

Peter denies Jesus

**Bible verses:**

John 18:15–18, 25–27; 21:15–17; Matthew 26:33–35
Peter says he doesn't know Jesus

**Aim:**

To learn that God uses people who aren't perfect in the Church and in the world

**Today's fruit:**

Kindness



In this session we will discover how God uses imperfect people in the Church and in the world.

Jesus was in serious trouble. The people in charge were looking for a way to catch him out. When Jesus was arrested, Peter, one of his closest followers, pretended he had never met him. Even though he made this terrible mistake, Jesus forgave him and used him to build his Church.

Despite Peter denying Jesus, Jesus showed kindness by accepting him back and gave him a key role in the future of the Church.

Each child will need:

- Orange A4 card, 3cm-wide strip of red card, small piece of yellow card, 1cm-wide strips of coloured paper, glue, scissors, pen/pencil and googly eye stickers
- *Explore It ideas* handout

You will need:

- Today's fruit sign: *Kindness*



Start it

There is a lot of mention of roosters in today's session. In the United Kingdom, an adult male chicken is known as a cockerel. But in the United States an adult male chicken is known as a rooster. Rocky the Rooster in *Chicken Run* is of course American.

Ask:

Who has seen the film *Chicken Run*? What is it about?

Say:

In the film, Rocky the Rooster suddenly arrives in the chicken coop, the area where the chickens live.

Ask:

Do you know what Rocky claims that he can do?

Say:

Rocky the Rooster claims that he can fly. We're going to watch the moment when the chickens discover that, although they have attended all of Rocky's flying lessons, he really cannot fly.

Video

Chicken Run - the truth about Rocky by Aardman Features uploaded by Veggieboy Ultimate (2:46)

Ask:

- How did the chickens feel when they discovered that Rocky had betrayed them?
- Did they ever forgive Rocky? If so, how did Rocky make up for the mistakes he made? (He helps the chickens escape from the farm on a plane they build.)

Say:

Our Bible story today involves a rooster, a cockerel, but it's not the rooster that lets Jesus down. We'll find out later who said they did not know Jesus and what part the cockerel played in the story.



Sing it

Share this month's memory verse together.

Memory verse

'The Lord is my strength and shield.

I trust him, and he helps me.

I am very happy.

And I praise him with my song.'

(Psalm 28:7 ICB)

Say:

In our story today Peter turned his back on Jesus and denied ever knowing him. He did not put his trust in God. We can learn from Peter's mistakes and keep trusting God no matter what. Our song for today reminds us how important it is to place our trust in God.

Song

'I'm trusting you' (Roar VBS group publishing) by Life Tree Kids (3:44)

Tell it

Say:

The main character in our story today is Peter, one of Jesus' followers.

Ask:

What do you know about Peter?

Say:

Peter is one of the most influential Christians in the world. He played a huge part in the Church's existence today. However, there was a time when he wasn't willing to let anyone know that he loved Jesus. So, how did this man go from denying he knew Jesus to building the Church? Let's find out in today's story.

Video

Jesus forgives Peter by Saddleback Kids (5:59)

Watch: 0:00-1:48 'The other disciples vowed the same. [Mumbles] "Yes, us too."'

Ask:

What did you learn about Peter in this part of the clip?

Say:

Peter was called by Jesus to follow him. He loved Jesus, spent time with him and watched him teach the people. He promised that he would do anything for Jesus, including losing his own life.

Read:

'Peter said, "All the other followers may lose their faith because of you. But I will never lose my faith."

'Jesus said, "I tell you the truth. Tonight you will say you don't know me. You will say this three times before the cock crows."

'But Peter said, "I will never say that I don't know you! I will even die with you!" And all the other followers said the same thing.'

(Matthew 26:33-35 *ICB*)

Ask:

How do you think Peter felt when he heard what Jesus had to say about him?

Watch: 1:49-3:35 'Jesus' words flashed through Peter's mind and Peter left the courtyard weeping.'

Ask:

- What did Peter do when the guards tried to arrest Jesus?
- How did Jesus respond?

Say:

Peter went with one of the other followers of Jesus into the high priest's courtyard. He was recognised by a young girl.

Read:

'The girl at the door said to Peter, "Aren't you also one of that man's followers?"

'Peter answered, "No, I am not!"

'It was cold, so the servants and guards had built a fire. They were standing around it and warming themselves. Peter was standing with them, warming himself.'

(John 18:17-18 *ICB*)

Ask:

Do you think it was brave of the young girl to ask Peter a question like this? If so, why?

Say:

Often children are really good at finding the best question to ask, even if the adults around them don't want to hear it. The girl's question caught the attention of the others who were warming their hands.

Read:

'Simon Peter was standing and warming himself. They said to him, "Aren't you one of that man's followers?"

'Peter denied it and said, "No, I am not."

'One of the servants of the high priest was there. This servant was a relative of the man whose ear Peter had cut off. The servant said, "Didn't I see you with him in the garden?"

'Again Peter said it wasn't true. Just then a cockerel crowed.'

(John 18:25-27 *ICB*)

Ask:

- Do you have any sympathy for Peter? If so, why?
- If you were under pressure, or you could get in trouble for being friends with Jesus, what might you do?

Say:

Peter said three times he did not know Jesus. Jesus had told him this would happen, and when the moment came, Peter still denied knowing him.

Ask:

How do you think Peter felt when he realised Jesus' prediction had come true?

Watch: 3:35 to end.

Say:

After he had been raised from the dead, Jesus came to visit the disciples at the beach.

Read:

'When they had finished eating, Jesus said to Simon Peter, "Simon son of John, do you love me more than these?"

'Yes, Lord,' he said, 'you know that I love you.'

'Jesus said, "Feed my lambs."

'Again Jesus said, "Simon son of John, do you love me?"

'He answered, "Yes, Lord, you know that I love you."

'Jesus said, "Take care of my sheep."

'The third time he said to him, "Simon son of John, do you love me?"

Peter was hurt because Jesus asked him the third time, "Do you love me?" He said, "Lord, you know all things; you know that I love you."

'Jesus said, "Feed my sheep."'

(John 21:15-17 NIV)

Ask:

- How many times did Peter deny knowing Jesus?
- How many times did Jesus ask Peter, 'Do you love me?'
- Why do you think Jesus asked Peter three times if he loved him?

Display the *Kindness* sign.

Ask:

What does this story teach us about the kindness of Jesus?

Say:

Jesus had forgiven Peter for denying him; and not only that, he wanted him to have a crucial role in caring for God's people when Jesus had gone. Even though Peter wasn't perfect, Jesus believed in him and knew he could do amazing things for God. Jesus feels the same way about us. We don't need to be perfect; Jesus can use us even when we make mistakes.

Action it

Explain that the children are going to make their own cockerel to remind them of Peter's story. The clip below can be used with the whole group or for the leader's reference.

Video

Easy rooster craft tutorial by pS Craftistic DIY (4:23)



Say:

Every time Peter heard a cockerel crow in the morning, he could have seen it as a reminder of the moment he let Jesus down. Instead, Peter committed his life to following Jesus and became a foundation of the worldwide Church. Every time the cockerel crowed, Peter was reminded that God had forgiven him and was using him to build his Kingdom. Your cockerel is a reminder that God uses imperfect people to do amazing things.



Pray it

Say:

To bring our session to a close, we are going to think about the mistakes we may have made and how God has forgiven us.

Discuss

Discuss with the children how God wants to use them, even though they are not always perfect and may slip up sometimes. Remind them of the story of Peter and the way God uses people who aren't perfect in the Church and in the world.

Play the music clip and ask the children to pay special attention to the words. When the song comes to an end, pray on behalf of the group.

Listen

'God forgave' (Cross Culture Thailand VBS Music Video Group Publishing) by Lifetree Kids (3:55)



Explore it

Remember to send home the *Explore It ideas* for children and families.



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Here are some ideas for you to explore at home.



Bible verses:

John 18:15–18,
25–27; 21:15–17;
Matthew 26:33–35



Aim:

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Today's fruit:

Kindness



Reflect

Think of a time you realised you made a mistake that hurt someone else.

How did you make it right? If you were forgiven, then how did that feel?

Now think of a time when someone hurt you because of a mistake they made.

Were you able to show kindness to them when they said they were sorry? If so, how?

What does Jesus teach us about showing kindness and forgiving those who have let us down?



Share

Watch the clip and have a go at crowing like a cockerel. Ask the people at home to try as well. Who has the best cockerel crow?

Can you crow like a rooster? (YouTube shorts) by J House jr



Memory verse

'The Lord is my strength and shield.

I trust him, and he helps me.

I am very happy.

And I praise him with my song.'

(Psalm 28:7 ICB)



Song for the week

'I'm trusting you' (Roar VBS group publishing) by Life Tree Kids

**LIVING
OUT FAITH**

Kids Alive! Online – salvationarmy.org.uk/kidsalive

Kids Alive! The UK's only weekly Christian comic – is filled with jokes, competitions, Bible-based cartoons and much more... and is now available to read online!

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Tell it

Share a child-friendly version of John 18:15-18, 25-27; 21:15-17; Matthew 26:33-35 or watch the following clip.

God's Story: Peter denies Jesus by Crossroads' Kids Club (2:52)

Sit in a circle and ask the group to share together:

- What did some people try to do when Jesus said he was God's son?

- How many times did Peter pretend he did not know Jesus?
- Jesus knew that Peter would deny knowing him. Which animal reminded Peter of Jesus' words?
- How did Jesus show kindness to Peter even though he had been let down?
- What did Peter do after Jesus had forgiven him?



Sing It

'Great big God!' Vineyard Kids, Vineyard Worship UK and Ireland (2:51)

'Jesus song' by Saddleback Kids (2:45) This song tells us about the amazing thing Jesus did.



Action it

Games and activities to reinforce the Bible passage:

- See if you can cock-a-doodle-doo three times like a cockerel.
- Find a partner and act out the moment when Peter heard the cockerel crow.
- Think of a way that you can show kindness to someone who has made a mistake and wants to try again.
- Draw a picture of a cockerel to remind you that even when we make mistakes, God forgives us.