

Yesterday. Today. Forever.

Module 2: Loving the Story

Lesson 3: Denials and Renewals

Objectives:

Students will

- engage in an experiment to understand the nature of conformity
- analyze the life of Peter at various stages
- create a t-shirt design that demonstrates understanding of boldness

Materials Needed:

- ☐ white board/chart paper and markers
- ☐ Bibles
- ☐ pen/pencil and paper
- ☐ computer and projector
- ☐ Loving the Story Lesson 3 Asch Experiment
- ☐ Appendix A: Peter Questions sheet, one copy for each group (see below for group sizes)

Pre-lesson preparation:

- Watch this video as you will be performing this experiment with your group. Do not show the video to your group, it is just for your own preparation, and so you

understand how to arrange the experiment.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NyDDyT1IDhA>

- Do some research into T-shirt printing in your area. Once you have found a place that will print shirts for you and you know the prices and details, create an order form so students can order the shirts they will design in this lesson. Another option to look into might be the print yourself iron-ons.
- as the students enter, you will need to enlist 5 'confederates' and 1 real subject (preferably an 'average' kid) for the Asch experiment. Privately tell each confederate they will be acting like subjects in an experiment, but they will actually be helping with the experiment. Tell them they will be asked to look at some lines and say which one is the same length as another. Confederates 1, 2, 4 and 6 are to answer truthfully the first two times, but after the third time they must answer incorrectly, **WHICHEVER INCORRECT ANSWER** the confederate # 1 says. Confederate 3 will answer as the other three until the slide with the red dot in the bottom left corner. After that, confederate 3 will answer truthfully. Tell them they can't let on to anyone else that they are confederates. Make sure the confederates understand the instructions.. To the real subject only tell them they are going to be part of an experiment on judging the lengths of lines. It is **VERY** important that it appears that all subjects are treated the same, which is why you will select them all before you do the experiment and send them all out together.
- arrange 6 chairs in a line, so that those sitting in them can see the screen.

Minds On

Approximately 30 minutes

Prompt: Tell the students you are going to do an experiment in perceiving line lengths, and you have chosen 6 volunteers. Number the students from 1-6, making sure that the 'real' volunteer is number 5, and your 'special' confederate is number 3. Ask them to leave the room, telling them they must be silent while waiting. If possible have a leader go out with them to keep them from talking to each other. Once the 6 have left the room, explain the experiment to the others. Tell the students this is actually an experiment about conformity and explain that some of the volunteers have been instructed to answer incorrectly. Tell the students it is very important that they say nothing, and that they don't laugh or make noises, or it will wreck the experiment.

Invite the volunteers in have them sit in order, from 1 to 6.

Prompt: We are duplicating a very famous experiment on the perception of line length. We are going to look at a series of slides with lines on them. There will be a sample line on the left and 3 lines of different length on the right. I will simply ask each of you one at a time to give the letter of the line that is the same length as the sample line.

Put up the first slide. Ask volunteer 1 to say which of the 3 test lines matches. Do the same for all volunteers and all slides. Use a pencil and paper to 'record' the answers. It isn't important that you actually record anything, but it is important that the volunteer believes you are recording.

When you have gone through all the slides, invite the volunteer to the front. Thank them for their participation and applaud their effort. Tell them about the real purpose of the experiment. then interview the volunteer about their experience. The following are some questions to ask.

1. How did you feel when the group started giving the wrong answers?

2. Why did you go along with the group?
3. Did you think you were wrong?
4. Why didn't you go along with the group?
5. How did you feel when you gave what you know was a wrong answer?
6. How did you feel toward the other person with the right answer?
7. Why did you let them stand alone saying the right answer?

There is a chance that your actual volunteer will not go along with the group. If they do not, tell the students that most times people will go along with the majority. Use the interview as an opportunity to explore the feelings of the student to see if they were tempted to go along.

Prompt: We have just seen how hard it is to stand up for what you know is right when everyone around is wrong; even when it is about something as trivial as the length of a line. Think about a time when you knew you should say something but backed down. Are there any volunteers who would be willing to share about that?

If you have a volunteer or two let them share their story and thank them for being brave and vulnerable. If you don't have a volunteer, acknowledge that it is very difficult to share and maybe you could share a story about yourself.

Action

Approximately 30 minutes

Prompt: Even Jesus' disciples sometimes struggled with standing up for what was right. We are going to look at 3 stages in the life of Peter and how he gave in to the crowd sometimes but stood up other times. In a moment, I will divide you into groups. Each group will get a question sheet about a different stage of Peter's life. Read the scripture, and try to come up with answers to the questions. You will be sharing your answers with everyone a little bit later. You have ten minutes.

Using the chart below, decide on the number of groups and use numbered heads to group the students. Make sure you did not miss numbering any students. Tell each group where you would like them to meet, and dismiss them to their groups. Make sure you have enough copies of the question sheets. Hand out the questions to each group. Give about 10 min for them to answer the questions and discuss their scripture, checking in with the groups from time to time as they work, listening to the students, and asking questions to clarify their thinking where necessary. Near the end of the 10 minutes ask for a representative from each group to report back their findings to the whole group. Work through the groups, and point out any additional pieces of needed information.

# of Students	# of groups	Appendix A sheets to Use
3-5 students	2	Group 1, Group 2, you will summarize the Group 3 information
6-15 students	3	Group 1, Group 2, Group 3
16-17 students	4	Group 1 (double), Group 2, Group 3
18-30 students	6	Group 1, Group 2, Group 3 (all groups double)
>30 students	students/5	add extra sheets as needed

If individual students do not have distinct roles, the ideal group has 3 to 5 students. Obviously this depends on the students, but fewer than three, and the ideas may not have as much breadth, and more than 5, it will be difficult for individual students to have meaningful contributions.

After all groups have reported back, ask the whole group the following questions. Give time for students to think about the answers, then take a few responses.

1. If you had an encounter with Jesus like Peter did on the beach, do you think it would make a difference next time you had an opportunity to make a stand?

2. Peter's behaviour changes between stage 1 and 2, and between 2 and 3. What events do you think caused those changes? (between 1 and 2 Jesus dies and rises again, between 2 and 3 Peter receives the Holy Spirit)
3. Why do you think the resurrection of Jesus and the Holy Spirit make such a difference in Peter's boldness?
4. When you give in to peer-pressure and don't stand up for what is right, how do you feel?
5. When you are under pressure, have any of you ever asked the Holy Spirit to make you bold? Why or why not?

Consolidate/Debrief

Approximately 15 minutes

Prompt: Standing up for what is right when everyone else is doing something wrong is hard. Admitting you are a Christian when people are making fun of Christianity is hard. Even just admitting you go to Church can be embarrassing. We are going to create a t-shirt for our youth group that will remind us to go against the flow, and maybe by wearing it, people will ask you about it. I have paper and markers so you can start working on a design. (**Leader's Note:** The t-shirt company will have given you guidelines as to size and number of colours you can use, make sure you pass these on to your students.) You may take your papers home to work on your designs, which can be done by hand or computer. We will collect submissions next week and vote for our favourite design. I will have order forms so you can order your t-shirt then.

Pray for the group that God would help them to be bold and stand up for what is right, even when it is hard.

Appendix A: Peter Questions

Group 1 (Group 4)

Read Luke 22:54-62

Set the scene, when in the life of Peter is this taking place?

Why do you think Peter denied knowing Jesus?

How do you think Peter felt as he denied Jesus?

How do you think Peter felt when the rooster crowed?

Describe Peter's character at this point.

Group 2 (Group 5)

Read John 21:1-19

Set the scene, when in the life of Peter is this taking place?

Why does Jesus ask Peter three times?

How do you think Peter felt when Jesus asked him the first time?

How do you think Peter felt when Jesus asked him the third time?

How does Jesus end this encounter?

Describe Peter's character at this point.

Group 3 (Group 6)

Read Acts 2:14-41 (you don't have to read it all in detail, get the idea of what Peter is doing)

Set the scene, when in the life of Peter is this taking place?

What is Peter doing in this passage?

Describe Peter's character at this point.

Christian tradition, backed up by first century historians, tells us that Peter eventually travelled to Rome and was killed for his faith in the year 64AD under the reign of Emperor Nero. It is said that he asked to be crucified upside down because he did not feel worthy to be crucified the same way as his Lord, Jesus. He was buried in Rome and now the largest Church in the world sits on the site of his grave – St. Peter's Basilica in Vatican City.

What does this say about the character of Peter at the end of his life?