

YOUTH INSTRUCTION CLASS

LESSON 12: THE EARLY CHRISTIAN CHURCH – II

Review

What was an *apostle*?

How many apostles were there originally? How many apostles were there altogether?

The Apostle Peter

- How did Peter first come to Jesus? (John 1:40-42)
- Peter was a Galilean from the town of Bethsaida. When he was called by Jesus, he had settled in Capernaum. Locate the region of Galilee and the city of Capernaum on the map.
- What was Peter's original occupation? (Matthew 4:18)
- Peter is also called Simon (meaning *hearing*). Simon was a common Jewish name.
- What special name did Jesus give Peter? (John 1:42)
- What do you remember about the role Peter played in the events of Jesus' passion?



Peter As Missionary

Peter played an important part on the day of *Pentecost*. Read this summary of the Bible account from Acts 2:1-39.

The disciples constantly prayed together after Jesus went away in the cloud.

Fifty days after Jesus was crucified, there was a big holiday. It was called Pentecost. At that time, many thousands of people visited Jerusalem. The disciples were all together that day. Suddenly, a sound like violent wind filled the house. Fire appeared and rested on each of them. They were all filled with the Holy Spirit. The Spirit made them able to speak in other languages. Then a curious crowd gathered. They were from many different nations. But they each heard the gospel in their own language.

Everyone was amazed and puzzled. They each heard their own language! "What does this mean?" some asked. Others sneered, "They're drunk on new wine."

Then Peter stood up. "People from Judea and all who live in Jerusalem: We're not drunk. It's only nine in the morning. Long ago the prophet Joel wrote: 'In the last days I'll pour my Spirit on everyone. Then, those who call on the Lord's name will be saved.'

"Jesus of Nazareth did miracles among you, but in God's plan, you killed him. This same Jesus, God brought back from death. We have seen him. He's now at God's right hand. The Father has given Jesus the promise of the Holy Spirit."

Peter's words cut them to the heart. They asked, "What shall we do?"

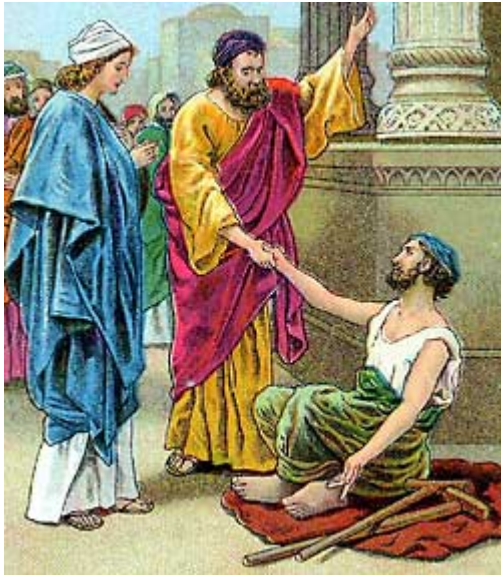
"Everyone, turn from your sins, be forgiven, and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ. You'll be given the Holy Spirit as a gift. This promise is for you, your children, and all who are far away." Three thousand people believed in Jesus that day.



- Who came in a special way at Pentecost?
- What could the apostles do on Pentecost that they could not do before?
- When Peter spoke to the crowd, what two main things did he tell them concerning Jesus?

This was the message that all the apostles preached as they went out into the world.

Once Peter healed a crippled man. Read this summary of that story (Acts 3:1-8).



"Give me money, please," begged a disabled man near the temple. "I've been crippled since I was born." Peter and John, passing nearby, heard the man's plea.

"I have no silver or gold," Peter said to him. "But I'll give you what I have. In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, stand up and walk." Peter took the man's hand and helped him up. Instantly, the man's feet and ankles became strong. Jumping up, he walked. The man went into the temple with Peter and John. He was walking and leaping and praising God.

- What gift did Peter give the man that was more important than money?
- What gift can *you* give to someone else that is more important than money?

Activity

Trace a portion of Peter's missionary journey as described in Acts 9:31-43 (CEV)

The church in Judea [1], Galilee [2], and Samaria [3] now had a time of peace and kept on worshipping the Lord. The church became stronger, as the Holy Spirit encouraged it and helped it grow.

(Starting at Jerusalem [4]) – While Peter was traveling from place to place, he visited the Lord's followers who lived in the town of Lydda [5]. There he met a man named Aeneas, who for eight years had been sick in bed and could not move. Peter said to Aeneas, "Jesus Christ has healed you! Get up and make up your bed." Right away he stood up. Many people in the towns of Lydda and Sharon saw Aeneas and became followers of the Lord.

In Joppa [6] there was a follower named Tabitha. Her Greek name was Dorcas, which means "deer." She was always doing good things for people and had given much to the poor. But she got sick and died, and her body was washed and placed in an upstairs room. Joppa wasn't far from Lydda, and the followers heard that Peter was there. They sent two men to say to him, "Please come with us as quickly as you can!" Right away, Peter went with them.

The men took Peter upstairs into the room. Many widows were there crying. They showed him the coats and clothes that Dorcas had made while she was still alive.

After Peter had sent everyone out of the room, he knelt down and prayed. Then he turned to the body of Dorcas and said, "Tabitha, get up!" The woman opened her eyes, and when she saw Peter, she sat up.

He took her by the hand and helped her to her feet.

Peter called in the widows and the other followers and showed them that Dorcas had been raised from death. Everyone in Joppa heard what had happened, and many of them put their faith in the Lord. Peter stayed on for a while in Joppa in the house of a man named Simon, who made leather.



- While he was at Joppa, Peter had a vision in which God showed him that the message of Jesus was for Gentiles (non-Jews) as well as for the Jews (see Acts 10:9-16 and Acts 11:1-18). Until now, the Christians were hesitant to associate with the Gentiles.
- After his vision, Peter traveled to Ceasarea [7] where he met a man named Cornelius and preached the gospel to the Gentiles.
- Peter learned that Jesus is for everyone!



Memory Passage

Acts 4:12 (596) Nor is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved.

Assignment

- Learn the memory passage.