

LESSON 4

PETER AND JOHN BEFORE THE SANHEDRIN

LESSON AT A GLANCE

WONDER TRUTH: The Holy Spirit Helps Us Be Bold

SCRIPTURE: Acts 3–4

GOD'S BIG STORY: God works miraculously through Peter and John, healing a man who couldn't walk. After hearing about the miracle, the Jewish authorities question Peter and John, who respond with boldness!

WORD OF WONDER: The Holy Spirit gives us power. —from Acts 1:8

FOUNDATION BUILDING BLOCKS

WHO?

Peter and John were two of Jesus' disciples, and they had been with Jesus and seen Him heal many people. The high priests who questioned them oversaw the temple and had rejected Jesus as God's Messiah.

WHAT?

The man who was unable to walk had a congenital disease which prevented him from earning a living, and thus, begging was his only way to survive. By healing him through Peter and John, God performed a miracle that was impossible to ignore.

WHERE?

The temple was in the city of Jerusalem. It had inner and outer gates. Many people passed by these gates, and by begging near a gate, the man who couldn't walk became known to those who passed on their way to pray.

WHEN?

This story occurs after the events of Pentecost, when God first sent His Spirit to fill the followers of Jesus in Jerusalem. Peter was confident and acted boldly because he saw that God was growing the fellowship of early Christians and empowering them to spread the gospel.

CONNECTING TO GOD'S BIG STORY

For centuries, Jews worshiped God in the Jerusalem temple, rebuilt when the Jewish exiles returned from Babylon (Ezra 1–6). Peter and John, faithful Jews, continued praying there, knowing Jesus was the promised Messiah. They shared this good news with everyone they met!

Curiosity

Play Stations

Greet the kids warmly and briefly explain the play stations to them. Invite them to play at any of the stations.

Welcome to church! While we're getting ready to start, you can play at any of these stations to help you get ready for our lesson today. Do you have any ideas about what we'll be learning today?

Play Station: Post Office

Set up: Set out various boxes, paper, and envelopes. Set out coloring utensils, stickers, and stamps and ink. If you have a toy mailbox or want to make one out of cardboard, you can set it up as well.

Play: Let the kids stack the boxes and draw on the sheets of paper. They can put the stamps on the sheets. Help kids fold the sheets and put them in the boxes or envelopes with stickers on the outside. If you have a mailbox, they can put the boxes and letters in it.

Play Station: Telephone

Set up: Before kids arrive, poke a hole in the bottom of each paper cup. Cut yarn pieces that are about 2'–3' in length. Thread ends of yarn through a pair of cups and tie off each end, so it stays inside the cup. Set out several telephones at the station. Optional: If you have toy microphones or a child-friendly megaphone (with volume turned down), you can set those out as well.

Play: Encourage kids to whisper and then speak louder in the cups to each other, and encourage them to take turns listening and speaking to one another. If you have a toy microphone or megaphone, they can put on performances for one another or sing songs.

Play Station: Peter and John Before the Sanhedrin Coloring Sheet

Set up: Ahead of time, print one copy per kid of the coloring sheet and set out coloring utensils.

Play: Let the kids color the sheet. Kids also could turn the paper over and draw a picture using bright, bold colors.

Faith

Game: Get the Message Across!

Spread out the carpet squares or plastic floor spots across the room to form a path from one end of the room to the other. Try to have the spots close together so kids can make it across. Before the game begins, have a leader stand at one end of the room. Then gather everyone else at the other end of the room.

In this game, we're going to have to be very bold and courageous! We're safe where we're standing now, but we're going to pretend that the rest of the floor across the room is lava! We can't step in that! But we have a very important message to get across to (name the leader at the other end of the room)! Can anyone guess what that message is? Allow kids to guess. Our message is that Jesus loves (name the leader). So we must get that message across!

Do you see all these squares (or spots) on the floor? Point out the squares/spots. Those are big rocks that we can step on and be safe, but we can't touch the floor! We'll go one at a time. When it's your turn, try to step only on these big rocks. If you make it across, then you can say, "Jesus loves you!" Are you ready?

Let each kid have a turn. If a kid steps onto the floor instead of the squares or spots, let her go back and try again. Have some grace and don't call out kids too quickly or too often if they accidentally step on the floor. You may also need to remind them what their message is if they forget

Leader Tip: If you have kids who might struggle to get across on their own, consider making a leader's or another kid's shoes "special lava-proof shoes" and allow them to help. Kids could even take turns being the one who is the helper and the one who goes across to say the message.

Identity

Responding in Worship: Share Your Faith

Jesus has promised that the Holy Spirit will be with us. The Holy Spirit helps us be brave so we can tell other people about Jesus too.

Who can you tell about Jesus this week? Allow kids time to respond. If they struggle to think of someone, offer suggestions of people around them, like brothers and sisters, teachers, babysitters, grandparents, friends, etc.

When you tell that person about Jesus, what can you say to them? Allow kids time to respond. Help them think of specific things they could say things like “Jesus is your friend, and He’s always with you,” or “Jesus loves you.”

Today we’re going to draw someone we’ve thought about, someone we can tell about Jesus’ love for them. When we go home, this drawing can remind us to pray for God to help us be bold, so we can tell this person about Jesus.

Give each kid a sheet of paper. Set out coloring utensils. As kids are drawing, ask them who they’re drawing and encourage them. You can also help them think of simple ways to share Jesus’ love with that person.

When kids have finished their drawings, encourage them to take their pictures home to remind them to talk to the person they drew about Jesus. Remind them that they can also pray for that person and pray for the Holy Spirit’s help as they share God’s love with that person.

Leader Tip: Before the lesson, draw your own picture of someone ahead of time, so you can show kids an example.

Prayer and Blessing

Let’s talk to God. When I say, “share,” you can put your hands up to your mouth like you’re shouting something to someone. When I say, “bold,” you can stand up straight like you aren’t afraid of anything. Let’s practice! Say the words “share” and “bold” several times, showing kids which motions to do.

God, thank You for giving us Your Holy Spirit to help us be bold (stand up straight) so we can share (hands to your mouth) Your good news. Help us be bold (stand up straight) and to share (hands to your mouth) about Jesus with people around us. In Jesus’ name, Amen.

Encourage the kids to hold their hands out in front of them, with palms up, as if their hands are open to receive something. Tell them to listen and receive the blessing as you speak it over them.

Blessing: When we follow Jesus, we have the Holy Spirit in us and with us! May you always trust the Holy Spirit to help you speak the truth, do the right thing, and trust God. May the Holy Spirit help you be bold!