The Disciples

Lesson 2: Love in Your Obedience

**Lessons in this series:** [1](http://www.teensundayschool.com/330/lesson/i-will-tell-your-name.php) **2**[3](http://www.teensundayschool.com/333/lesson/what-are-you-thinking.php) [4](http://www.teensundayschool.com/339/lesson/dealing-with-doubt.php) [5](http://www.teensundayschool.com/334/lesson/leaving-a-legacy.php)

LESSON OBJECTIVES

Goals

1. To examine the life of one of the most famous disciples, Peter  
2. To illustrate how Peter's life mirrors that of every believer  
3. To inspire students to love God by obeying His commandments

Topics

Apostles, Commandments, Disciple, Following Jesus, Obedience

Scripture Memorization

John 14:15

OPENING PRAYER (5 to 10 minutes)

GROUP BUILDING (15 minutes)

**Pick the Leader (Game)**

Who Is Leading Whom?

Leaders are not always perfect. Sometimes a true leader is hard to find. However, when we allow Jesus to be the Lord of our life, He will never lead us astray.

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| Topics:  Boredom Buster, Choices, Guidance, Icebreaker, Leadership  Materials:  None  Duration:  Approximately 15 minutes | Maze of Leaders |

What you will do:

Arrange the chairs into a large circle and have everyone sit down. Then, have one student volunteer to leave the room until called. While away, the rest of the class selects one person to be the leader.

When the volunteer returns to the room, he or she will find everyone following the leader, but will not know who the leader is. The class tries to notice what the leader is doing and do the same, but without looking directly at the leader so as not to give him or her away. The leader should change actions about every 15 seconds or so. Naturally, the leader should try to change actions when the volunteer is not looking directly at him or her.  
  
Actions can be whatever the leader wishes. Some examples are rubbing eyes, popping zits, coughing violently, slapping face, etc.

When the volunteer discovers the leader, he or she becomes the next volunteer to leave the room, and the class chooses another leader.

**Discussion Questions:**1. Leaders: How did it feel knowing the class would follow your every action?  
2. Followers: What if the leader did something questionable--would you still follow for the sake of tricking the volunteer?  
3. When should we follow someone in a leadership role?  
4. How do we know that we can trust the leadership of Jesus?

GETTING STARTED (5 minutes)

Today we are going to continue our focus on lessons from the twelve disciples of Jesus.

**General Discussion:**• Do you like to obey others? Why or why not?  
• What is the hardest rule you’ve ever had to obey?  
• Does obedience show that you trust someone? Love them?

DIGGING IN (25 minutes)

Peter is quite likely the most popular and talked about of the disciples. His ministry with Jesus is significant, as well as his powerful ministry after Jesus’ ascension. What do you remember about Peter?  What stands out about him? *(Allow for answers)*   
  
Here are a few things you may or may not know about Peter.

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| **Peter Facts:** • Natural leader- quickly became the spokesperson for the disciples • Church father- He was the first great voice in the church after Pentecost and preached the first sermon in Acts 2:14-40.   • Wrote 1 and 2 Peter • Knew Mark and gave him information for his gospel • Spoke without thinking - impulsive personality - constantly had his foot in his mouth • Denied Jesus three times during Jesus’ trial • Made some BIG statements, some good, some bad |

Peter was probably the *life of the party*. If you met the 12 disciples, you would probably walk away thinking, “those guys were cool, and that Peter guy was hilarious” or “that Peter guy sure did talk a lot!”  
   
We remember Peter best for the things he did without really sitting back and thinking about it. Some of them are awesome examples of faith, while others are examples we can learn from of what NOT to do.

**Read Matthew 14:25-33**

Jesus walks out to the disciples on the water, and while the other disciples are freaking out about seeing a ghost, Peter attempts to walk to Jesus on the water.    
  
**Discussion Questions:**  
1. What would motivate a person like Peter to want to walk on the water toward Jesus? *(Faith in Christ’s power, desire to experience something more, desire to be with Jesus, etc.)*

**Read Matthew 17:1-8**

Peter’s response to this awesome experience was an immediate desire to set up tents in order to keep them around longer. He thought it was really cool to have that experience. However, his response was so impulsive that he missed the point.

God interrupts Peter in order to show the true purpose of this event. Moses and Elijah were the two greatest prophets in the Old Testament. Moses represents the law while Elijah represents the prophets. Jesus is the fulfillment and completion of the law and prophets, but Peter’s eagerness caused him to miss the initial point.

**Read John 21:3, 7-8**

Little time has passed since Jesus’ resurrection. The disciples are still making quite a transition without the Lord.  Peter’s impulsive nature caused him to jump into the water to race to see the Lord, leaving behind the fish (his idea in the first place). His eagerness to see the Lord was more important.

There is no question that Peter is the type of guy who does lots of things, many of them without thinking, and often fails. However, he always kept his focus on obeying Jesus.

Peter became a man of great influence for the early church.  If you read the book of Acts, you can see that Peter was the front man for the church early on. He was the “preacher” of the church when it grew from 12 to 3,000 in one day!  You would think with all this success in his ministry that God would have given Peter some special gift or calling in his life. You would think that Peter would have received special instruction on what he was to do in life. He was a great pillar of the faith. However, do you know what Jesus’ main message was for his life?

**Read Mark 1:17 and John 21:22** (Choose two students to read one verse each)

**Discussion Questions:**  
1. What were Jesus’ first words to Peter in Mark 1:17? *(Follow Me.)*2. What were Jesus’ last words to Peter in John 21:22? *(You must follow me.)*

Jesus’ main message to Peter was not "you must preach every day, and preach well" or "My Will for you is to go into foreign missions" or "be a faithful leader for the church" or even "evangelize the lost for Me, Peter." While all of those things became a part of Peter’s ministry, Jesus’ main message for him was simply, "Follow Me."

Peter’s life was a continual stumbling, bumbling, hurling forward with the momentum of his own mouth. At times, his zeal and enthusiasm took him to a place where he was right where God wanted him. At other times, his over eagerness propelled him into a place where he faced embarrassment.

The awesome thing about Peter though, is that there was always a *bottom line*: A point of no return from which he could not return.

MAKING IT REAL (12 minutes)

**Read John 6:60-69**

Plagued by his own imperfections and ideas about what a Messiah was supposed to look like, Peter made a defining statement about Jesus in John 6. After feeding the 5,000, Jesus had many eager listeners. But, when he started talking, people found His words very troubling. Understandably so! He was talking about eating His flesh and drinking His blood! Jesus explained that life came from sharing in His body and His blood.

Many of the people listening decided that awesome miracles or not, this was just simply too hard to accept.

The question Jesus asks the disciples in verse 61 is interesting: literally, “Does this cause you to stumble?” Jesus then turns and asks the twelve, "What about you?" (plural).    
  
Peter, the mouth of the group, speaks up, this time with powerful words: “Lord to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life. We believe and know that You are the Holy One of God.”

The whole issue is summed up in this: Difficulties will come. God will ask us to do things we do not want to do. Life will get hard.  Ask yourself these questions:  
  
• Which direction will I run?   
• Will I run from or towards God?    
• Will I run into Jesus' arms or away from Him?

Resolve yourself to this fact: You will be unfaithful to God. If you live a “full life” you will sin thousands of times. You will likely face embarrassment, ridicule, and, perhaps, persecution. The decision of the disciple is whether you will follow even then. God doesn’t call you to know everything. He doesn’t call you to feel anything. He may never call you to be anything significant in the eyes of the world. However, He calls you to love Him, and in loving Him, to show your love by your obedience.

**Read John 14:15**

**Discussion Questions:**1. According to this verse, how do you show your love of Jesus in your life?*(By obeying His commands.)*2. Do you believe Peter did this well or poorly? Explain.  
3. What are some ways you show your love of God well?  
4. What are some ways you struggle?  
5. Starting today, which way are you committed to run?

CLOSING PRAYER (2 minutes)

Pray for your students, that they could mirror the great qualities of Peter and learn from his mistakes.