

**THE EARLY CHURCH:  
PETER AND JOHN AT THE BEAUTIFUL GATE  
LESSON 2**

**LESSON OVERVIEW**

**Key Point:** You can tell others about Jesus.

*Repeat this phrase throughout the lesson.*

**Bible Story:** Acts 3:1-8

**Key Verse** Acts 1:8:—"But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."

*Younger option:* "You will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses." Acts 1:8

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**ITEMS NEEDED**

*Each class needs the following:*

- Goldfish crackers—both for the game and for each student to have one small cup as a snack.
  - Masking Tape
  - 8 small cups
  - 4 pairs of chopsticks (You can usually get or buy these from a restaurant.)
  - Signs for: *Beautiful, Peter, John, Crippled Man*.—You can hole punch these and use yarn to make a sign that will hang around a student's neck.
  - Fortune Cookies that have today's memory verse inside.
  - 1 blank Japanese fan for each student to decorate (i.e., from <http://www.asianideas.com/paperfans1.html>)
  - Bible Verse Poster (Kindergarten and 1<sup>st</sup> grade have a shorter version)
- Since today's lesson involves two snacks (a Scripture cookie and Goldfish), it's a good idea to provide drinks as well.

**BEFORE CLASS**

- Before class put an equal number of Gold fish crackers in to cups. You will need one cup of cracker for each team you desire to have. Put these cups on the floor or a table. Using masking tape, put a line on the floor on the opposite side of the room behind which the teams will stand. Set an equal number of empty cups on the floor half-way between the teams and the cup with the Gold fish.
- Put up the Bible Verse Poster for today.
- Set out any items you need for today's lesson
- Pray for each student by name.

**IMPORTANT NOTE:** Today is also **Japanese Mission Day**. You will see the "Japanese" influence on today's lesson. If you want, feel free to dress Japanese-like, although you don't have too. And also feel free to be creative. For example, you might want the kids to sit cross-legged on the floor instead of in chairs or to sit on mats. Have fun with this and enjoy the kids in your class but don't let this theme disrupt the Bible lesson.

## **OPENING ACTIVITY**

SAY: Konnichiwa (koh-nee-chee-wah)—“Hello”

SAY: Today is Japanese Mission Day.

Explain that this means hello in Japanese. Tell your children that anytime you say, “Konnichiwa,” they should say it back to you.

*(Practice a few times. If they are real quiet as they say it, encourage them to be louder.)*

SAY: Everybody say, “Ichi.” Say, “ni.” Say, “san.” That’s how you count to three in Japanese. So on the count of three, in Japanese, I want you to touch three walls and come to the group circle.

Ready...ichi...ni...san...Go!

SAY: Konnichiwa (koh-nee-chee-wah)—Kids say: Konnichiwa!

## **Goldfish Races**

Quickly divide your class into teams (for however many cups you set up before class) and have them stand behind the line.

SAY: Racing is popular in Japan and welcome to our big race of the day! In a minute I am going to give the first person in each line a pair of chopsticks. When I say, *Ready...ichi...ni...san...Go!* the first person will run to the cup at the far end of the room and use the chopsticks to pick up one Gold fish cracker. He will then bring the cracker to the cup in the middle, put it in, and give the chopsticks to the next person in line. If he drops the cracker, he will have to use the chopsticks to pick it up. Once everyone on your team has gone, sit down in a straight line and raise your hands.

*Ready...ichi...ni...san...Go!*

## **Discussion**

SAY: What I didn’t tell you about this game is what these cups mean. The cup you took the Gold fish out of means “love.” The empty cup stands for how empty people feel when they don’t know Jesus. People who don’t know Jesus are just as empty as this cup was. *(Hold up the second cup.)* They will always be looking for something more in life. What they want and need is God’s love *(Hold up “love” cup.)* In the same way that you took the cracker to the empty cup, you can take God’s love to other people. You can invite friends to church. You can tell others that Jesus loves them. You can even tell your parents about how much God loves them and how God will always take care of them.

## **BIBLE LESSON**

*SAY:* Konnichiwa (koh-nee-chee-wah) —*See if the students remember to say it back to you. If not, try it again.*

*Choose 4 volunteers*--One girl and three boys. Give the girl the *Beautiful* sign. Give the others the signs that say *Peter, John, and Crippled Man*.

**Read Acts 3:1-8 from your Bible** and help the students to act it out. Have them repeat anything after you that their character say. The girl represents the Gate Beautiful. When the story mentions her, simply have her stand beside the beggar and give her the sign that says, "Beautiful."

*SAY:* Just because this crippled man was different from them, didn't mean that they didn't talk to him. They could have walked on by but they didn't—they stopped to tell him about Jesus, even though he was different.

*ASK: How are some other people different from you?* (Some are short, tall, different skin color, different eye color, different hair color, lots of freckles, no freckles, different races and nationalities, etc.)

*SAY: God loves everyone the same and He wants for everyone to know Him.*

## **SAD STORY**

*ASK: Who knows who our country fought against during World War II?* We fought against several countries but one of these was Japan. After the war, however, their country was in ruins and suffering and for the first time there was an open door for Christian missionaries to go and help them and share the Good News of Jesus. It would have been hard because there were still a lot of bad feelings between Americans and Japanese, but some went and many were saved but those who went sent word back to America that they needed more help—more missionaries to share Jesus with the people, but not many volunteered. Today if you look at Japan today, there are not a lot of strong Christians there, but what might have happened if many people had volunteered to go and tell the Japanese people about the Lord? It might have completely changed the history of their nation...but many weren't willing to go, some because they too had hard feelings about the war and they didn't want to go and share with the "enemy."

*SAY:* Someone being different from us should never stop us from sharing Jesus with them.

## **KEY VERSE**

*Give each student a “fortune” cookie and let him eat it and find today’s challenge verse inside. Read the verse together as a group.*

**ASK: Does anyone know where this verse is found?** (Hint: This is something Jesus said just before He ascended to heaven after His resurrection. It’s Acts 1:8.)

Get ready for a Bible Drill  
*Ready...Acts 1:8...Go!*

**ASK: How is this like what Peter and John did?**

**SAY:** They hadn’t planned to share God’s love—they were just on the way and when the opportunity came up, it was natural for them to be witnesses.

**ASK: Did you know that not long after this story the leaders commanded Peter and John to stop teaching and preaching in Jesus’ name? What do you think they did?** (They said, “For we cannot help speaking about what we have seen and heard” [Acts 4:20]. In other words, they couldn’t stop being “witnesses.” Then they went to other Christians and prayed for boldness to continue being good witnesses.)

**ASK: What does this verse mean when it says, “When the Holy Spirit comes on you?”** (Let a few students answer.)

**ASK: Who is the Holy Spirit?** (The Holy Spirit is God, just like Jesus and the Father are God. He is the third part of the Trinity. He guides the Christian. He is like a voice in your heart to tell you when you are doing something wrong, to show you what is right, to comfort you and give you strength, etc.)

**ASK: When does a person get the Holy Spirit?** (The moment you give your life to Jesus and once you are saved, He will never leave you although you can grieve Him [make Him sad] by how you live your life.)

## **Dismiss to Small Groups**

**SAY:** Right now it is time for our small groups, so I’m going to dismiss you one row at a time.

*Dismiss rows of chairs to the tables in the rooms. Give them specific directions where to go.*

## **SMALL GROUP**

*Give your students a cup of Goldfish as a snack as you do today's craft.*

### **Craft Activity**

*SAY:* Japanese folding fans are elegant pieces of art. They are beautiful and often represent an interesting stories. Today you get to make your own Japanese folding fan to use as a reminder to pray for Japan. You can also use it to cool yourself off on a hot day.

*Provide a blank Japanese fan for each student to color and decorate. You may want to put some decoration suggestions on a marker board.*

You can also teach them to say "Jesus" in Japanese which is pronounced: Nante koto da.

Below is the Jesus' name in Japanese in case your students want to use it on their fans:



## **WRAP IT UP**

*The following can be done in either small groups or in the large group by coming together again at the end of your time.*

### **Bible Skills**

*SAY: Konnichiwa (koh-nee-chee-wah) —See if the students remember to say it back to you. If not, try it again.*

**ASK: Why is the book of Acts called “Acts”?** (Because it’s all about the “acts” of the disciples and others like Paul who later followed Jesus.)

**ASK: What is the name of the book that comes after Acts?** (Romans—this was a letter written to the Romans, people who lived in Rome.)

*Get ready for some Bible Drills*

Explain that today they are going to be looking for New Testament books of the Bible. You may want to do these drills in front of your Bible Book Chart.

*Ready...The book of James...Go!*

*Ready...The book of Philippians...Go!*

*Ready...The book of Romans...Go!*

*(If you have more time, feel free to look up other books as well.)*

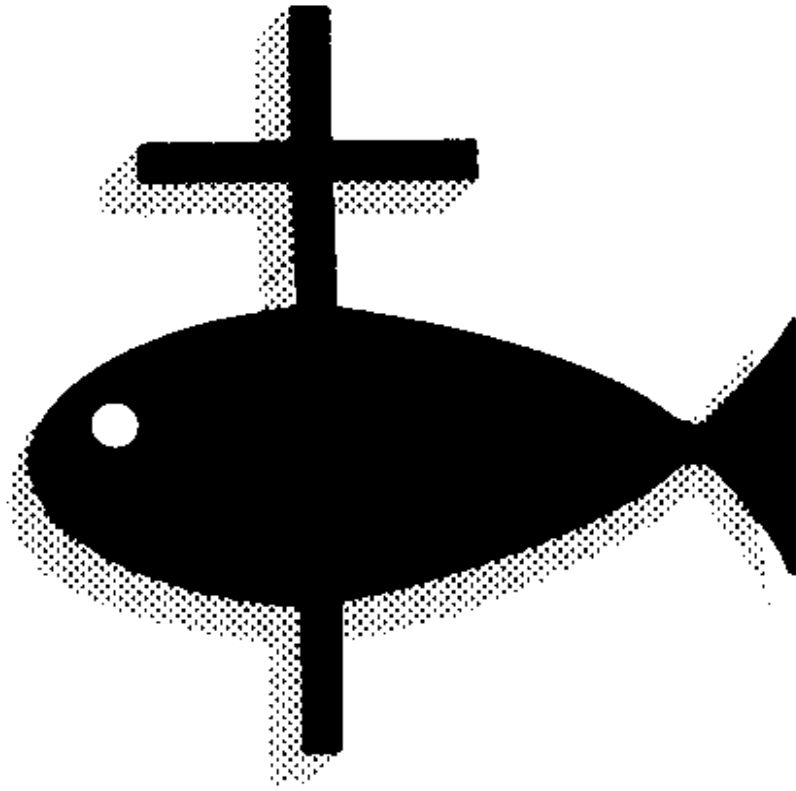
### **Prayer Time**

Take prayer requests and pray for your students

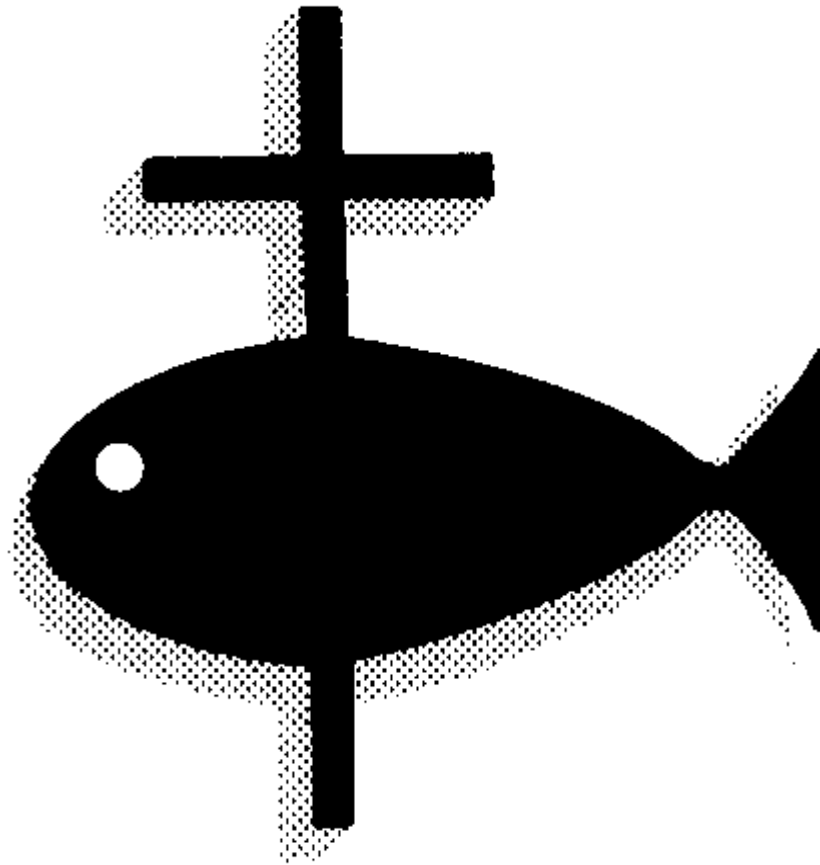
### **EXTRA TIME**

Help your students memorize today’s key verse.

“Sayounara” (sigh-yo-nah-rah)—“Good-Bye”



“But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.” Acts 1:8



“You will receive power when  
the Holy Spirit comes on you;  
and you will be my witnesses.”

Acts 1:8