



Faithful in Hard Times

May 16, 2021- 1 year olds and 2 year olds

BIBLE PASSAGE: 1 Peter 1-2

KEY PASSAGE: 2 Corinthians 5:17

BOTTOM LINE: The Holy Spirit helps me in hard times.

CHRIST CONNECTION: Jesus gives us hope and true life so we can live joyfully for Him, even in hard times. Through suffering, God can make us more like His Son.

Context

Peter's story of faith began when Jesus said, "Follow Me." Matthew 4:18 Peter and his brother Andrew- two fishermen from Galilee- left their nets and followed Jesus. As one of Jesus' twelve disciples, Peter witnessed firsthand Jesus' miracles and teachings.

Peter believed that Jesus is the Messiah (Matthew 16:16) and he was understandably upset when Jesus predicted that Peter would deny Him (Matt 26:34-35). Peter fell asleep as Jesus prayed in the garden, and he drew his sword to defend Jesus when He was arrested. (Matt 26:40; John 18:10) Peter denied Jesus three times, but after the resurrection Jesus appeared to Peter and the other disciples. Then Jesus restored Peter to ministry at the Sea of Galilee (John 21:15-19)

The first 12 chapters of the Book of Acts record the Holy Spirit's work through Peter after Pentecost. God revealed to Peter that the gospel is for everyone- Jews and Gentiles. Peter was arrested and imprisoned for sharing the gospel, but an angel of the Lord rescued him. (Acts 12:1-8)

Peter wrote his first letter sometime between AD 62 and 64 to believers who had experienced persecution and suffering. He encouraged them and reminded them how to live holy lives as followers of Christ, looking forward to an eternal reward in their true home- heaven.

Peter's letter was written nearly 2,000 years ago to believers who were not far removed from Jesus' life on earth. We still wait eagerly for Jesus' return, but God calls us to faithfulness in hard times- using our time on earth to better know and love Him, and to tell others about Him. As believers, we are called to live a life of love and to glorify God by what we do and say, even in the midst of trials and troubles.

TAKEAWAYS

- The Bible teaches that people who love Jesus will face troubles.
- But when we face troubles, we can have hope because we have a relationship with Jesus.
- Because Jesus went through tough times to rescue us, He knows what we are going through and He is with us through everything.
- We can live for Jesus even in hard times.
- **BOTTOM LINE:** The Holy Spirit helps me in hard times.

Social Activity: What's Missing

What You Need: 6 items, tray, towel

What You Do:

Lay all 6 items on the tray. Show kids the items. Then cover the items and remove one of them. Tell children to close their eyes while you remove an item. The children open their eyes when you say "Open", then tell you as a group what's missing. Do this same thing with another item, until they are all missing. When you are finished, place all the items in a ziploc bag. **Say:** That was a fun game to get us ready to watch our Bible video. Let's pray and listen to our story today."

Small Group Prayer: "Dear God, thank you for making me, thank you for loving me and thank you for sending your son, Jesus to be my savior. We love you, Amen."

Introduce the Story

"Peter and the other friends told people everywhere they went about Jesus. Some people did not want people to hear the good news about Jesus, and they were mean to people who loved Him. Peter wrote a letter to help believers keep following Jesus- even when it was hard. Peter said, "God's power is keeping you through faith. Remember this and be happy, even though right now you have trouble. Hope in Jesus and be holy. Love one another. Do what is good. Remember that Jesus let bad things happen to Him so He could rescue you. Now you can live to do what is right."

PLAY BIBLE STORY VIDEO

Check diapers and listen to a worship song

Application Activity Create Sticker Art

What You Need: Jesus Rescues Printable (1 per kid), emotions stickers (5-6 per kid)

What You Do:

- Provide each toddler with a Jesus Rescues Printable and emotions stickers.
- Encourage toddlers to talk about the emotions as they decorate their art.
- Tell the Bible story together.

What You Say " People who love Jesus can have many troubles. The Holy Spirit helps us remember Jesus went through hard times to rescue us too.

Discussion Questions:

- **Peter urged the early church to be holy in all their conduct. (1 Peter 1:5) How can a sinner be holy?** Help kids recognize that holy means to be set apart for a special purpose. It does not mean that we are sinless, because we could never be sinless. We are set apart for the special purpose of serving and glorifying God. We cannot be holy in our own power. We must be sensitive to the Holy Spirit's conviction in our lives and respond to His leading and allow God to use us for His glory. (Romans 12:1)
- **What did Peter mean when he said, "this world is not your home"?** Help kids recognize that while God has placed them on the earth for a time, this world as we know it is passing away. We have to consider our eternal home. Will we spend eternity with Jesus or will we spend eternity separated from Him? Peter challenged believers to live differently than those who don't know Jesus; to live thinking about eternity. (1 John 2:17)
- **Why does God allow us to face hard times?** Discuss the benefits of facing hard times, such as growing in patience, learning to trust God more, and showing His power and love to the world by responding graciously to those who are cruel to us. Remind kids that God can turn all things to good, and that even when we don't see the good He is working out.
- **How can we choose to face hard times in our life knowing that our hope is in Jesus?** Help kids recognize Peter said that the things of the earth will fade, but God's Word stands forever. For Christians, this means that suffering we experience on earth is temporary. (Rev 21:4)