

Breakfast on the Shore



Scripture Reference: [John 21:1-17](#)

Suggested Emphasis: Jesus can forgive us and help us do better when we sin.

Memory Verse: But if we confess our sins, he will forgive our sins. We can trust God. He does what is right. He will make us clean from all the wrongs we have done. [1 John 1:9, ICB](#)



Story Overview:

After the resurrection, Jesus appeared to many people. One of these times was to Peter and some other disciples who had spent an unproductive night fishing. Jesus directed them to cast their nets on the other side of the boat, which resulted in a miraculous catch of fish.

Jesus cooked breakfast for these followers on the beach and then provided Peter with a new opportunity to follow him and care for others in the future. Peter had previously denied Jesus, but now Jesus says to “feed my sheep”.

Background Study:

The children will remember Peter denying Jesus. Perhaps they feel sad for Peter. He wanted so much to stand up for Jesus but he really let him down when he denied him. Today’s story is special because it shows that Jesus could

still be friends with Peter even though he had messed up. Jesus could forgive Peter and he can forgive us.

This whole story is similar to the first time Jesus called the fishermen to follow him and become fishers of men ([Luke 5:1-11](#)). Then and now the apostles had spent all night fishing without catching anything. Again Jesus leads them to a huge catch.

The Sea of Tiberius was another name for the Sea of Galilee. It was a beautiful lake and almost 700 feet below sea level. It was 14 miles (22.5 kilometers) long and 6 miles (10 kilometers) wide. The upper part of the Jordan River fed into it.

It was common practice for fishermen of this time to fish at night. The cooling waters drew fish to the surface. Fishermen could also use torches or lamps to attract fish to the surface so nets could be drawn up to catch them. They would use a large, weighted net thrown from a boat and then dragged toward shore. Sometimes two boats stretched the net between. In this case, they fished all night but caught nothing.

It is interesting that Jesus asks Peter 3 times if he loved him. Perhaps it is parallel to the fact that Peter denied Jesus three times during the trial. Much has been said concerning the three questions Jesus asked. Although the original conversation took place in the Aramaic language, the account is written in Greek. The first two times Jesus asks Peter if he truly loved him. The Greek word is “agape” which refers to a divine love that involves a commitment to wanting the best for the other person. Twice Jesus asks Peter if he loves him in this way. Peter answers both times but uses a different word for love. It is the word “phileo” which means more of a fondness or emotional love like the love friends have for one another. So Jesus asks Peter if he loves him in a deep committed way and Peter answers “I love you with the fondness of a friend.” Finally, the third time, Jesus asks Peter if he loves him with the fondness of a friend and Peter answers that he does. Perhaps this is all about the fact that Peter had often claimed deep love for Jesus but then let him down when he denied him. Now Peter is more humble and unwilling to make brash statements that he cannot live up to.

All Christian leaders are called to “feed the sheep” or take care of the people they lead ([1 Peter 5:1-4](#); [Hebrews 13:7](#)). Peter is not the only one. Perhaps Jesus knows that Peter needs special affirmation after the denial. Perhaps he wanted the others to hear that he accepted Peter.

Whatever the case, we know that Peter goes on to be a leader and an elder in the early church. Perhaps he was thinking back to this time with Jesus when he writes the following:

“Now I have something to say to the elders in your group. I am also an elder. I myself have seen Christ’s sufferings. And I will share in the glory that will be shown to us. I beg you to take care of God’s flock, his people, that you are responsible for. Watch over it because you want to, not because you are forced to do it. That is how God wants it. Do it because you are happy to serve, not because you want money. Do not be like a ruler over people you are responsible for. Be good examples to them. Then when Christ, the Head Shepherd, comes, you will get a crown. This crown will be glorious, and it will never lose its beauty.”
1 Peter 5:1-4 ICB



Way to Introduce the Story:

Ask the children to tell you all the different kinds of places they have eaten breakfast (at the table at home, camping, in bed, in the car, in a boat, etc.) Ask them what kinds of foods they have eaten for breakfast. Share some of your own stories. "In today's story we are going to learn about a time when Jesus made breakfast for his friends. Listen to the story very carefully. When you hear me say where he cooked the breakfast, I want you to say 'Yum, yum!' and smack your lips very loudly." Do the same when I say what food Jesus cooked.

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The Story:

The apostles were all very happy that Jesus had been raised from the dead. They had seen Jesus a few times since he had been resurrected.

One day Peter said, "I'm going out to fish." Thomas, Nathanael, James and John and two other disciples decided to go along with him.

They all went to the Sea of Galilee and got into a boat. The way the fishermen would fish was to put their nets into the water and pull them up to see if there were fish inside. People liked to fish at night because lots of fish came to the surface of the water and the fishermen could catch them. Usually that worked but not this time. Peter, James, John and the others fished all night but they did not catch any fish. They tried throwing the net on the right side and the left side but they just couldn't catch any fish.

Early in the morning they looked up and saw someone on the beach. The man yelled and asked them if they had caught any fish. When they said no the man yelled again, "Throw your nets on the right side of the boat and you will find some fish."

The fishermen probably wondered about that. After all, they had been throwing the net on both sides all night and they hadn't caught anything yet. Why should they do it again?

Finally, they decided to give it a try and cast their nets off the right side of the boat. When they started to pull the net up they saw that there were fish in it. There were lots of fish in the net. In fact, there were so many fish that the seven apostles could not even lift the net into the boat. They decided to head for shore and pull the net beside the boat.

Then John looked at the beach again. He took a closer look at the man standing there. Wait a minute. The man looked familiar. It was Jesus! When John told everyone Peter got very excited. He really wanted to see Jesus again so he jumped into the water. Peter made his way to shore while the others followed with the boat and net full of fish.

When Peter and the apostles got to the shore they saw that Jesus had a fire going and some fish already cooking. "Bring some of the fish you caught and we will eat them too," Jesus said. "We will eat breakfast on the beach."

Peter and the others brought some of the fish. There were plenty left because they had caught 153 big fish! Jesus fed the apostles a big breakfast of fish and bread. Would you like to eat fish for breakfast?

While they were eating the breakfast Peter was probably thinking back to another time when they had all eaten together. Peter loved Jesus but he had done something he was very sorry for. A few weeks ago, when Jesus and the apostles had been eating the Last Supper together Peter told Jesus that he would be willing to die for him. Then, when Jesus was arrested, Peter got scared. He did not die for Jesus. He had not been brave at all. He told people that he did not know Jesus. He denied he knew Jesus three times. Peter wondered if Jesus could ever forgive him.

After breakfast, Jesus asked Peter a question. "Peter, do you really love me?"

Peter answered, "You know that I love you, Lord."

Jesus then said, "Feed my lambs."

Then Jesus asked again, "Peter, do you really love me?"

Peter answered again, "You know I love you, Lord."

"Take care of my sheep," Jesus repeated.

Finally, Jesus asked again, "Peter, do you love me?"

Peter was hurt that Jesus kept asking him. Asking the question three times reminded him of the three times he had denied Christ. "Lord, you know everything. You know that I love you."

"Peter, feed my sheep."

Jesus had forgiven Peter. He told Peter that he would someday die for Jesus. Jesus said to Peter, "Follow me" and Peter did. Peter would always follow Jesus.

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Ways to Tell the Story:

This story can be told using a variety of methods. Always remain true to the facts found in the Bible but help children connect to its meaning by using drama, visual aids, voice inflection, student interaction and/or emotion.

[Click here for visual aids and story-telling methods.](#)

[Click here to download these illustrations and slideshow.](#) Be selective. Each teacher is unique, so only use the illustrations that best relate to how YOU tell the story in THIS lesson. Too many illustrations can be confusing, so eliminate any that cover other stories or details you do not wish to emphasise in this lesson.

Review Questions:

1. After they fished all night and caught nothing, what did Jesus tell the apostles to do? Cast their nets on the other side of the boat.
2. What did Jesus repeat three times to Peter? Feed my sheep

Song Suggestions:

- [Jesus' Love is a-Bubblin' Over Song](#)
- Sing [Fished All Night and Caught No Fishes](#)
- Refer to the [Song Page](#) on this website for more options.

Learning Activities and Crafts:

[\(How to choose the best learning activities for my teaching situation\)](#)

Activities:

- How about a snack of fish. Or be adventurous and plan a fish fry on the beach.
- Serve breakfast to the class.
- Divide the group into two teams. One team stands holding one side of a large blanket and the other team holds the opposite side. The blanket is the fishing net. The teams hold the blanket slack while the teacher places a number of fish in the centre (these can be plastic ones or ones cut out of sponges). When the teacher says “go fishing” each team tries to “bounce” the fish off one end of the blanket or the other. The teacher should have designated which end belongs to each team. The team bouncing the most fish onto their side wins the game. To keep the game from getting out of hand, mark off smaller areas where the fish must land to gain points.
- Play a simple word game. [Bible Wordz Game](#) is an adaptable game, children form words from letter tiles. The words relate to words found in the Bible lesson.

Crafts:

- A very unusual craft is to paint a real fish with tempera paint and let the children press it onto paper and make prints. The prints are unusual and show all of the scales and fins.
- Jesus told Peter to “take care of my sheep”. Make a sheep craft today. Younger children could glue cotton wool to a picture of a sheep. Older children might glue wool yarn to paper in the shape of a lamb or to outline the words “Take care of my sheep”.

Check the [Teaching Ideas](#) page on this website for ideas that are adaptable to any lesson.



[Click here for “Breakfast on the Shore” printables to print on A4 size paper](#)
[Click here for “Breakfast on the Shore” to print on Letter size paper \(USA\)](#)

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Other Online Resources:

- [Colouring page with text \(Ministry Spark\)](#)
- [Colouring page: ‘Feed My Sheep’ \(sermons4kids.com\)](#)
- [Craft: How to make a fish net for kids \(ehow.com\)](#)
- [Craft: A number of fish craft ideas \(dltk-kids.com\)](#)
- [Craft: A number of fish craft ideas \(artistshelpingchildren.org-scroll down once you get to the page\)](#)
- [Craft: Make a fish. Choose from a selection \(dltk-kids.com\)](#)

- [Craft: Make a fish \(or other sea creatures\). Lots to choose from \(artistshelpingchildren.org\)](#)
- [Craft: Tissue paper fish with printable pattern \(kidscraftzone.com\)](#)
- [Craft: Rainbow fish made from a coffee filter \(dltk-teach.com\)](#)
- [Craft: Rainbow fish. Cut out and then glue on bright paper \(dltk-teach.com\)](#)
- [Craft: Paper crafts for pre-schoolers: scroll down on page to days 4 and 5 \(ourcraftsnthings.com\)](#)
- [Craft: Adapt this boat made from a seashell at \(christiangamesandcrafts.com\)](#)
- [Craft:How to draw a campfire-for drawing Jesus cooking the fish \(www.dragoart.com\)](#)
- [Worksheet,Feed My Sheep interactive group activities \(sermons4kids.com\)](#)
- [Worksheet,Feed My Sheep fill-in-the-blank worksheet \(sermons4kids.com\)](#)
- [Worksheet,Feed My Sheep multiple choice worksheet \(sermons4kids.com\)](#)
- [Worksheet,Feed My Sheep wordsearch \(sermons4kids.com\)](#)
- [Teaching Tool: Perform the "Cutting off Fingers" string trick to show how we can be completely tangled in sin but God can take it away. Be sure and practice this one! \(youtube\)](#)

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