

LESSON PLAN

LAST FISHING TRIP

John 21:1-25

Lesson Memory Verse: John 14:15 - "If you love Me, keep my commandments."

Lesson Aim: Teach children to show their love for Jesus by obeying His commands.

Lesson Plan: Use the KEY – HE – SEE – WE – BE plan (explained in the Introductory Notes).

KEY (for Attention): Mothers want to be loved by their children. Ask your students what they think is the best way to show their mothers that they love them. They may say that the best way to love one's mother is to give her a gift, or to hug her, or to tell her, "I love you," but none of these is the best way. The best way is to obey her. They should obey their mothers every day.

HE (for Authority): If we show our love to mothers by obeying them, then it is also true that we show our love to Jesus by obeying Him. Today's Bible memory verse tells us that Jesus Christ expects us to obey Him if we love Him. Read John 14:15. "Commandments" are the orders that Jesus wants us to obey. What are His commandments? One is found in John 15:12. Can you find it in your Bible? Yes, we are to love one another as Jesus loved us. That is a big command. How did Jesus show His love to us? Yes, He died for us. That means we need to be willing to make a sacrifice to show our love to others. Another commandment is to love God (Father, Son and Holy Spirit) with all our heart, soul, mind and strength (Mk 12:30). Jesus' commands come from His Father (John 14:24).

SEE (for Apperception) and WE (for Application): PLEASE do not read these comments until you have read the Scripture for this lesson. First let the Holy Spirit teach you directly from His Word. In our lesson today we will see how Jesus taught Peter to love Him.

I. Peter Failing - John 21:1-3

A. Jesus had called Peter and the other disciples who had been fishermen, to leave their nets and their boats to follow Him. He promised to make them fishers of men (Jn 4:19; Lk 5:10-11).

B. After Jesus' resurrection Peter decided to go back to fishing. By his leadership he took six other disciples with him (Jn 21:2-3). Maybe they forgot or did not think it was so important to stay away from fishing, but when they did this, they were disobeying Jesus' earlier command to follow Him (Lk 9:23).

C. The fishermen worked all night and failed to catch anything (21:3). How could they succeed when they were disobeying the Lord?

WE: We also will fail when we disobey the Lord. We may not think it is so important to obey all of His commands, but it is important to Him. Our obedience will prove that we really love Him.

II. Peter Fishing - John 21:4-11

A. Jesus went to the place where the disciples were fishing (21:4). Jesus knew where His disciples were and what they were doing, but they did not know Who He was.

B. Jesus asked His disciples if they had caught anything (21:5). He knew that they had not, but it was important that they admit their failure to catch any fish. A fisherman hates to admit that he has caught nothing for all of his efforts. It is much more pleasant to boast about a great catch of fish.

C. Jesus told them to cast their net on the right side of the ship, and when they obeyed, they caught so many fish that they could not lift them into the boat (21:6).

D. Suddenly John realized that it was Jesus on the shore and he told Peter. When Peter heard that, he did not wait, but dove into the sea and swam to Jesus, while the others followed in a little ship (21:7-8). Peter showed that he really loved Jesus, but the best way that he could have shown his love to Jesus was to obey Him.

E. Jesus was patient with Peter who was the leader of the other disciples. He had prepared a good breakfast for His hungry disciples, but He told Peter to bring the fish that they had caught. Peter drew the net to shore and counted the fish. It was a great catch of fish; there were 153 fish in the net (21:9-11).

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WE: We can learn an important lesson from this fishing trip that Peter organized: a whole night of disobedience to the Lord will bring us failure, but a few minutes of obedience will give us great success.

III. Peter Feeding - John 21:12-14

A. Jesus called the hungry fishermen to come and eat of the food He had prepared for them (21:12). Jesus showed His love for them by feeding their hungry stomachs.

B. This was the third time that Jesus showed His disciples that He truly was alive after His death on the cross (21:13-14).

WE: We can be certain that Jesus arose from the dead after Jesus appeared so many times to His disciples and others in different places. Jesus is alive and He will take care of all our needs, too. The greatest need that we have is our spiritual need for salvation, but He will take care of our physical needs as well. He is a great and good Savior to all who will receive Him into their lives.

IV. Peter Feeling - John 21:15-17

A. Peter was feeling very good until Jesus asked him, "Do you love Me more than these?" Maybe Jesus was referring to the nets and boats and fish which had gotten hold of his heart once more. Or, Jesus may have had the other disciples in mind: "Do you love Me more than these other disciples?" Before Jesus was crucified, Peter had proudly said, "Though all men shall be offended because of You, yet will I never be offended" (Mt 26:33). But Peter denied the Lord three times later that very night while the other disciples did not deny Him.

B. Jesus asked Peter three times whether or not he loved Him. Peter had to publicly confess three times that he loved Jesus – one for each time that he had publicly denied the Lord. It took humility for Peter to do this, but it was necessary if he was ever going to learn to obey the Lord. He would never be able to feed the Lord's lambs and sheep (the young and old Christians) if he was too proud to tell everyone that he loved Jesus.

WE: How do we feel about Jesus? Do we love Him? If we do, we need to obey Him and let others know that we love Him. In fact, we should be ready to let the whole world know that we love Him. Also, we must not forget to tell the Lord that we love Him and to show it by obeying Him.

V. Peter Following - John 21:18-25

A. Jesus told Peter that someday he would show his love for Him by dying on a cross as a servant for Him (21:18-19).

B. Jesus told Peter to follow Him two times (21:19, 22). Peter had to obey this command if he really loved the Lord Jesus Christ.

WE: Will we follow the Lord Jesus even if our friends do not? We need to follow Him and obey Him until we die. This is how we can show our love to Him.

BE (for Action): Have the children pray that they might not be like Peter when he denied the Lord, but to be like him when he obeyed the Lord.