

**PETER AND THE PROPHET JOEL**

SCRIPTURE REFERENCE: ACTS 2:14-37

*The Spirit-empowered gospel call goes forth.***The STORY**

Pray with children to start class.

**Teaching Points for Class Discussion:**

**Peter explains the outpouring of the Spirit-** Some of the people who witnessed the outpouring of the Spirit thought those who received the Spirit and were speaking in other tongues were drunk. So Peter stood up with the eleven other disciples and explained what was happening. God was pouring out His Spirit just as the prophet Joel had foreseen and Jesus had promised. Peter did not want to simply correct their poor judgment. He wanted them to be saved. That's why he went on to share the gospel.

In the days of old, God only spoke through a few choice men, and God's Spirit would not be poured on all God's people. This new outpouring, however, would be for all kinds of people, and God would speak through men and women, young and old.

From this very first sermon we can see the Spirit at work in the life of Peter. No sermon would be given without pointing back to Jesus.

**Peter shares the gospel** – After Peter explained the outpouring of the Spirit, he connected it to the gospel. His courage is evident as he accused his hearers of nailing Jesus to the cross. That could have stirred up trouble. Peter also connected these events to the sovereign plan of God. Jesus was handed over as a part of God's predetermined plan. Peter shows them how King David foresaw the resurrection of Jesus.

**Peter connects the scriptures to Christ** – Peter, having shared the gospel once, continued his explanation of the prophets and how David looked forward to Jesus. And then Peter shared the gospel again! When he spoke of the Resurrection, he calls it a fact. There would be no room for doubters. Peter ends with a resounding call to all of Israel to believe. The people were so affected that Luke says they were "cut to the heart" and asked what they should do!

A true sign of repentance in a person is when they realize they are guilty, give no excuses, make no argument, and simply say, "What should I do?"

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### WHERE IS THE GOSPEL?

*Please use the following comments connecting today's lesson to the Gospel to help inform your understanding and serve you by aiding your preparation for class. Remember, we want to do more than present disconnected Bible stories and lessons to our young children. We want them to understand how each story in the Bible plays a part in God's greater plan of redemption.*

Immediately following the outpouring of the Spirit on Pentecost, Peter addressed the crowd. Emboldened by the Holy Spirit's power, Peter interpreted the prophets and connected their prophecies to the outpouring of the Spirit and the gospel message. Jesus, he said, "was handed over to the Jews by God's set purpose and foreknowledge." He further explained that the Jews put Him to death, but that God raised Him from the dead. The gospel, delivered at Pentecost, became the core of Peter's life message.

In his subsequent letter, Peter gives us a wonderful glimpse back into the mind of the prophets (see 1 Peter 1:10). What exactly did they know? He tells us they searched with the greatest care because they knew the words they spoke were not for them, but for all those who would come after them. Moses knew. David knew. And Joel knew that God had a glorious plan of salvation. They searched intently to know more.

With the coming of Christ, the secrets of the kingdom of God were revealed by Him and through Him. We reveal them to others just as Peter did in his first sermon at Pentecost: through the gospel message. This mystery, revealed to us, is a message even the angels longed to know.



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### ON THE ROAD TO EMMAUS

Read the following Bible passage from the Old Testament. Use the following questions to help the children understand how this passage points to Christ in the New Testament.

**Bible Passage: Isaiah 49:7,8**

**Connecting the passage to Christ:**

Jesus is the Redeemer and Holy One of Israel. He was despised and abhorred by the rulers and people of Israel who mocked, beat, and crucified Him. Jesus rose from the dead. One day all kings will bow their knees to Him.

**Questions for reflection:**

- Who is the Redeemer referenced in this passage? (Jesus is the ultimate Redeemer. Only Jesus, by His death on the cross, can redeem us.)
- How was Jesus faithful? (Jesus did everything the Father asked of Him. The Bible tells us that Jesus is a faithful high priest [see Hebrews 2:17], a faithful Son [see Hebrews 3:6], and His name is called Faithful and True [see Revelation 19:11].)

### SWORD BIBLE MEMORY

**BE A DOER OF THE WORD**

*Take time during the class to review the SWORD Bible Memory verses with the class. Provide the opportunity for each child to recite the verses to an adult worker.*



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### ACTIVITIES & OBJECT LESSONS

*Use the following activities for practical application and discovery of this lesson. For the younger children, review the preschool questions and use them to help the children relate to the passage. For older children, ask them why they think this passage is in the Bible for us today. How is it supposed to affect our lives?*

#### WHERE IS THE GOSPEL?

**Supplies:**  
white board

Go through Peter's sermon verse by verse and help the children pick out the Gospel. Write each reference to the Gospel on the board. Then ask the children the following questions:

- How much did Peter use the Gospel in his message? (He used it a whole lot.)
- Why did he share the Gospel so much? (The Gospel, the Bible tells us, is the power of God for salvation. See Romans 1:16. Peter could have shared a lot of information, but it was the Gospel which could change the hearts of the people.)
- Does the Gospel have the same power today? (Yes. The Gospel is still transforming millions of people every year.)

#### WITNESSES CAN PROVE IT.

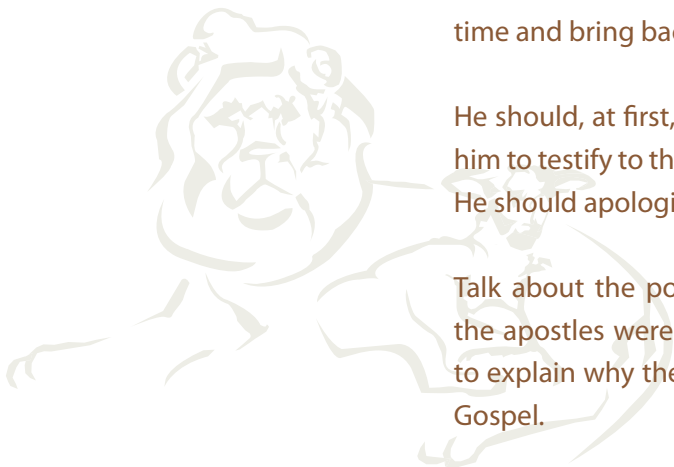
**Supplies:**  
• a bag of candy  
• a conspirator

Use this exercise to show how witnesses prove that something happened.

Prior to your class make sure that you step out of the room. Leave the bag of candy on the desk. While you are out, your conspirator should come in and very suspiciously take the bag of candy. When you return to find your candy gone, you should ask the class where it went. Don't accuse them, but make sure you get at least two or three witnesses to name your conspirator. Excuse yourself a second time and bring back the accused. He should have the candy with him, but hidden..

He should, at first, deny taking it. Then parade at least three witnesses in front of him to testify to the truth. At that point he should confess and give the candy back. He should apologize to the class and then excuse himself.

Talk about the power of a witness in finding out the truth and talk about how the apostles were God's witnesses of Jesus resurrection (Acts 2:32). Ask the class to explain why the apostles, as witnesses, play an important role in spreading the Gospel.



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### ONLY A FAINT SHADOW

**Supplies:**

- a sheet or blind
- overhead projector
- sundry household items to include a small book, glass jar half filled with sand, ink pen, and cassette tape or CD

The object of this lesson is to help the children understand that the prophets could see God's salvation in the future, but didn't get the whole picture. We have the full picture.

Set the overhead projector up where all the class can clearly see the image it projects. Set the blind up to block their view of what is being placed on the projector. Set the focus of the projector so the image you project is fuzzy, but still visible.

Place each of the following objects on the projector and ask the class to identify them and then ask them the more specific question which they can only guess.

1. Small book – What is the title of the book?
2. Glass jar – What is in the jar?
3. Ink pen – What color does the pen write?
4. Cassette tape or CD – What is recorded on it?

Review their guesses by passing the objects around the room one at a time. Ask them how much different it is to actually see the object.

Read 1 Peter 1:10-12 to them and ask them how your exercise relates to the prophets.

## PRAYER

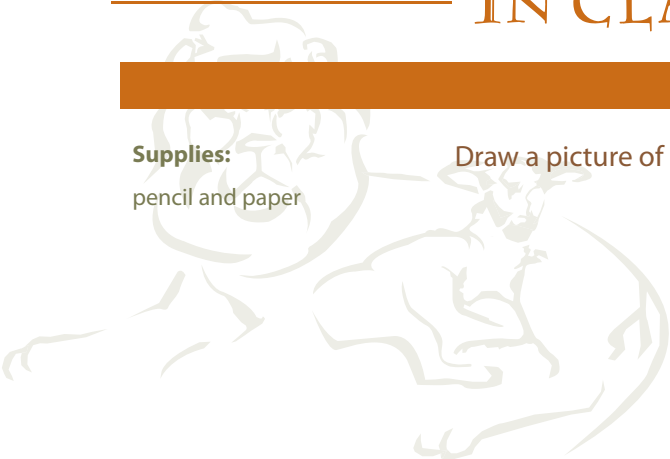
**Pick several children to pray based on the day's scripture passages.**

## IN CLASS PROJECT

**Supplies:**

pencil and paper

Draw a picture of Peter standing up and addressing the crowd.



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### FOR THE OLDER GRADES

#### STUDY AND PREACH THE GOSPEL

Break the class up into teams of five. Have each team study the Gospel presentation of Peter and then create a skit where one person, a Christian, shares the gospel with the other four. Make a requirement that each of the four unbelievers ask one question or raise at least one objection.

Use this to help your students grow in their ability to share the Gospel. Have the class critique each performance to share how they feel the presenting group did and how they might improve.

Caution the class from getting silly, overly argumentative, or dramatic. This should be an opportunity to practice sharing the Gospel, not winning an Academy Award.

### A LITTLE BIT MORE

**The Prophet Joel** – Joel is somewhat of the mystery prophet. He is only mentioned in his book and here, by Peter. All the other men with the same name cannot be identified as the prophet Joel. The book contains no dates or references to known kings, rulers, or other historical figures or events. Joel does speak of Israel and Jerusalem. Commentators looking to place him believe he lived somewhere between the sixth and ninth centuries B.C.

