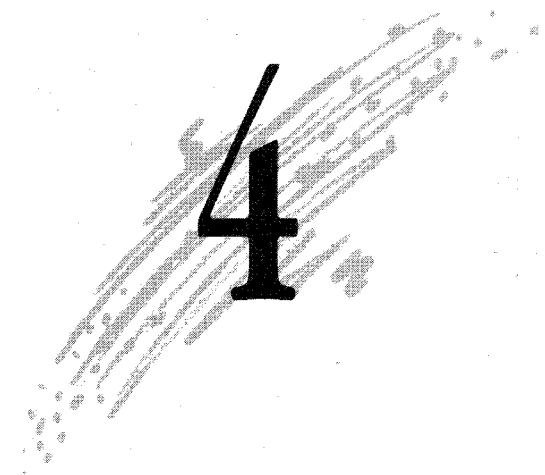


# More Like Jesus



## LESSON AIM

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To help kids see that ★ Jesus wants us to be like him.

## OBJECTIVES

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Kids will

- reproduce their partners' drawings without seeing them;
- learn how Peter failed, then grew in faith;
- experience "circuit training" in ways to mature in faith; and
- make a commitment to be more like Jesus.

## BIBLE BASIS

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### Luke 22:31-34, 54-62

These passages present the poignant story of Peter's intention to be loyal to Jesus even to the point of death, and his miserable failure to carry out those intentions.

Jesus knew Peter's shortcomings and twice prophesied clearly about Satan's imminent attack and Peter's failure. In between the negative prophecies, Jesus offered Peter the reassurance that because of Jesus' own prayers, Peter wouldn't completely fail. And Jesus encouraged Peter to be strong and help the other disciples when Peter returned from his self-imposed exile.

Jesus saw all Peter's shortcomings—and his potential. He showed deep compassion and love for Peter by forgiving him and gently restoring him before the acts of denial even took place.

## YOU'LL NEED

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- pencils
- paper
- a cassette tape of the Bible story and a cassette player (optional)
- photocopies of the "Cross Training" handout (p. 42)
- scissors
- glue sticks or tape
- a whistle (optional)
- a Bible

## Acts 3:1-10; 4:1-20

Can this healer and fearless spokesman for Christ be the same coward who denied his Lord three times? What a transformation! How wonderfully encouraging to see what the power of God can do with a far-from-perfect person.

## UNDERSTANDING YOUR KIDS

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Peter is a hero kids can identify with. He's the first one to speak and the last one to think. He overestimates his abilities. He flounders in the waves. He makes big promises he can't keep. He desperately wants to succeed but often falls short.

Kids experience all these feelings. They want to be grown up. They want to show they're responsible and make their own decisions. But good intentions often end in disappointment or failure. Maturity doesn't happen overnight—it comes through painful struggles similar to the ones Peter experienced. This lesson will help you show your kids that God's love for them is greater than any failure could ever be.

Peter's grand flops are followed by grander miracles. God completely transforms Peter's character and makes him a key leader of the church in Jerusalem. Kids need to see that God can do the same with them. With God in charge of their lives, each embarrassment or failure can become a steppingstone to being more like Christ.

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## The Lesson

### ATTENTION GRABBER

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#### Partner Pictures

Distribute pencils and paper. Have kids find partners and sit back to back.

**Say: The younger partner in your pair will draw a simple picture of anything—flowers, a house, trees, or mountains. As the younger partner draws, he or she will explain each step of the drawing without saying what the drawing is. The older partner will listen and try to draw the same picture. You'll have about two minutes. Ready? Start drawing.**

Call time after two minutes. Have partners take turns showing their pairs of pictures to the class. Give everyone a

round of applause for their good efforts. Then ask:

● **What did you think when you first compared your picture to your partner's picture?** (I didn't think they looked the same at all; they looked sort of the same.)

● **What was it like trying to match your partner's picture without being able to see it?** (Frustrating; kind of fun.)

● **What was it like trying to explain what you were drawing?** (I couldn't explain it very well; I didn't know how to tell exactly what I was drawing.)

● **What could we change to make this activity easier?** (We could draw side by side instead of back to back so that both partners could see each other's drawing.)

Say: **Let's try it again. I'll give you each another sheet of paper. This time, sit side by side. The older partner gets to draw this time, and the younger partner will copy the drawing. You've got two more minutes. Go!**

Call time after two minutes. Then have partners lay both sets of drawings in front of them. Ask:

● **Why does the second set of drawings match so much better?** (Because we could see what our partners were drawing.)

Say: **Did you know that's one reason Jesus came to earth? Listen while I explain. God wanted people to be loving, just as God is loving. So God told Moses and other Old Testament prophets how he wanted people to live. But that was hard for people—just like drawing a picture from your partner's instructions was hard.**

Then Jesus came to earth to *show* us how to live. Jesus was an example we could see and understand, just as you could see your partner's drawing when you sat side by side. ★ Jesus wants us to be like him. Today we're going to talk about how we can be like Jesus.

## TEACHER TIP

**A**s kids are drawing, wander around and give encouragement. You may want to help younger children give oral instructions to their partners.

## BIBLE STUDY

**The Problem With Peter (Luke 22:31-34, 54-62; Acts 3:1-10; 4:1-20)**

Say: **Our Bible story today is about one of Jesus' closest friends. Jesus had twelve disciples, but three were especially close friends—Peter, James, and John. Jesus took those three friends with him sometimes when he left the rest of the disciples behind. So you'd think that Peter would truly understand how to be like Jesus.**

## TEACHER TIP

Consider asking a man who reads expressively to record "Peter's Diary" on a cassette tape you can play in class.

## TEACHER TIP

You might want to prime the discussion with a story from your own life about when you let someone down or felt like a failure.

Well, sometimes Peter did really well, and sometimes he fell flat on his face. Today we're going to get to know Peter better by taking a peek into what his diary might have been like. Ask:

- **How many of you keep a diary? What kinds of things do you write in it?** (Things that happen to me; what I do with my friends; what I pray about.)

Say: **Let's listen to what Peter might have written in his diary during the week of Jesus' death and resurrection.**

Read aloud the "Friday Evening" section of "Peter's Diary," then pause and ask:

- **Based on the story you just heard, what words would you use to describe Peter?** (A failure; a coward; he brags; he doesn't keep his promises; he disappoints his friends.)

- **How do you think Jesus felt about Peter at this point?** (Jesus still loved him; Jesus was disappointed in him; he hurt Jesus' feelings; Jesus cared about him and prayed for him.)

- **If you had been in Peter's shoes, what would you have done when the soldiers and priests came to arrest Jesus?** (I would have run away; I would have tried to fight.)

- **Who can tell about a time when you felt like Peter must have felt after he said he didn't know Jesus?** (When I broke my mom's favorite vase; when I told on one of my friends to get back at him.)

Say: **All of us have times when we fall flat on our faces. We're not perfect. But God loves us anyway. Sometimes God even uses our failures to teach us how to be more like Jesus. Let's listen to the section of Peter's imaginary diary titled "Two Months Later."**

Read aloud the last segment of the Bible story, then ask:

- **What words would you use to describe Peter now?** (Strong; brave; a miracle worker; like Jesus.)

- **Why is this Peter so much different?** (Jesus forgave him; God's Holy Spirit helped him; he had more faith because Jesus rose from the dead.)

Say: **The wonderful thing about God is that he never gives up on us. When we give our lives to God, we can trust God to make us more and more like Jesus. That doesn't mean we'll be perfect, but it does mean we'll get better all the time. And that makes Jesus happy because ★ Jesus wants us to be like him.**

## Peter's Diary

### Friday Evening

The last 24 hours have been the most terrible of my whole life. I'm so confused. It started when we ate the Passover meal with Jesus. He was quiet and sad. He told us that he would soon suffer and go away from us. Then he told me that I would be tested and that he had prayed that I wouldn't lose my faith.

I said, "Jesus, I would go to prison with you and even die with you." But Jesus answered, "Before the rooster crows, you'll say three times that you don't know me."

I couldn't believe it. I would never do anything like that—at least I didn't think I would.

After dinner we left the city and went out to the Mount of Olives. Jesus went off to pray and asked us to pray with him. But we all fell asleep.

Then, before we knew it, Jesus was waking us up. Soldiers and priests came and arrested Jesus. I grabbed my sword and cut off the ear of one of the servants. But Jesus told me to put my sword away. Then he healed the servant's ear.

As they led Jesus away, we all scattered. I followed Jesus at a distance. They took him to the house of the high priest. Soldiers started a fire in the middle of the courtyard. I stood near the fire to keep warm. I could see what they were doing to Jesus—it was awful. They beat him and made fun of him. I didn't know what to do.

A servant girl pointed to me and said, "This man was with Jesus."

"I don't even know him," I replied.

Then another person said, "You're one of his disciples."

"No, I'm not!" I replied. I was afraid that the soldiers would arrest me, too.

About an hour later, another man said, "You were with Jesus—you're from Galilee."

"I don't know what you're talking about!" I shouted.

Just then a rooster crowed. Jesus turned his head and looked at me. His eyes were so sad. I ran away into the darkness and cried for the rest of the night.

Today they crucified him. Jesus is dead. My life is in pieces.

### Two Months Later

So much has happened since that terrible Friday when Jesus died. He rose again on Sunday and appeared to us several times. He forgave me for denying him and asked me to help take care of his people.

Then one day as we were talking together on a mountaintop, Jesus rose into the sky. Angels told us Jesus would come again someday.

We went back to Jerusalem to pray for the Holy Spirit Jesus had promised. As we were praying together, the Holy Spirit filled the room. We went out and started preaching to the people in Jerusalem. Many people believed.

One day John and I went to the temple to pray. A man who couldn't walk asked us for money. I said to the man, "I don't have any silver or gold, but I do have something else I can give you. By the power of Jesus Christ from Nazareth, stand up and walk!" And he did.

That attracted a big crowd of people, so I told them about Jesus. The priests got really angry—the same priests who had Jesus killed. So they dragged us off to court and told us not to preach about Jesus anymore.

But we said, "Should we obey you or God? We cannot keep quiet. We must speak about what we have seen and heard."

## LIFE APPLICATION

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### Cross Training

Say: Let's have some fun finding out how we can be more like Jesus. Can anyone explain what cross training is? In cross training you do some exercises to make your heart and lungs healthy and other exercises to strengthen your muscles. Today we're going to do a different kind of cross training. Our cross training will show us how to be more like Jesus. We'll have four different stations. At each station you'll learn one way to be more like Jesus.

Distribute photocopies of the "Cross Training" handout (p. 42), scissors, and glue sticks or tape. Demonstrate how to fold on the dotted lines and cut on the solid lines. Then show kids how to hold the paper the long way, grasp the ends, and push them together. The sections around the slit will push outward to form an eight-page booklet. Glue or tape the top and bottom center so the booklet will stand. Ask:

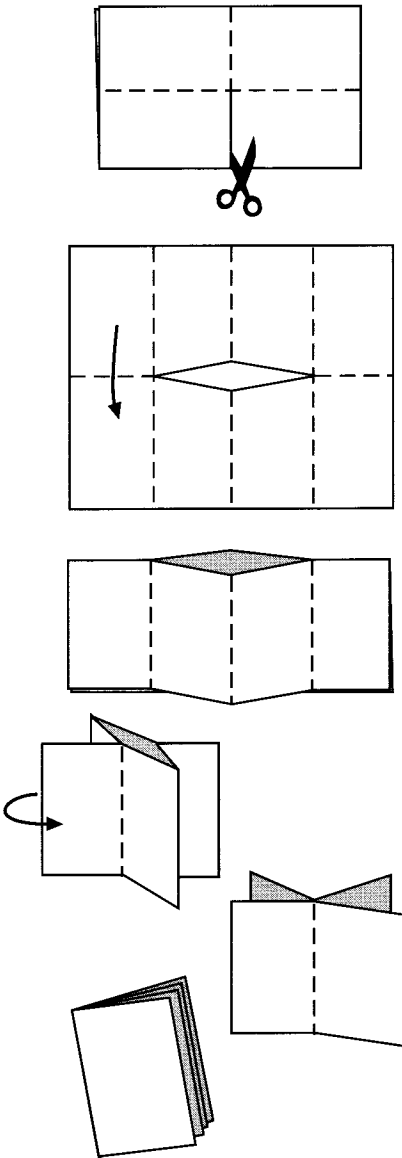
● When you look at our stand-up booklet from the top, what do you see? (A cross.)

Say: Let's see what this cross-training booklet teaches us about how to be like Jesus.

If you have a fairly small class with limited space, you may want to work through the four steps of the cross-training booklet as a whole group.

If you have a large group and plenty of space, consider forming four groups and setting up four stations. Place a Bible at Station 1. Appoint a leader from each group to read and direct the activity at each station. Blow a whistle every two or three minutes and have groups rotate clockwise to the next station.

After kids have worked through all four stations, gather everyone and say: **Good work! Learning to be like Jesus can be fun.**



## COMMITMENT

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### Training Time

Help kids form pairs.

Say: Look at the four panels of the cross-training booklet with your partner. Tell your partner when you'll do each of the things in the booklet this week. Then shake hands to show that you'll carry out your cross-training plan this week.

## CLOSING

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### **Cross Prayer**

Have kids stand in two intersecting lines, forming the shape of a cross. Close in a prayer similar to this one: **Dear Jesus, thank you for being our example. Thank you for being patient with us just as you were patient with Peter. Please help us be more like you every day. Amen.**

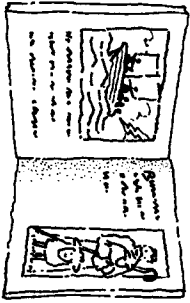
# CROSS TRAINING

## Station 1

Read (or have someone read to you) stories of Jesus' life from Matthew, Mark, Luke, or John. After you read each story, ask yourself these questions:

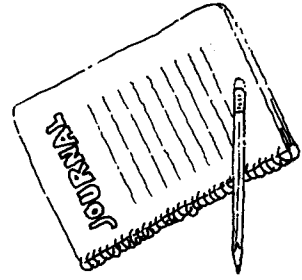
- What is Jesus like in this story?
- What can I do to be like Jesus?

Start with the story in Mark 10:13-16.



## Station 4

When you make a decision, ask, "What would Jesus do?" Keep a journal (in words, pictures, or both) that tells about times you tried to do what Jesus would do. If you're facing a difficult decision, ask others to pray about it with you.



## Station 2

Talk to Jesus every day in prayer. On some days, pray this prayer that Jesus taught his disciples:

"Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors.

And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one." (Matthew 6:9-13, NIV).



## Station 3

Take time to encourage your friends and family. Talk about how you're growing in your faith and becoming more like Jesus. Finish sentences like these:

- (Name of person), I see Jesus in you when ...
- I thank Jesus for you because ...

