

Series: Born Among Us

Lesson 1: Hooked (Simon Peter)

Lesson Objectives:

As a result of this lesson, students will be able to...

- Identify that Simon Peter responded to Jesus with awe and inadequacy
- Identify what Simon Peter's encounter with Jesus says about Jesus' identity
- Begin to build a biblical image of Jesus

Materials Needed:

- ☐ Copy of page A-23
- ☐ Bibles
- ☐ Pictures of successful people known for excellence in their field (ex. Wayne Gretzky)
- ☐ Some sort of traditional Jesus image (flannel graph picture, an old fashioned painting or print, even a Jesus bobble head doll will do)
- ☐ A bulletin board or piece of Bristol board to mount the picture on
- ☐ Slips of paper, all the better if they are attractive slips of paper
- ☐ Pens

Lead In:

Read out each of the Fishing Tales that can be found on page A-23. After each story give the whole class a chance to say if they believe the story is true or untrue. They can give the thumbs up or down, or, if you would like to stick with the theme, give each student a hook and ask for hooks up or hooks down. After each vote reveal if the story is true or untrue.

To transition into the tasks, say something like, *This week we will be starting a series about Jesus. We have probably heard a lot about Jesus, even if we haven't gone to church much. However, some of the stories about Jesus are quite surprising. We may be surprised to realize that Jesus was far from boring; he was radical, he was out there, he often rocked the boat. We learn a lot about Jesus from the encounters that different people had with him that are recorded in the Bible. We're going to look at one of those stories today.*

Task One:

Choose a volunteer to find and read Luke 5:1-11. Before they read say something like, *In our culture, we often talk about getting hooked on something. You might get hooked on golf the first time you play, a new video game, or a new type of fashion. Often we talk about getting hooked on another person. This usually means that we can't get enough of them! As so-an-so reads this passage from Luke 5:1-11 listen and decide who got hooked in this passage. Then I am going to ask you another series of questions about the passage, so make sure to listen carefully.*

Solicit answers from the students. Simon Peter was the one hooked. Ask these further questions that are more open ended. Have the student re-read the text if necessary.

1. **What attracted Simon Peter to Jesus?** There are various answers. It could have been Jesus' interest in him, his confidence, his teaching, his promises, or his miraculous catch of fish.
2. Have the reader re-read v. 8 and ask, **why did Simon Peter respond this way?** It could be because he recognized Jesus was God, it could be because of scepticism, it could be because in comparison to Jesus Simon Peter realized how limited and misguided he was. This passage is powerful because the miracle made Simon Peter recognize his own inadequacy before God.
3. Ask a student **what is something that he or she is good at or interested in.** For example, one student is good at modern dance, she says. Ask her who the best modern dancer ever is and she might say Isadora Duncan, Martha Graham, or Margie Gillis. Ask her how she would feel if she had to dance with one of them. Give all the students a chance to answer if possible. While they would likely be excited to work with these people, in other words hooked, they might also feel insecure and inadequate. In the presence of greatness it is common to become aware of our imperfections but also to be awed and inspired by the great person.

Task Two:

Choose another volunteer to read John 21:1-14 and ask the other students to listen and decide how Simon Peter felt in this scene. Point out to them that the scene takes place after Jesus rose from the dead. Solicit some answers, which could include that Simon Peter was excited, shocked, in awe, empowered, and so on.

Task Three:

Bring out the traditional image of Jesus that you have brought with you. Mount it on a piece of Bristol board or a cork board if possible so that you can continue to add notes to it. Select a place where this image will remain throughout the next few weeks. Ask the students to explain the image of Jesus that they see and whether they agree with that idea of Jesus. Ask if the Jesus they studied today lines up with that picture of Jesus. Explain to the students that it is easy to have wimpy images of Jesus, thanks to all of the art that depicts him as a skinny white guy in a gown and a sash. Tell the students that you are going to give them slips of paper and pens and that they are going to correct and add to the image of Jesus that you have brought with you. Tell them that they are going to keep adding and changing the picture every week as you study the real Jesus together.

Give each student a slip of paper and pens and ask them to write one word or phrase that describes something they learned about Jesus in this lesson. When they are done, allow each student to place that word over the image you have brought and to share what the word means. Be accepting of this ideas but also guide students beyond the Sunday school answers towards a more integral portrait of Jesus, a first century Palestinian Jewish carpenter who could haul miraculous net-fulls of fish while communicating through rich spiritual symbolism in order to inspire the lowly to greatness. Wow! See you later Wimpy Jesus!

Closing:

Close in prayer, thanking Jesus for who he is and asking God to reveal to each of the students a fresh understanding of his character.