

WEEK 1

GOD RESTORES RELATIONSHIPS

GOD RESTORES OUR RELATIONSHIP WITH HIM

ELEMENTARY LESSON GUIDE

THE FOUR KEYS . . .

KEY VERSE

God is faithful, by whom you were called into the fellowship of his Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord. 1 Corinthians 1:9

KEY IDEAS

1. Our sin separates us from God.
2. Jesus is the way to the Father.
3. Repentance restores fellowship with God.

KEY PASSAGE

Luke 22:54-62, John 21:15-19

KEY PRINCIPLES



EVERY CHILD SHOULD KNOW . . .

sin separates us from God, but God desires to have fellowship with us and provided Jesus as our way to salvation.



EVERY CHILD SHOULD FEEL . . .

loved by God who would pay the price for our sin so that we might be given life in Him.



EVERY CHILD SHOULD BE ABLE TO . . .

recognize that sin has consequences not only in this life, but also in eternity if we are not restored to fellowship with God through faith in Jesus.



EVERY CHILD SHOULD WANT . . .

to repent of sin and trust in Jesus for salvation.

INTRODUCTION

Peter was one of Jesus's most devoted disciples. Though he believed Jesus was the Messiah, in Luke 22 when Jesus is about to be crucified, we see Peter respond in fear by rejecting Jesus publicly. He denied even knowing who Jesus was. Peter surely wrestled with guilt after this happened, knowing he had just denied the Savior of the world. Would Jesus still love him? Would he still be accepted after messing up? After Jesus's resurrection, He sees Peter again and reminds him how much he is loved. Jesus didn't just leave Peter to feel shame, but by asking him three times to tell Jesus that he loved him, it was like cancelling out each of his three denials. He was restoring Peter by reminding him who he was called to be. He wasn't the guy that messed up, he was the man who would lead others to know and follow Jesus, the man who would build the Church! Jesus wants to remind us of who we are, too. When we place our faith in Him, we are restored. Jesus wants to remind us that even when we mess up, our identity is in Him and who He is making us to be, not who we once were.

OPENING ILLUSTRATION

Begin class by bringing in a lamp. Turn on the lamp and place it on the table with the shade off. Allow the kids to take turns placing their hands near but not on the lightbulb. Ask if they can feel the warmth from the glow coming off the lightbulb. Explain that this is what it is like when we are in the presence of God. We can feel the warmth of His presence and see the light of His goodness. Place the shade back on the lamp and explain that the lamp shade is like our sin. It separates us from God. God is still there, but we cannot see or feel His presence as much as before. The lamp shade, like our sin, separates us from the source of warmth and goodness. As Christians, if we have placed our faith in Christ, we have the Holy Spirit always and cannot lose our salvation, but we can still choose to act rebellious and sinful, putting the lampshade back on and separating ourselves from the love, joy, and peace of the Holy Spirit.

KEY IDEAS

Read Luke 22:54-62 and John 21:15-19. Then use the following points for guided discussion.

- Our sin separates us from God.
 - How does sin separate us from God? Sin is rebellion, or actively going against God and His ways. So, it makes sense that when we are going against something, we are separate from it. As sinners without Christ, we are separated from God because we have not placed our faith and trust in Him for salvation. And even as Christians who have trusted in Him, we can choose to separate ourselves from the presence of God in our lives by actively choosing sin instead of obedience. Though God will never leave us, the comfort of His presence can feel far away when we are choosing to sin. Just like when Peter sinned, even though He believed in Jesus, he felt shame and felt far away from God. But Jesus lovingly reminded him who he was.
- Jesus is the way to the Father.
 - How do we know Jesus is the only way to God? Because sin must be paid for and the cost of sin is death, either our sin debt is paid for by Jesus's death or by our own. The Bible says we are dead in our trespasses (sins) apart from Jesus, but in Jesus there is eternal life. When we place our faith in Him for the forgiveness of our sin, He remembers it no more and we are restored to fellowship with God our Heavenly Father. (Eph. 2:1, 4:18, Rom. 6:23, Ps. 103:12)
- Repentance restores fellowship with God.
 - How do we repent? Repent means to "turn away". If we are walking one direction (toward sin), we must choose to turn away from it and go the completely opposite direction (toward God). We must first acknowledge our sin and confess it to the Lord, and He will forgive! (Psalm 32:5)

Activity

Pass out blank sheets of paper and ask the class to brainstorm an activity they would love to do for God. Have each student write, "A New Beginning" at the top of the paper and then draw a picture of their chosen activity. Explain that this creative project will remind us to keep looking forward as God's servants instead of dwelling on our past failures. Take it home and put it somewhere to remind you of Peter's story and that God is about new beginnings! He reminds us of who we are in Him, so that we don't dwell on the guilt and shame of our past sins once we have repented and been forgiven.

Prayer

Thank God that He doesn't leave us without hope. Thank Him that He offers new life in Jesus when we place our faith in Him. Ask God to help you remember what He has done for you and to help you trust in Him for salvation and a new beginning.

FAMILY DEVOTIONAL

ACTIVITY

Memorize the key verse 1 Corinthians 1:9.

Spend time as a family thinking about how God offers us new life and a new beginning in Him. Revisit Peter's story from this week's lesson and think about how Jesus reminded Peter of who he was...forgiven.

Once Jesus forgave Peter, he gave him a mission..."feed My sheep". Jesus knew Peter would have a big part to play in building His church. Just like Peter, it's our job to share the gospel and offer forgiveness to others who have wronged us.

Using the discussion questions below, start considering who in your life you can offer a new beginning to.

DISCUSSION

- Think of a time recently when someone has hurt you. How did you respond?
- How has Jesus shown us love and grace when we hurt Him? (Romans 5:8)
- How can you offer forgiveness and a new beginning to that person?

PRAYER

Spend time acknowledging your sin and confessing it to God. Thank God that He offers new beginnings when we repent and ask for His forgiveness. Thank Him for loving you enough to pay your sin debt and offer you a new life. Ask Him to help you believe, trust, and obey Him more each day.