

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

Challenge 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

ITEMS NEEDED

Each class needs the following:

Goldfish crackers—approx. 30 in each class.

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. These can be ordered from Gold Star Graphics at (405) 677-1529 or star5@gogoldstar.com. The minimum order is 250. Or, a recipe for fortune cookies can be found online.

Bible Verse Poster (Kindergarten and 1st grade have a shorter version)

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—if your class is small have two teams. Larger classes can make three or four teams. Make sure you have at least as many Gold fish in the cups as you have students on the teams. Put these cups on the floor or a table. Using your 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.

AS STUDENTS ARRIVE

- Greet each student by name as they enter.
- Give each student an attendance sticker for the attendance chart, and feel free to add guest names to the chart. This will give them a sense of belonging.
- Get to know any guests and help them fill out a guest form.
- Be sure to smile—Your smile and attitude sets the atmosphere as students enter.

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

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 may 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 the students: **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 the students: **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.

CHALLENGE 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 the students: **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 the students: **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 the students: **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.)

(3rd-5th grade only) Ask the students: **What does this verse mean when it says, “When the Holy Spirit comes on you?”** (Let a few students answer.)

(3rd-5th grade only) Ask the students: **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.)

(3rd-5th grade only) Ask the students: **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.)

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 the students: **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 the students: **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!

PRAYER TIME & WRAP-UP

Pray specifically today for the people of Japan and for others that your students know who don't know Christ.

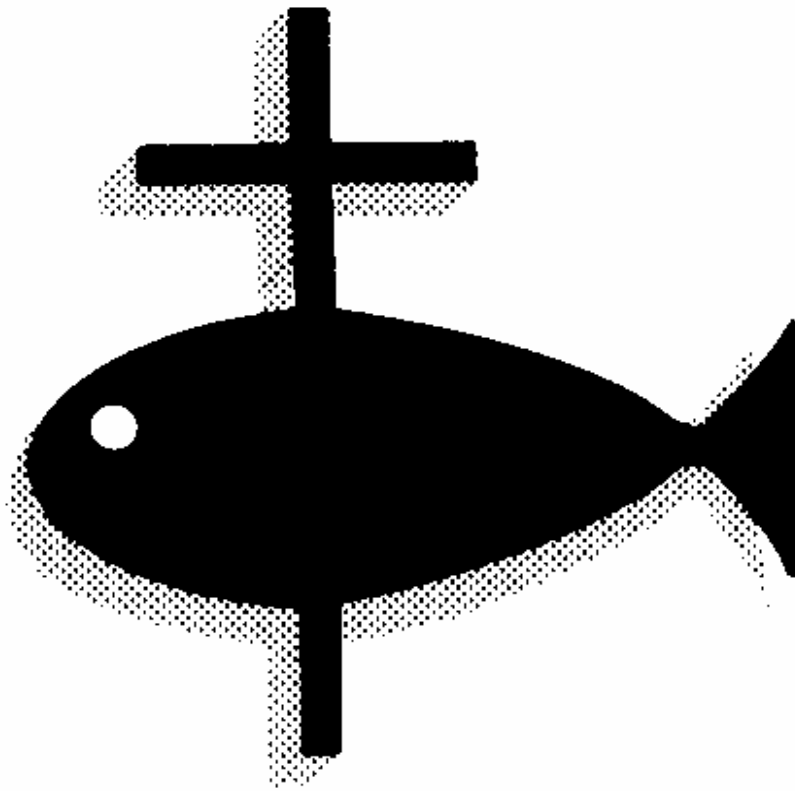
Take Prayer Requests Below:

List Prayer Requests Here

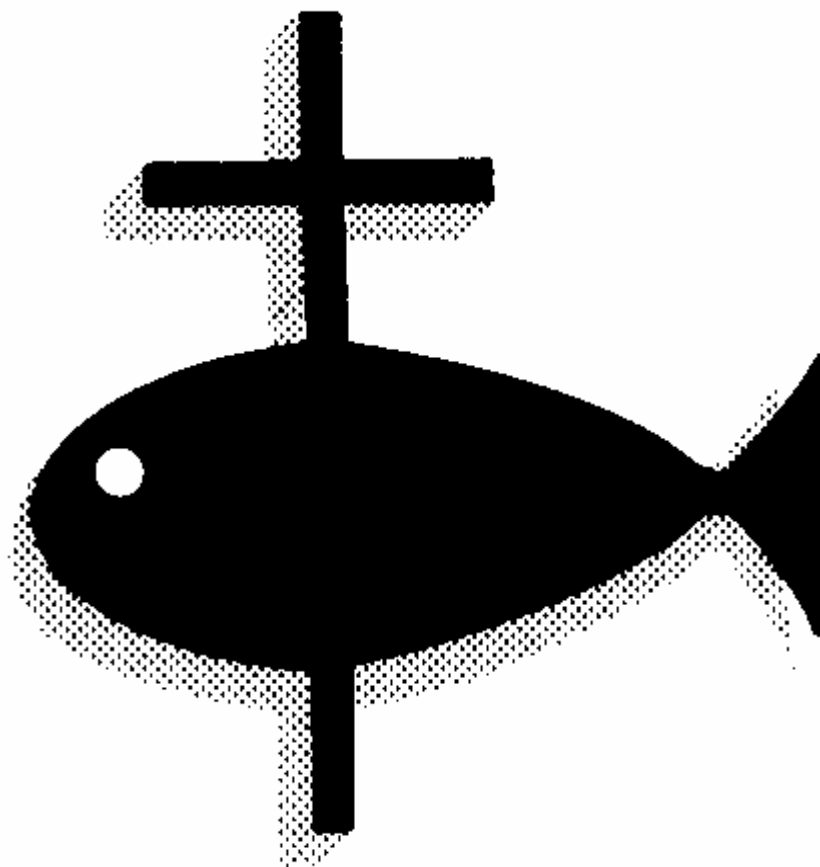
“Sayounara” (sigh-yo-nah-rah)—“Good-Bye”

EXTRA TIME

Use any extra time to help your students memorize the verse for today.



“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;
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Acts 1:8