

Bible Lesson

## 38. Peter Denies Jesus

Matthew 26; Mark 14; Luke 22; John 18



“You are one of them,” they said.  
But Peter replied, “I don’t know the man!”  
Matthew 26:73-74

## **Peter Denies Jesus**

During their last supper together, Jesus said, "You will all fall away from me."

Peter said, "Even if all fall away, I never will. I will stay with you, even if I have to die." The others agreed.

Jesus said to Peter, "The rooster will crow very early in the morning. Before then, you will deny that you know even me three times."

After Jesus was arrested, Peter followed him to the courtyard. He stood by a fire to stay warm. A servant girl looked closely at Peter. She said, "You were with Jesus."

"I don't know what you are talking about," Peter said. He moved into the shadows.

Another girl said, "Yes, that man is one of them." Again, Peter said that he didn't even know Jesus.

A third time, people said, "You are one of those disciples. You talk the same way Jesus does."

Peter yelled, "I don't know the man!"

At that moment, the rooster crowed. From across the courtyard, Jesus turned. He looked right into the eyes of Peter. Jesus' words had come true.

Peter went outside and wept with all his heart.

## Questions

1. What does this mean, "Peter denied Jesus"?
2. Why did Peter deny Jesus?
3. Even today, Christian followers will sometimes deny Jesus. They often fall away from him. Why?
4. Have you ever had to stand up for Jesus? When?

### Pray this prayer:

Dear Jesus,

You forgave Peter after he denied you. Help me to never deny you. Help me to stand up for you, no matter what. If I do fall away, please forgive me, bring me back, and use me. Thank you for fresh starts.

Amen

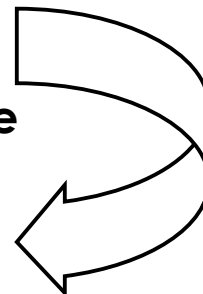
Write the letters f-a-l-l in the boxes.

Write the letters b-a-c-k t-o in the arrow.

If I do

□ □ □ □

away, please bring me



you.

Amen

# Story S-t-r-e-tch-ing

## 38. Peter Denies Jesus

Show students where the story is in the Bible. Use the Bible references above the illustration.

### Before you read:

#### Activate Prior Knowledge

- What does the word deny mean?
- Has a friend ever turned his or her back on you? What did it feel like?
- How do you think Jesus felt when Peter denied him?

### After you read:

#### Kids of Courage Today

Peter and the other disciples lived in fear that they too would be caught. In at least 45 countries, Christians are still persecuted for their faith. This special website teaches young people about those nations. You can “meet” brave believers of all ages who follow Jesus no matter the cost. Kids of Courage is a treasure box full of free colorful maps, games, pages to print, videos, recipes, and stories. Pray often for your sisters and brothers who risk arrest, mocking, and worse persecution for their faith:

[www.KidsOfCourage.com](http://www.KidsOfCourage.com)

#### RE-Starts

What changed Peter from being an ashamed, fearful follower of Christ into a mighty, bold pastor? First, he wept bitterly (**repentance**). Second, Jesus came back to life (**resurrection**). Third, Peter was forgiven and trusted again by Jesus (**reinstated**). Peter's life story and his words are all about restarts. The prefix “re” means again. Look up these Bible verses and write on the board the re-word in its context. Thank God that you can re-start your relationship with him anytime. Acts 2:38 (repent); Acts 3:19 (refresh); Acts 3:20 (restore); Acts 4:13 (realize); Acts 4:23 (release); Acts 5:25 (retold); Acts 5:41 (rejoice); 1 Peter 1:23 (rebirth); 1 Peter 1: 6 (refined); 1 Peter 1:9 (receive); 1 Peter 4:13 (revealed); 1 Peter 5:10 (restore) – this verse defines much of Peter's life; 2 Peter 3:1 (remind); and 2 Peter 3:9 (repent).

#### 3 x 3 = 3,000

Yes, Peter denied Jesus three times. But that is not the end of the story. Read John 21:15-17. Find three times that Peter affirmed his love for Jesus and was trusted to be a church leader. Did Peter act as a shepherd and feed others the truth? Go to Acts 2:22-41 and read aloud. Did the forgiveness equation work? YES! Who can you forgive, feed, and care for like Peter did?

#### One Little Line

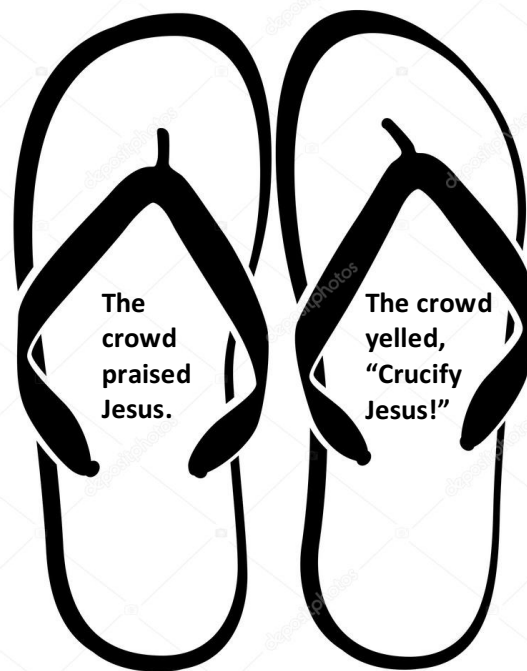
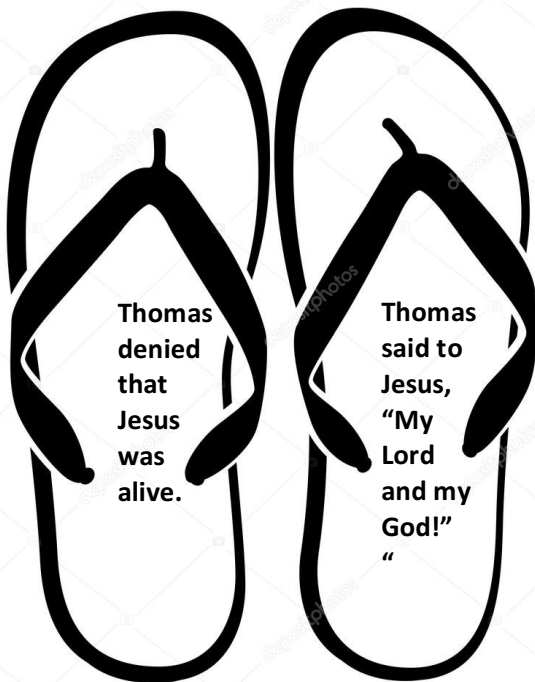
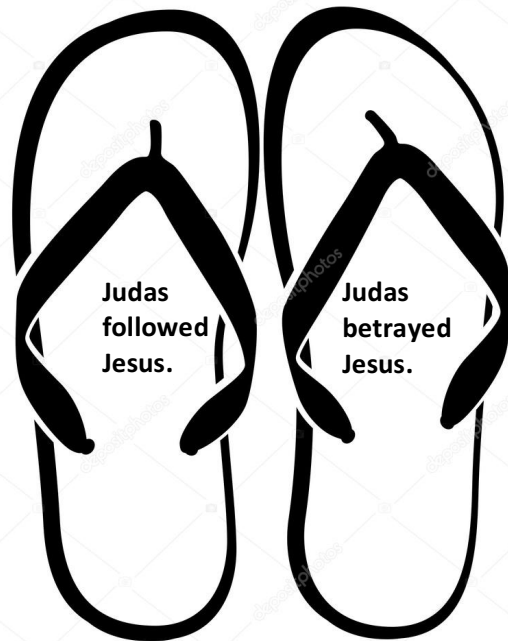
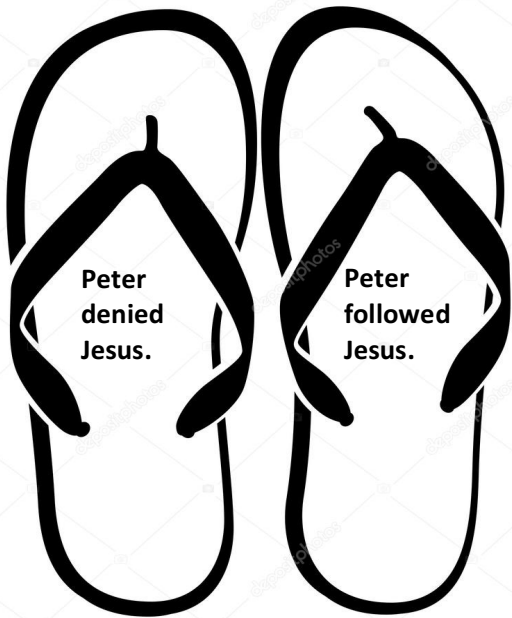
Read each account of Peter's betrayal in all four gospels. Let the kids find the one line in one gospel that says, “The Lord turned and looked straight at Peter.”

How did that silent glance change Peter? Pray for a soft heart as you look at Jesus in the gospels.

## Flip Floppers

Peter stood up for Jesus and then Peter flipped his loyalty when he thought he might get arrested. Others followed Jesus and then denied him. BUT some denied Jesus first and then followed. Play this game to show that even if we flip-flop and desert Christ, we can always come back. Talk about how you can stay true to Jesus and NOT flip flop.

Photocopy this page onto card stock so that each student has one page. They cut out each sandal. At the count of three, throw all the flip flops into the air together so they land in one big mess. Who can match their four pairs the fastest? You can play this same game with real flip flops, using masking tape to write the names on the sandals.



## All Fall, All Tall

The loudest and most loving lesson in the Bible is redemption – forgiveness and starting over again. The disciples did desert Jesus in his time of need. However, all of them (except Judas) returned to Jesus and became men who started the Christian church. In fact, all but John gave their lives for Christ.

Using 13 sheets of cardstock paper, fold each vertically into thirds so that the paper can stand. Write the apostle's name on the front side (from the FALL column) and the same disciple's feats (TALL column) on the back side (or cut and paste). Set them up like bowling pins and roll a soft ball toward them. Pick up the papers of the "fallen men" and tell his short story. Play until everyone has had several turns. See which child can tell the most fates of the apostles.\* Discover how they stayed true to Christ until their bitter end: <http://www.christianity.com/church/church-history/timeline/1-300/whatever-happened-to-the-twelve-apostles-11629558.html>

He did <b>FALL</b> away from Jesus...	...but he stood <b>TALL</b> in the end.
1. Peter	Peter became the pastor of the church in Jerusalem and wrote two books in the Bible.
2. Andrew	Andrew was the first to bring the good news to the Soviet Union and also preached in Turkey and Greece.
3. Thomas	Thomas preached in lands as far away as India and he started many churches there.
4. Phillip	Phillip brought the good news to northern Africa and also to the area in and around Turkey.
5. Matthew	Matthew shared Jesus in Iran and Ethiopia. He wrote the longest of the four gospels.
6. Bartholomew	Bartholomew traveled to many lands to share his love for Jesus: India, Saudi Arabia, Ethiopia, and Armenia.
7. James (son of Zebedee)	James of Zebedee: Historians are not 100 percent sure which James is which, but he traveled to Syria.
8. Simon the Zealot	Simon (not Simon Peter) preached in modern day Iran. He was killed when he wouldn't worship their sun god.
9. John	John became a pastor in a church in Turkey and cared for Mary. He wrote the book of Revelations.
10. Matthias	Matthias replaced Judas (the betrayer). He worked with Andrew in Syria.
11. Thaddaeus	Thaddaeus brought the news of Jesus to Iran and also to Turkey.
12. James (son of Alphaeus)	James stayed in Jerusalem and kept the church there strong. He was stoned to death by the Jews.
13. Paul	Paul became the greatest early missionary. He wrote most of the letters in the New Testament.

\* Note: Historical accounts vary.

## Chameleon Christians

When Peter was accused of being a Christ-follower, he hid in the shadows. When his accent sounded like Jesus', he denied it. Sadly, Christians often want to blend into this world. They want to look, act, think, and sound so much like nonbelievers, that they camouflage Christ within them. Without realizing it, they might be denying Jesus. Chameleons also change their colors to blend into their surroundings. Could this be you?

Photocopy this page onto card stock. Write on the back of each lizard, one of these words: look, act, think, sound. Students color their cut-out chameleon to exactly match its surrounding. For example, you might color one dark brown and lay it on a dark brown table. How can you NOT look, act, think, and sound like nonbelievers? Talk about this verse from Romans 12:2 (NLT): "Don't copy the behavior and customs of this world, but let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think. Then you will learn to know God's will for you, which is good and pleasing and perfect."

