

# Unit 28: Jesus Is Alive

**Unit Description:** Jesus' resurrection was no secret. For 40 days, Jesus appeared to His disciples and hundreds of others so that they would know He is alive forevermore. Jesus wants everyone to know Him, trust Him, and live for Him.

**Big Picture Question:** How do we know that God wants us to know Him? We can know that God wants us to know Him because He has revealed Himself through His Word.



## **SESSION 1: Jesus Appeared to the Disciples** Luke 24



## **SESSION 2: Jesus Appeared to Thomas** John 20



## **SESSION 3: Jesus Forgave Peter** John 21



## **SESSION 4: God Wants Us to Know Him** Matthew 28



UNIT 28 | SESSION 3

## JESUS FORGAVE PETER

JOHN 21

### KEY PASSAGE:

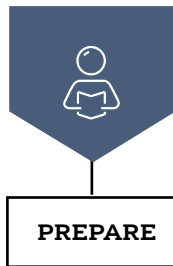
Now this is eternal life: that they know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent. John 17:3 NIV

### BIG PICTURE QUESTION:

How do we know that God wants us to know Him? We can know that God wants us to know Him because He has revealed Himself through His Word.

### CHRIST CONNECTION:

The disciples had turned away from Jesus when He was arrested, but Jesus still wanted to use them in God's plan—as fishers of men who would tell people the good news about Jesus. Jesus is the Lord who forgives us and makes things right again.



## PRIOR TO TEACHING THE SESSION



## LEADER Bible Study

In the beginning of John 21, we read of the resurrected Christ's third appearance to His disciples. Although Peter had seen Jesus, perhaps he had not yet come to terms with his three-fold denial of Jesus. Through a series of three questions and commands, Jesus demonstrated His mercy and forgiveness toward Peter's denial as well as His wisdom to help Peter understand that obedience flows from a heart of love toward God.

How does Christ's forgiveness toward Peter demonstrate His own mercy toward us? What does Jesus' commission to Peter teach us about our call as forgiven disciples?

While Peter hadn't been the first disciple in the boat to realize the man calling them back to shore was Christ, he was the first one making waves to get back and join the Savior where He stood. We witness this headstrong disciple plunge himself into the sea to swim to Jesus while the rest struggled to haul in all the fish they had caught.

In their conversation after breakfast, Jesus repeatedly asked Peter, "Do you love me?" Each time Jesus asked, Peter became more grieved. Jesus didn't ask this question because He didn't know the disciple's response; rather, Jesus wanted Peter to examine his motives and mission before

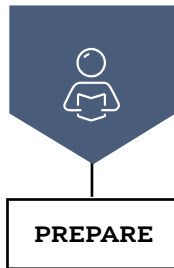
stepping into God's calling on his life: that he would lead others into His gift of eternal life.

Lead the kids in your class to consider how impactful Jesus' mercy was in these moments on the beach. How unbelievable it is that Jesus was willing to forgive Peter after all the times he had denied Him! This same forgiveness has been granted to us through faith in Jesus.

Remember: God chose to use Peter to lead others to Jesus, despite the ways he had fallen short in sin. God can choose us, too. Nothing can separate us from Jesus' love, power, or authority over our lives. With each new day, He beckons us to lead others as we follow Him.

### PLACES TO KNOW

**Sea of Tiberius:** the Sea of Galilee (John 6:1). Tiberius is a city located on the western shore of the Sea of Galilee encompassing today what was in ancient times two separate cities.



## PRIOR TO TEACHING THE SESSION

### GATHER Supplies

Keep a regular supply of the following items available at all times: Bibles, pens or pencils, markers, crayons, colored pencils, scissors, glue or tape, paper.



#### WELCOME

##### Activity Page

- ☐ "Find the Fish" activity page

##### Session Starter (Option 2)

- ☐ dull or dirty pennies, 1 per kid
- ☐ cups, 1 per kid
- ☐ vinegar
- ☐ salt canister
- ☐ spoons, 1 per kid
- ☐ paper towels



#### LEARN

##### Introduce the Session

- ☐ countdown video

##### Big Picture Question

- ☐ Big Picture Question Poster

##### Review the Timeline

- ☐ Giant Timeline

##### Tell the Bible Story

- ☐ "Jesus Forgave Peter" video
- ☐ Bible Story Picture Poster
- ☐ beach towels, cardboard boxes (optional)

##### Questions from Kids

- ☐ "Unit 28, Session 3" questions from kids video

##### Missions Moment

- ☐ "The Need for Churches in Denver" missions video
- ☐ "Phillips Family Photo" printable

##### Key Passage Activity

- ☐ Key Passage Poster
- ☐ "This Is Eternal Life (John 17:3)" song
- ☐ worship song of your choice (optional)



#### LOVE

##### Review & Bible skills

- ☐ Small Group Timeline and Map Set
- ☐ world map



#### LIVE

##### Activity Choice (Option 1)

- ☐ paper towels, 1 per kid
- ☐ watercolor paints, 1 per kid
- ☐ paintbrushes, 1 per kid
- ☐ black construction papers, 1 per kid
- ☐ water

##### Activity Choice (Option 2)

- ☐ Big Picture Question Poster

##### Journal and Prayer

- ☐ Journal Page
- ☐ "Forgiveness" activity page



## WELCOME Kids

Greet each kid as he or she arrives. Use this time to collect the offering, fill out attendance sheets, build relationships, and help new kids connect to your group.

**SAY** “Do you think it is hard to forgive someone when they have wronged you? Why or why not? Why is it important to forgive people?”

### 1 ACTIVITY PAGE (5 minutes)

Invite kids to complete “Find the Fish” on the activity page.

**SAY** “Today, we will learn how Jesus appeared to His disciples a third time. Not only did Jesus perform a miracle, but He forgave Peter, too.”

### 2 SESSION STARTER (10 minutes)

#### ☐ OPTION 1: GROUPS OF THREE



Lead kids to gather in the center of the room. Tell kids that when you say “Go,” they will need to form into groups of three as quickly as they can. Tell kids that the first three groups to form a group of three will advance to the next round, while the other kids are out. Play again, but tell the kids that only the first two groups to form groups of three will move on to the final round. Finally during the last round, the first group to form a group of three wins. Make sure that before you begin each round, kids are spread out to avoid forming a group too easily. Tell kids that they cannot form the same group of three each round. Repeat the activity as time allows.

**SAY** “It took quick action to form a group of three so you would remain in the game. In the Bible, the number three is repeated in many stories. Can you think a Bible story with the number three? [Allow responses.] Jonah was in the belly of a fish for three days, and Jesus was in the tomb for three days. Today, we will learn how Jesus asked Peter a question three times.”

#### ☐ OPTION 2: RESTORED

Provide each kid with a cup and an old, dull penny. Direct kids to examine their penny then place it in the cup. Add vinegar and salt to the cups, covering the penny with vinegar. Leave the pennies in the cups for five minutes.

While kids wait, provide kids with a Bible. Ask kids to turn to Ephesians 4:32. Invite one kid to read the verse aloud. Discuss what it means to be kind to others, tenderhearted, and willing to forgive. Tell kids that being tenderhearted means we are moved toward compassion for others, even if they have wronged us. Discuss how God forgives us and is kind to us even when we have sinned against Him. Then direct kids to remove their pennies using a spoon and wipe them with a paper towel.

**SAY** “Your pennies went through the process of being restored, and they are now shiny. Forgiving others is a way to restore, or fix, a relationship. Today, we will learn how Jesus forgave Peter and made things right. Let’s learn how Jesus’ forgiveness allowed Peter to be used in God’s plan.”

Transition from **WELCOME** to **LEARN**





## THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

# INTRODUCE the Bible Story

### 1 INTRODUCE THE SESSION (3 minutes)

Show the countdown video as you transition to introduce the Bible story. Set it to end as the session begins.

**SAY** “Hello, everyone! My name is **[your name]**, and today we get to read a story about how Jesus forgave Peter. Do you remember what Peter did three times after Jesus was arrested? **[Allow responses.]** Peter denied Jesus three times. This means that when people asked him if he knew Jesus or said that Peter was one of Jesus’ followers, Peter lied and told the people that he did not know Jesus. Peter sinned against Jesus and abandoned Him during His arrest and crucifixion.

If you brought a Bible, please take it out and open to the Gospel of John. **[Distribute Bibles to kids who need one.]** God’s Word reminds us that even when we mess up or sin, God is always willing to forgive us. We can have complete forgiveness through faith in Jesus. Let’s get ready to learn how Jesus forgave Peter. ”

### 2 BIG PICTURE QUESTION (1 minute)

**SAY** “God’s willingness to forgive people of sin is one way we know God wants us to know Him. When we experience forgiveness, God makes things right between us. He restores our relationship. Throughout the Bible, we see God call people to repent and ask for forgiveness. Most of all, God sent His Son, Jesus, so that we could be forgiven of our sins forever. God revealed Himself through Jesus and the Bible so we can know Him and turn to Him for forgiveness.

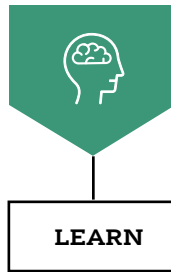
Let’s review our big picture question: **How do we know God wants us to know Him? What’s the answer we learned?** **[Allow responses.] We can know God wants us to know Him because He has revealed Himself through His Word.** ”

### 3 REVIEW THE TIMELINE (1 minute)

Show the giant timeline. Point to individual Bible stories as you review.

**SAY** “At this point in our timeline, Jesus had appeared to His disciples twice. First, He appeared to ten of the disciples in Jerusalem. Then eight days later, He appeared to Thomas. We learned that even though Thomas doubted that Jesus is alive, after seeing Jesus for himself, he believed. Jesus told Thomas that those who don’t see Him and still believe are blessed. Today, we will read about the third time Jesus appeared to His disciples and how He forgave Peter. ”





## THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

### LEARN the Bible Story

#### 1 TELL THE BIBLE STORY: VIDEO OR STORYTELLER (10 minutes)

Open your Bible to John 21. Use the Bible storytelling tips to help you tell the story, or show the Bible story video “Jesus Forgave Peter.” Use the bold text to retell or review the story.

#### JESUS FORGAVE PETER

“Three days after Jesus died on the cross, He came back to life. More than once, Jesus appeared to His disciples and proved that He was alive. One day, Jesus met His disciples while they were fishing on the Sea of Galilee.

**Peter and the other disciples got into a boat to go fishing. They spent all night on the water, but they did not catch any fish. The next morning, as the sun was coming up, Jesus stood on the shore. He called out to the disciples, but they did not recognize Him. Jesus said, “Men, you don’t have any fish, do you?”**

**“No,” they answered.**

**“Put your net in the water on the right side of the boat, and you will catch some fish,” Jesus said. The disciples did what Jesus said. So many fish were in their net, that they could not pull the net back into the boat!**

**One of the disciples said to Peter, “It is the Lord!”** Peter jumped into the water so he could swim to shore. The rest of the disciples traveled to the shore in the boat, pulling the net full of fish behind them.

**When the disciples got out of the boat, they saw bread and a charcoal fire with fish on it. “Bring some of the fish you’ve caught,” Jesus said. So Peter pulled the net ashore. It was full of large fish—153 of them!**

**“Come and have breakfast,” Jesus said.** Jesus took the bread and gave it to them. Then He gave them the fish.

**Jesus turned to Peter. “Do you love Me more than these?” He asked.**

**“Yes, Lord,” Peter said. “You know that I love You.”**

**“Feed My lambs,” Jesus told him.**

Jesus asked Peter again, “Do you love Me?”

**“Yes, Lord,” Peter said. “You know that I love You.”**

**“Take care of My sheep,” Jesus said.**

**Jesus asked Peter a third time, “Do you love Me?”**

**Peter was very sad that Jesus asked Him a third time. Peter loved Jesus very much! “Lord, You know everything! You know that I love You!”**

**“Feed My sheep,” Jesus said. Jesus told Peter that he would bring honor to God. Then Jesus said to him, “Follow Me!”**

#### STORYTELLING TIPS

**Set the scene:** Lay out beach towels for kids to sit on as you tell the Bible story. Create a fake fire using cardboard boxes cut into logs and red and orange paper for the flames.

**Use emotion:** Vary the tone of your voice as you share the questions Jesus asked Peter to emphasize Jesus’ kindness and resolve.



## THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

Christ Connection: The disciples had turned away from Jesus when He was arrested, but Jesus still wanted to use them in God's plan—as fishers of men who would tell people the good news about Jesus. Jesus is the Lord who forgives us and makes things right again. ”

### 2 REVIEW THE BIBLE STORY

**SAY** “ Even though all Jesus’ disciples had left Him when He was arrested, Jesus was always faithful to them. He had already appeared to them twice after His resurrection, and in the story today, we learned that He appeared to them a third time. What miracle did Jesus perform for His disciples? [Allow responses.] The disciples had fished all night and hadn’t caught a single fish. Then Jesus gave them a command and at His word, their net filled with 153 fish. By providing for them and seeking them out, Jesus showed that He loved and forgave His disciples.

When Peter realized that it was Jesus who had spoken to them, he couldn’t wait to get to Jesus. Peter jumped out of the boat and swam to the shore. But Jesus had some questions for Peter. After they ate breakfast together, Jesus asked Peter three questions. What were the questions Jesus asked? Look at John 21:15-17. [Choose a volunteer to read aloud John 21:15-17.] Peter had denied Jesus three times after His arrest. Just as Peter had denied Jesus three times, Jesus asked Peter if he loved Him three times.

Each time Peter answered yes to His question, Jesus told Peter to feed His sheep. Who are Jesus’ sheep? [Allow responses.] Anyone who follows Jesus as Savior and Lord becomes His sheep, or His disciple. Jesus wanted Peter to show he loved Him by caring for those who are Jesus’ followers. The forgiveness Peter experienced gave him the opportunity to be used in God’s plan for the start of the early church. Peter would later become a very important leader in the early church. He was no longer just a fisherman, but a true fisher of men. He shared his faith and proclaimed Christ, even when it eventually cost him his life. ”

### 3 CHRIST CONNECTION

**SAY** “ The disciples had turned away from Jesus when He was arrested, but Jesus still wanted to use them in God’s plan—as fishers of men who would tell people the good news about Jesus. Jesus is the Lord who forgives us and makes things right again. ”

(Tip: Use Scripture and the Gospel Plan Poster to explain how to become a Christian. Make sure kids know when and where they can ask questions.)

### 4 QUESTIONS FROM KIDS (3 minutes)

Show the “Unit 28, Session 3” questions from kids video. Prompt kids to discuss:

1. How do we know that God forgives us?
2. Jesus uses forgiven sinners to build His church. How can He use you?





## THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

### 5 MISSIONS MOMENT (3 minutes)

Display the “Phillips Family Photo” as you teach about the church planters. Tell the kids that Denver, Colorado, has a growing population. Tell kids that many move to Denver for the fun outdoor activities and the many businesses. Explain that even with 2.9 million people in Denver, many do not believe in Jesus.

**SAY** “Denver is in need of many more churches. Chris Phillips, his wife, Libby, and their four kids have lived in Denver, Colorado, since 2017. They moved there to start a church called Journey Point Church. Now, Journey Point Church has two campus locations. Chris says he feels like God wants him to use the gifts that God has given him to honor the Lord. He wants their church to tell many people about Jesus.”

Show the video. Pray that more churches and individuals will be involved in starting new churches in Denver by sending mission teams to help the missionaries and existing churches.

### 6 KEY PASSAGE ACTIVITY (5 minutes)

Before the session, cut out fish shapes from construction paper and write a word from the key passage on each fish. Create two sets of fish. Tape each set of fish in random order on separate walls using painter’s tape. Show the key passage poster. Lead kids in reading aloud John 17:3 together.

Form kids into two teams and assign each team a wall of fish. Challenge the teams to line up the fish on the wall in the correct order of the key passage. The first team to complete the challenge wins.

**SAY** “Jesus called Peter to be a fisher of men and tell others the good news of the gospel. Like Peter, we can share the good news with others so they can have forgiveness of sins and eternal life through faith in Jesus.”

Lead kids to sing “This Is Eternal Life (John 17:3).” You may also choose to sing a worship song of your choice.

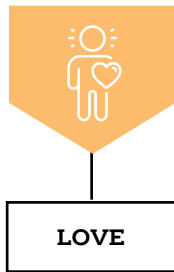
### 7 PRAY (2 minutes)

Invite kids to pray before transitioning to Love.

**SAY** “Dear God, thank You for sending Jesus to forgive us of our sins. Help us share Jesus with others so they can have forgiveness and life through Him. In Jesus’ name, amen.”

Transition from **LEARN** to **LOVE**





## THE GOD OF THE GOSPEL

### LOVE God by Applying the Story

#### 1 REVIEW & BIBLE SKILLS (5 minutes)

Distribute Bibles and display the New Testament Israel Map. Guide kids to open their Bibles to John 21. Explain that Jesus appeared to His disciples by the Sea of Tiberias, also known as the Sea of Galilee (D6). Remind kids that Jesus performed many miracles and taught by this sea throughout His time on earth.

Consider comparing the New Testament Israel Map to a modern-day map to help kids understand where these stories took place. (Tip: Locate the areas in and around modern-day Sea of Galilee.) Choose a volunteer to read aloud John 21:17.

**SAY** “Do you think Jesus asked Peter three times, ‘Do you love me?’ because He didn’t know Peter’s answer? **[Allow responses.]** Jesus knows everything. He knew how Peter would answer, but perhaps He wanted to make a point to Peter: We must first love Jesus before we can follow His commands. Then our love for Jesus is shown by how we care for others.

If we love Jesus and have experienced His forgiveness, we will want to care for the needs of others and follow after Him. God already knows the future, but we get to be a part of His plans by making Him known to all the world. God loves us and has special plans for us just like Peter.”

#### 2 GROUP DISCUSSION (10 minutes)

Ask the following questions. Lead the group to discuss.

**SAY** “How does Jesus make our relationship right with God?”

Discuss how forgiveness of sins only comes through faith in Jesus. Explain how sin destroys our relationship with God, and we are under His judgment. Tell kids that Jesus’ blood washes away our sin and brings us to God where we experience forgiveness and life with Him.

(Option: Choose a volunteer to read Rom. 5:10.)

**SAY** “Even though Peter had sinned against Jesus, he couldn’t wait to get to Him. What does this tell us about how we can come to God after we’ve sinned?”

Discuss how our sin is an offense to God but He doesn’t turn us away. Remind kids that God calls all people to come to Him to repent of sins and find forgiveness. Explain that through Jesus we can freely come to God and find forgiveness from all our sin.

(Option: Choose a volunteer to read Heb. 4:16.)

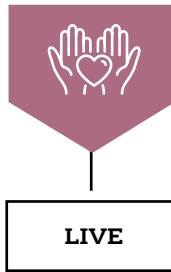
**SAY** “What does it mean to be fishers of men?”

Help kids understand that being a fisher of men means we are going into the world to make disciples of Jesus. Remind kids that Jesus has called every Christians to share the gospel with others. Discuss how the gospel is like a “net” we cast out and trust that God’s power through His Spirit will draw hearts to believe in Jesus.

(Option: Choose a volunteer to read Matt. 28:18-20.)

Transition from **LOVE** to **LIVE**





## THE MISSION OF THE GOSPEL

### **LIVE** the Mission

#### **1 ACTIVITY CHOICE** (10 minutes)

##### ☐ **OPTION 1: CITYSCAPE CRAFT**



Provide each kid with a paper towel, watercolor paint, water, paintbrushes, black construction paper, scissors, and glue. Lead kids to paint the paper towels with watercolor paint using lots of water to create “drip” effects.

Lead kids to cut out four strips of black construction paper to create a frame around their paper towel. Tell kids to glue the strips to the paper towel. Then direct kids to cut out strips of varying lengths to create a skyline on the bottom third of the paper towel. Lead kids to glue the strips across the bottom third of the paper towel. Remind kids that Denver is a large city.

**SAY** “ You can use your cityscapes to remind you to pray for the people of Denver who do not know Jesus. Remember to also pray for the church planters in Denver who are sharing the gospel with unbelievers.

##### ☐ **OPTION 2: KNOW THE LORD**



Form kids into six groups and provide each group with a Bible. Assign each group one of the following Bible verses: John 1:18; Jeremiah 31:34; Hosea 2:19-20; Psalm 98:2; Isaiah 45:3-6; Ezekiel 34:30-31.

Direct groups to look up their Bible verse and discuss how it teaches us that God wants us to know Him. After a few minutes, invite groups to share with the rest of the kids how their verse helps us know God wants us to know Him.

**SAY** “ **We can know God wants us to know Him because He has revealed Himself through His Word.** Throughout history, God has spoken through His prophets so people would know Him. He sent His Son, Jesus, so we can know Him. And He has given us the Bible so we can know Him. To know and love God is why we were created. Just as Peter was called to tell others the way for them to know God, we can share the gospel so others can know God and believe in Jesus. ”

#### **2 JOURNAL AND PRAYER** (5 minutes)

Distribute journal pages and pencils. Guide kids to think about and answer the questions listed on the page. As kids journal, invite them to share their ideas.

- What does this story teach me about God or the gospel?
- What does the story teach me about myself?
- Are there any commands in this story to obey? How are they for God’s glory and my good?
- Are there promises in this story to remember? How do they help me trust and love God?
- How does this story help me to live on mission better?

Review the gospel and encourage kids to speak with you or another teacher if they have questions. Then pray, asking God to use us as part of His plan to help others know Him. As time allows, lead kids to complete “Forgiveness” on the activity page.



JOURNAL PAGE

1. What does this story teach me about God or the gospel?
2. What does this story teach me about myself?
3. Are there any commands in this story to obey? How are they for God's glory and my good?
4. Are there any promises in this story to remember? How do they help me trust and love God?
5. How does this story help me to live on mission better?



Unit 28 • Session 3

## JESUS FORGAVE PETER

John 21

**HOW DO WE KNOW THAT GOD WANTS US TO KNOW HIM?  
WE CAN KNOW THAT GOD WANTS US TO KNOW HIM BECAUSE HE HAS  
REVEALED HIMSELF THROUGH HIS WORD.**

Peter and the other disciples got into a boat to go fishing. They spent all night on the water, but they did not catch any fish. The next morning, Jesus stood on the shore, but they did not recognize Him. Jesus said, "Men, you don't have any fish, do you?"

"No," they answered.

"Put your net in the water, and you will catch some fish," Jesus said. The disciples did what Jesus said. So many fish were in their net.

One of the disciples said to Peter, "It is the Lord!"

The disciples saw bread and a charcoal fire with fish on it. "Bring some of the fish you've caught," Jesus said. So Peter pulled the net ashore. It was full of large fish—153 of them!

"Come and have breakfast," Jesus said.

Jesus turned to Peter. "Do you love Me more than these?" He asked.

"Yes, Lord," Peter said. "You know that I love You."

"Feed My lambs," Jesus told him.

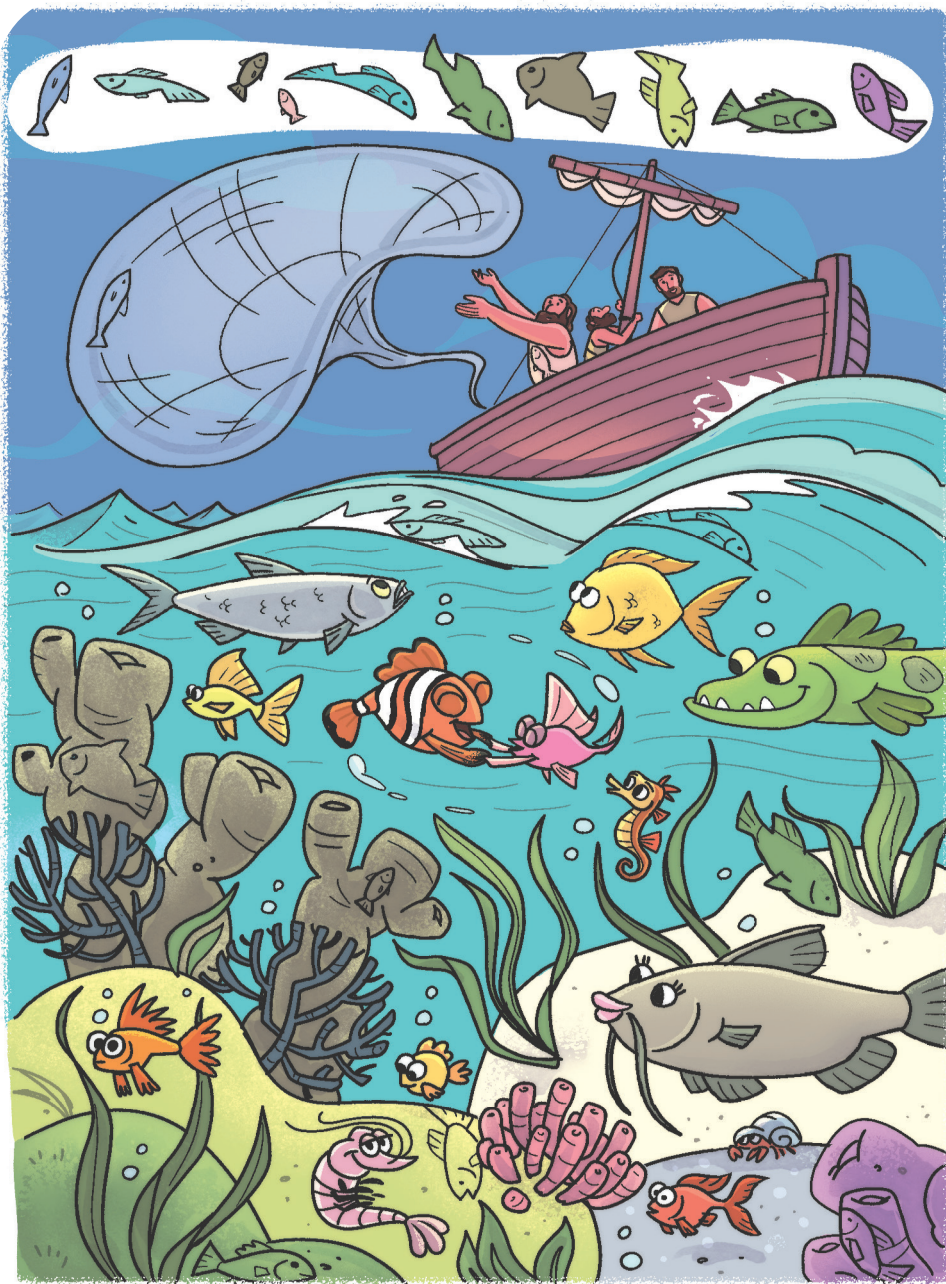
Jesus asked Peter a third time, "Do you love Me?"

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"Feed My sheep," Jesus said. Then Jesus said to him, "Follow Me!"

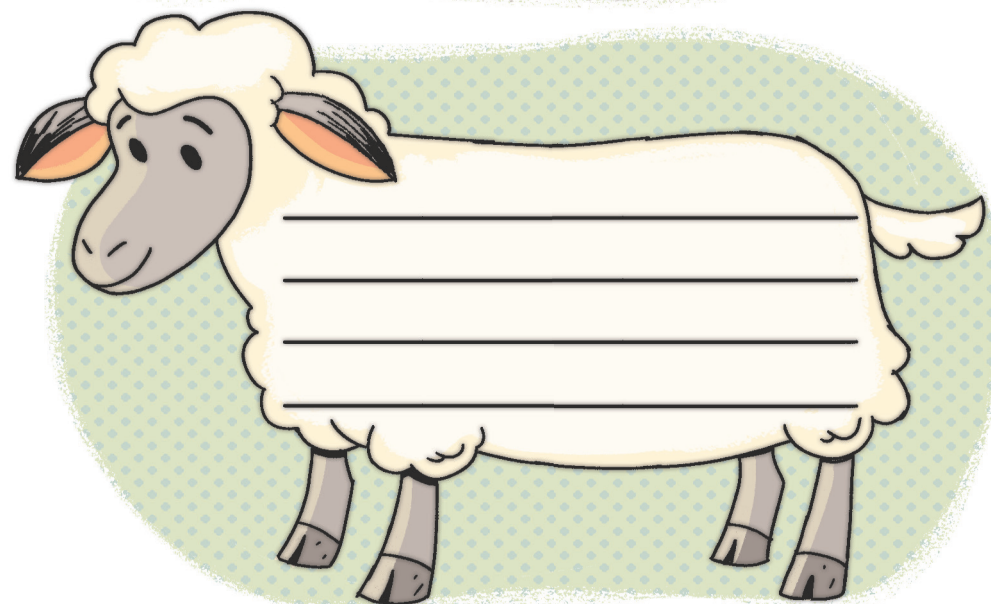
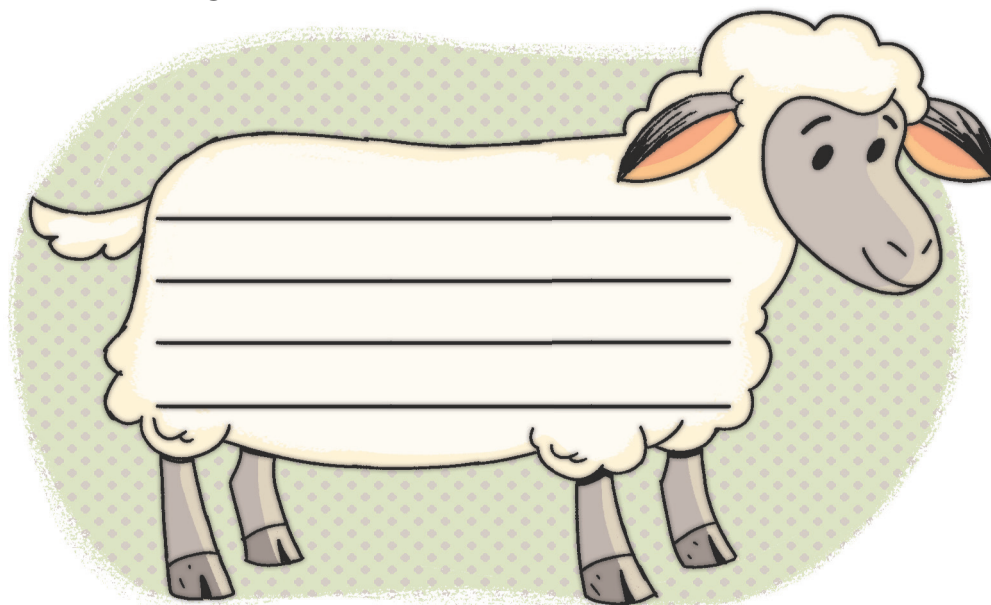
**Christ Connection:** The disciples had turned away from Jesus when He was arrested, but Jesus still wanted to use them in God's plan—as fishers of men who would tell people the good news about Jesus. Jesus is the Lord who forgives us and makes things right again.





**Find the Fish** | Find and circle all 10 hidden fish.

**Forgiveness** | On one sheep, write how God has shown you forgiveness. Then on the other sheep, write how you can show forgiveness to others.



NAME: \_\_\_\_\_



the **GOSPEL** PROJECT

## Jesus Forgave Peter

### BIBLE STORY SUMMARY:

- Jesus appeared to the disciples a third time and performed a miracle by helping them catch a net full of fish—153 of them!
- Peter recognized Jesus and swam to shore. Jesus ate breakfast with His disciples.
- Jesus asked Peter three times if he loved Him. Jesus told Peter to feed His sheep.

### CHRIST CONNECTION:

The disciples had turned away from Jesus when He was arrested, but Jesus still wanted to use them in God's plan—as fishers of men who would tell people the good news about Jesus. Jesus is the Lord who forgives us and makes things right again.

**KEY PASSAGE:** John 17:3

### BIG PICTURE QUESTION:

How do we know that God wants us to know Him? We can know that God wants us to know Him because He has revealed Himself through His Word.

