**FIRST STEPS TOGETHER:** FOR YOUNGER CHILDREN

Session 1 of 4

# Peter and John

### MEETING AIM

To explore what it means to follow Jesus’ example, just as Peter and John did.

### BIBLE PASSAGE

Acts 3

### BACKGROUND

This session plan is intended for use either in person or online, depending on how you’re meeting. Adapt the activities to fit your particular situation.

This story takes place in the early days after the events of Pentecost. Filled with the power of the Holy Spirit, Peter and John are transformed from fearful followers of Jesus, hiding in upper rooms, to confident leaders of the early Church, walking the same streets they walked with Jesus, following his example to do as he had done.

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### STARTING OUT – 5 mins

Start your time together with some simple refreshments. Ask the children to tell you about something kind that they have done for someone else this last week, or something kind that someone has done for them. How do we feel when people do something kind for us?

### PLAY – 10 mins

Play a simple ‘follow the leader’ type game. This could be the well-known game ‘Simon says’, or this follow-the-leader circle game:

One player (A) is selected and leaves the room briefly, while another player (B) from within the circle is chosen as the leader. When player A returns, all the players in the circle should be copying any actions performed by player B, such as clapping hands, stamping feet, tapping head etc, without revealing which player they are copying. Player A has three attempts to guess the correct identity of player B, before swapping for another player to repeat the game again.

### BIBLE STORY – 10 mins

**You will need:** small wooden building blocks or Lego blocks; small play people (such Lego or Playmobil)

Gather the children together in a circle around the space where you will tell the story together. Explain that you would like them to help you, before you begin, to set up a simple town scene with the building blocks, with the people around and about. Ensure that you include a structure to represent the temple, with a clear gate, and lay a play person down beside it.

As you physically set up the scene, share the background to the story. Jesus had returned to heaven and had sent the Holy Spirit to be with all of the disciples. This is a story about something that happened to two of Jesus’ followers, Peter and John. Ask the children how the two friends might have been feeling. What might they have been doing on this day when they went to the temple?

Invite the children to share some of their ideas, and talk about these and the issues or questions raised. Tell the story, moving the play figures around the scene as is appropriate:

Peter and John were walking to the temple one day to pray, as they often did, when they saw a man lying next to the gate, which was called ‘Beautiful’. This man could not walk, so in those days this meant the man couldn’t work either. He often sat next to the gate, asking people for money to help him.

The man asked Peter and John for money too. They knew what to do straight away – do what Jesus would have done! Before Jesus had returned to heaven, he told them that they would receive the Holy Spirit, and then they would be able to do the things that Jesus had done. Peter had no doubt what Jesus would do, if he was talking to the man. He held out a hand, and said to the man:

“We don’t have any money to give you, but we do have one thing we can share. In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk!”

The man couldn’t believe what he was hearing, but Peter sounded so confident, he didn’t hesitate. Stretching out his hand and taking hold of Peter’s, the man stood to his feet. It was the first time in his life that he had been able to do that. He couldn’t believe it! He was so overjoyed, he walked and he ran, he leapt and he danced! Oh, how wonderful! The man was well again.

Many people saw what had happened and gathered round. Peter stood up and said: “Why are you surprised? It is Jesus who has healed this man, just as he said he would!”

### CHATTING TOGETHER – 5 mins

Ask the children these questions, encouraging everyone to take turns to contribute:

* What did you like best about this story?
* How did Peter and John follow Jesus in this story?
* How can we show we care, like Jesus?

### CREATIVE TIME – 10 mins

**You will need:** blank cards and envelopes; a selection of craft materials

Invite the children to use the craft materials provided to make a card for someone they care about. This could be a ‘get well soon’ card for someone who is unwell, a ‘thinking of you’ card, or simply a ‘thank you for being my friend’ card. As you create the cards, talk about how we can show people we care for them, like Jesus did. At the end of the session, encourage the children to take their cards away to give out.

### PRAYER – 5 mins

Sit the children down together and talk about how Jesus says we can ask him to make people well again today too. Ask the children if there is anyone they would like to pray for, either for themselves or for a friend or family member. Model how to pray for healing, and invite the children to pray aloud too. Take some time to talk about how we do not always see healing, as we may hope to, but that God holds each of us in his hands and cares for us all. Let the parents know that this is what you have been praying for this morning, so that they can follow this up with their children.

**BECKY MAY**

is founder of [The Resources Cupboard](https://theresourcescupboard.co.uk/).