has promised to be with us as we do it.”

### **Pray and Dismiss**

**What You Need:** Prayer journals, Journal page (1 for each kid), markers/crayons, Bibles

**What You Do:**

- Distribute journal pages one to each kid.
- Ask the kids to write about or draw a picture to answer the following questions:
  - What does this story teach me about God or about the gospel?
  - What does this story teach me about myself?
  - Whom can I tell about this story?
- If time remains, take prayer requests or allow kids to complete the Bible story coloring page provided with this session.
- Pray for your group.

As adults arrive to pick up, tell kids to recite the memory verse to them.