

The hour is late

JESUS FEEDS THE 5000

MATTHEW 14.13-21 • 2-8 AUGUST 2020



Read the [Introduction for leaders](#), or [Introduction for parents and carers](#) for guidance on how to use these ideas.

You will need these items: food and drink to share, for very young children: play dough, cutters, plates; fish and bread shapes cut out of card; paper, pens; ingredients and equipment to make pizzas, card, a candle, timer (e.g. stopwatch on a phone).

Part 1

Time to share

Plan a special time to eat together, before starting the other activities this week. Serve drinks and simple food or offer something more ambitious if you can. Spend time catching up with each other. Discuss who else could or perhaps should have been with you today. Think and talk about the importance of sharing together.

For very young children: provide play dough, cutters and plates. Make some play food and share it out on the plates.

Lord Jesus, as we meet together,
may we be as keen as the crowds in this week's story;
wanting to stay close to you
and ready to hear what you will say to us today.
Amen.

Part 2

Story search

Divide the Bible story up into small paragraphs and write each one on bread-shaped and fish-shaped cards, then hide them around the room. Ask everyone to find and collect the cards and gather them into a basket or box in the centre of the room. Once they have worked together to arrange the story into the right order, ask someone to read it aloud.

Jesus heard that John the Baptist had been killed by Herod. He needed some time on his own, and went in a boat to a place completely away from everything. But the crowds found out and followed Jesus on foot from the town. When he got off the boat, Jesus saw all the people and he had compassion for them. He healed people who were sick.

When it was evening, Jesus' disciples came to him and said, 'This place is in the middle of nowhere, and it's getting late. Send the crowd away so they can go to the villages and buy themselves some food.'

But Jesus told them, 'They don't need to go away; you give them something to eat.'

The disciples replied, 'What? We've got nothing here! Nothing apart from five loaves and two fish.'



Jesus told them, 'Bring them here to me.' Jesus made everyone sit on the grass. Taking the five loaves and the two fish, he looked up to heaven, blessed the bread and broke it. Then he passed the food to his disciples and asked them to share it out. Everyone ate as much as they wanted. And at the end, when they cleared up, they had twelve baskets of leftovers! Five thousand men, women and children ate that day.

Act out the story

Read the Bible passage again together. Work together, as a family, to recreate the Bible story in the modern day, e.g. having friends round for a party but not having any food to offer. Allow time and space to rehearse then perform the resulting drama.

Thank-you prayer

Provide paper and pens. Invite everyone to write something that they want to thank God for and then place them in a special place all together.

As Jesus thanked you
for the baskets of food,
we thank you, God,
for the many things you give to us
every day.

Amen.

Part 3

Turn out your pockets

Invite someone to turn out their pockets or bags. What do they have with them that they could share with someone else? Use this as a starting point for a discussion: what other things could we share that are not about money or possessions, e.g. Time? Energy? Expertise?

Sorry prayer

As you pray, invite everyone to hold their hands together in a clasped grip before slowly releasing their grasp.

Lord Jesus, we are sorry for the times
we keep you to ourselves
and for not sharing your love with others.
Help us to share it with those around us.

Amen.

Part 4

Time is short

Set a simple challenge connected to food, e.g. make a sandwich, fetch a glass of water, and only give a very short time to do it. Afterwards, sit down together. Light a candle, and have the stop watch ready on a phone (or www.online-stopwatch.com/). Set the time for a minute. Remind everyone that doing God's work is urgent. Encourage everyone to pray quietly, asking God how he wants them to serve other people, and reflecting on what he might be saying.

Part 5

Make and share food together

Have pizza bases, tomato sauce, cheese and various topping ingredients laid out. Be aware of any food allergies. Invite each person, one at a time, to choose one item each. Encourage everyone to contribute their item as you begin to make pizzas together, reminding them that sharing makes the whole experience better for everyone. Cook and share the pizzas together.

You may wish to use these questions and the picture to aid a discussion while you eat together.

- Why is there a need to share?
- What are the best things about joining together with your church community?
- What would you share with them?



A closing prayer

Pray this prayer as you finish eating together.

The crowds gathered around you, Lord,
to share with you;
your words and your food.
Help us to go out to share
your words of love and your bread of life.
Amen.

Testing the water

PETER WALKS ON THE WATER TO JESUS

MATTHEW 14.22-33 • 9-15 AUGUST 2020



Read the [Introduction for leaders](#), or [Introduction for parents and carers](#) for guidance on how to use these ideas.

You will need these items: objects which sink or float; person shapes from paper or card, pens/pencils/felt tips, toy boat or draw one; a die (online, if you haven't got one: www.online-stopwatch.com/online-dice/), sweets (or another snack); flattened cardboard boxes or cushions, (optional: water pistols); a bowl to put water in and pebbles, or toy figures; wooden lolly sticks or strips of card, pipe cleaners or a person-shaped cut-out; blue paint and shallow plates or a thick blue pen, large piece of paper; stepping stones cut out of card; boat shapes cut out of card; the song Simply trusting Jesus, at <https://sameboatmusic.com/pages/roots> and a phone/tablet to play it on.

Part 1

Sink or swim?

Run some water into the sink and experiment together with objects to see which ones float and sink.

Into the boat

Cut out person shapes from paper or card and invite everyone to decorate their person and write their name on it. Then take turns to place the people into a drawn or toy boat, explaining that this week's story is about what happens to Jesus' disciples one day in their boat.

Thank-you prayer

God of wind and waves,
thank you that you meet us
when we are sure of our faith
when we are battling our doubts
wherever we are today.
Amen.

Part 2

Roll the dice

Ask a volunteer to read **Matthew 14.22-33**. Before they read, encourage them to take a risk by rolling one die (if you haven't got one you can roll a dice online here: www.online-stopwatch.com/online-dice/): rolling a number 1 means they must read with the Bible/story text upside down; a 2, they can read normally and win a tube of sweets (or help themselves to a snack); a 3, they should sing the passage to a tune of their choice; if they roll a 4 they can nominate someone else to read; a 5 means roll again; and if they roll a 6 they have to read in French (find La Bible du Semeur on biblegateway.com). Ask: are all risks worth taking?

Straight after feeding the crowd with the fish and bread, Jesus made the disciples get into the boat and cross to the other side of the lake. He sent the crowds home. When everyone had left, he went up the mountain by himself to pray. He stayed there on his own until evening.

Meanwhile, the boat that the disciples were in was caught in a storm – battered by the waves, far from the shore, with the wind against them. Early the next morning, Jesus came walking towards them on the water. When the disciples saw him they were absolutely terrified! They shouted out in fear, 'It's a ghost!'

But immediately Jesus called to them, 'Be brave! It's me. Don't be afraid.'

Peter called out in reply, 'Lord, if it's really you, tell me to come and meet you on the water.'

'Come!' called Jesus. So Peter climbed out of the boat and began to walk across the water to Jesus. All was going well until Peter began to notice the strong wind and got frightened.

He started to sink and cried out, 'Lord, save me!' Jesus immediately reached out his hand and caught him.

'Why didn't you trust me?' he asked Peter.



When they got back into the boat and sat down the wind died down. This made everyone in the boat worship him saying, 'Truly, you are the Son of God.'

Act out the story

Act out the story as if you are all sitting in the boat. Use flattened cardboard boxes or cushions for the boat sides (ask everyone to bob these up and down with the movement of waves), and wave your arms to recreate the movement of the water. You could even use small water pistols to squirt people with (being aware that not everyone will appreciate this!) and ask two people to act out the parts of Jesus and Peter walking on the water, miming and adding the spoken words that those characters say.

Talk together

- If you were Peter, would you have stepped out of the boat?
- What are some of the big and small things that scare you?
- When you're in trouble or scared, who might you ask to help?

A prayer for others

Sit together in a circle. Put a container of water in the middle and give each person a pebble or small object to place in it during the prayer. Or use toy people, and no water.

We bring before you, God,
all those who are finding it hard
to put their trust in you.

Place the pebbles in the water or put the toy people into the centre of the space.

Fill them with your Holy Spirit
and restore their faith in you.

Amen.

Part 3

Peter's courage

You will need: paper, pens/pencils, glue, wooden lolly sticks or strips of card, pipe cleaners or a person-shaped cut-out.

Give everyone paper and pens/pencils, then ask them to draw a picture of the disciples' boat and Jesus walking on the water towards them. Help everyone to use glue to attach lolly sticks or strips of

card to look like the timber of their boat and pipe cleaners to fashion a figure of Peter to add to the boat. Invite everyone to use pens/pencils to add other details to the picture.

Steps of faith

Lay out a large piece of paper and pour some blue paint onto shallow plates. Encourage everyone to take off their shoes and socks, step onto the paint, and make footprints across the paper as though they were walking on water. Write 'Trust in me' across the paper when the paint has dried. Help everyone to clean their feet! If you don't want to use paint, you could draw around feet with a blue pen.

A prayer of praise and thanksgiving

Invite everyone to join in with the response: **You are God over all.**

Almighty God, creator of all things:

You are God over all.

God in our weakness.

You are God over all.

God in our strength.

You are God over all.

God with authority.

You are God over all.

God in our doubts and fears.

You are God over all.

Almighty God.

You are God over all.

Amen.

Part 4

Stepping over doubt

You will need: card 'stones', pens.

Ask everyone to think about the things that might hold them back from knowing and trusting Jesus. Write their answers on card 'stones', and lay them across the floor, to make stepping stones, with the writing facing up. Pray together about the doubts and worries written on the cards. Gradually invite everyone to turn the stones over one by one as they pray over them, and walk across to the other side of your space.

Sing

Learn and sing the song 'Simply trusting Jesus' from Same Boat Music:

<https://sameboatmusic.com/pages/roots>

Part 5

Remember to trust in God

Cut out a boat shape from some card and write on it a situation where you need to trust God. Decorate it as you wish, then stick it on the fridge (or somewhere else you will see it) to remind you.

Stepping prayer

Stand in a line and encourage everyone to take a large 'step' out at the appropriate point.

Lord Jesus, when we go out,
help us to step out in faith,
remembering who we walk with,
knowing that you have authority over all.

Amen.

Listen and understand

JESUS MEETS WITH THE PHARISEES AND THEN A

CANAANITE WOMAN MATTHEW 15.(10-20), 21-28 • 16-22 AUGUST

Read the [Introduction for leaders](#), or [Introduction for parents and carers](#) for guidance on how to use these ideas.

You will need these items: snacks, drinks, playing cards; video clip '[The art of misdirection](#)' and the equipment to play it; template below printed onto card (or use card and draw your own), scissors, split pins felt tip pens; cardboard tubes, pens, paper; song at <https://sameboatmusic.com/pages/roots> and a phone/tablet to play it on, Children's Sheet: www.rootsontheweb.com/media/20740/16-aug-2020-childrens-sheet.pdf, envelopes.

Part 1

Pointless?

Serve snacks and drinks but also challenge everyone to build a house of playing cards. Is anyone distracted from the food by this pointless task?

The art of misdirection

Show the clip '[The art of misdirection](#)'. Apollo Robins demonstrates what misdirection means and how it can be used to 'steal your attention'. Talk together: do you ever find that your attention is 'stolen' by things that don't really matter? Can you think of any examples?

A prayer for this week

God of all,
as we go into the week ahead,
help us to keep our eyes on you and the things you want us to do,
so that we do not become distracted by the things that draw us away from you.
Amen.

Part 2

Can you hear me?

Ask someone to read out the story while everyone else make as much noise as they can. Ask how clearly they were able to hear the reader with so much distraction. Ask the same person to read the passage again, this time without distraction, and discuss how that felt.

Jesus was teaching the crowds when he explained about what makes a person pure. 'It's not about what goes into your mouth,' he said, talking about what you eat. What stops you from being pure is if bad things come out of your mouth.' Some people listening disagreed and the disciples told Jesus. He answered, 'Any plant that has not been planted by God will be uprooted. These people are like the blind leading the blind. If they do not understand, how can they help others to do so?'

Then Peter said to Jesus, 'Explain this to us.' Jesus said, 'Do you still not understand? Whatever goes into your mouth goes into your stomach and eventually into the sewer. But things that come out from your mouth come from the heart, so if they are bad, this means the very heart of you is also bad.'

Jesus went on to another place, a foreign place called Tyre and Sidon. A woman from that place, a foreigner, came out into the street and started shouting. 'I need your help, Lord!' she called. 'Son of David, help me. My daughter is very ill.'

She shouted as loud as she could to get their attention, but Jesus didn't answer her at all.

His disciples tried to persuade him: 'Send her away. She keeps on shouting at us.' Jesus seemed to agree with them.

He answered, 'I was sent only to the lost sheep of Israel.'

But the woman didn't give up. She came right up to them and knelt before Jesus, saying, 'Lord, help me.' Then Jesus said to her, 'It's not fair to take what was meant for the children, their food, and throw it to the dogs.'



But she replied, 'Well, yes, Lord, but even the dogs get something. They eat the crumbs that fall from the master's table.'

Jesus looked straight at the woman and answered, 'Woman, you have great faith! What you want most will happen.' And her daughter was healed instantly.

Talk together

- What's the kindest thing someone has said to you recently?
- How important are the words we use, and why?
- Who are 'outsiders' today, and how can we include them more?

A prayer for ourselves

We are here to listen, God,
Place hands behind ears.
 we are here to understand.
Place finger on head.
 Help us not to be distracted.
Place hands over ears.
Amen.

Part 3

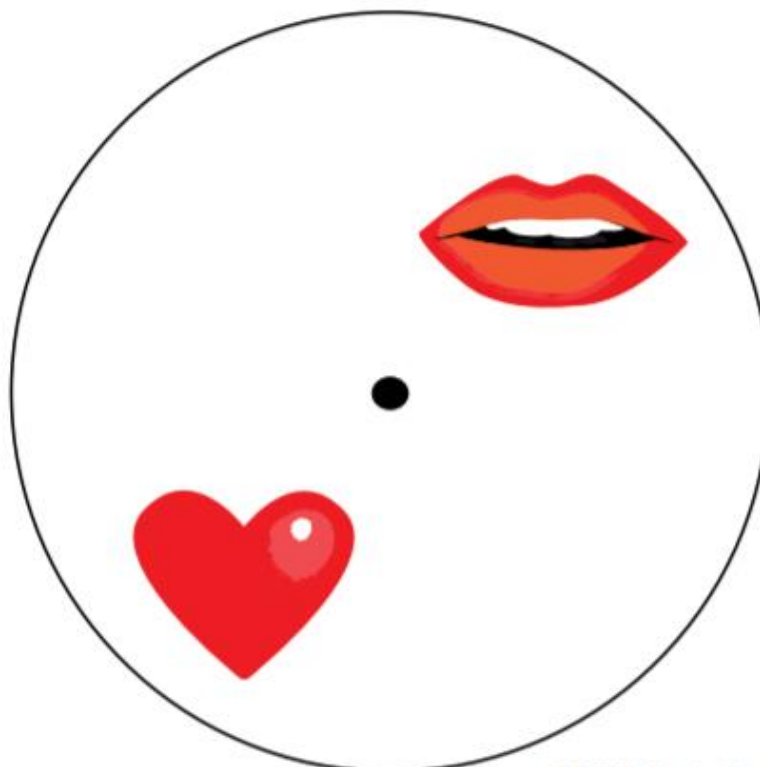
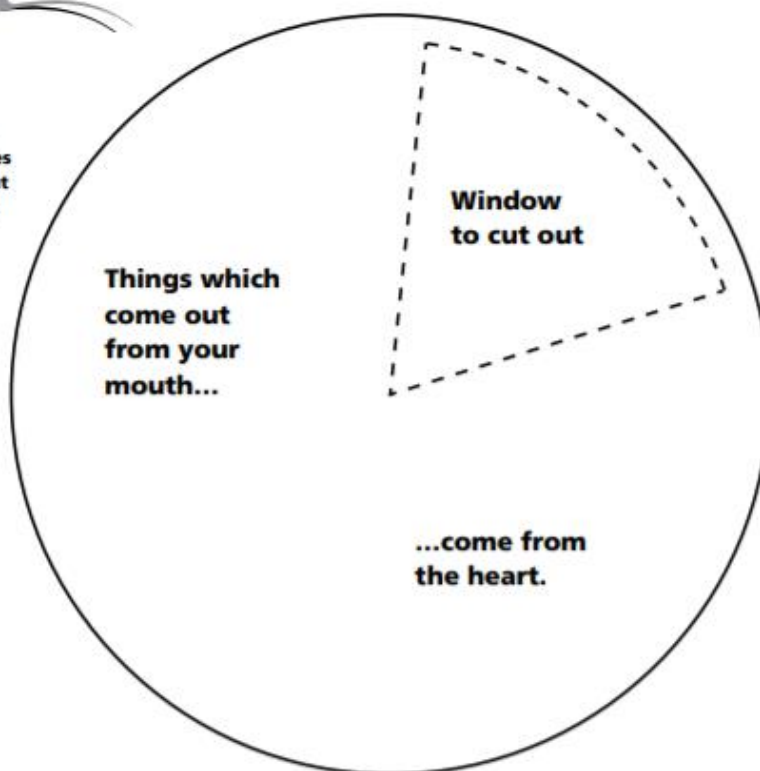
Heart and mouth pinwheels

Using the template below, help each person to cut away the window from the top circle, and fit the top circle on top of the bottom circle. Then help them to make a small hole in the centre (as marked) and put a split pin through. Encourage everyone to decorate both their circles and personalise them using felt tip pens. When everyone has finished, they can spin their wheels to reveal the images and read the verse aloud together.



CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE | 16-22 August 2020
Template to use with: *Heart and mouth pinwheels*, p.32

Print copies of the two circle templates on thin card and cut them out carefully.



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Are you listening?

Make 'listening tubes' from cardboard tubes. Encourage everyone to decorate their tubes with felt tip pens (and other craft materials if you have them) and then use them to listen to others.

A prayer for forgiveness

Lord Jesus,
we don't always follow you
as closely as we should.
Sometimes we walk far away
and get distracted by things
that aren't of you.
We are sorry, Lord.
Amen.

Part 4

Sing

Learn and sing the song 'Keeper of my heart' from Same Boat Music:
<https://sameboatmusic.com/pages/roots>.

Listen and understand

Ask everyone to think of people they know and pick out a few who have obvious differences, e.g. a friend from a different country, someone who uses a walking stick. Talk about similarities and differences, and what we might learn by putting ourselves in each person's position, e.g. learning a new language, what it's like to listen and understand someone with a different perspective on life, showing patience with disability.

Optional: Draw a picture or write a prayer to say thank you to God for making people so diverse and that there is so much we can learn from one another.

Part 5

Secret envelope

You will need: pens, paper and envelopes, one of each per person.

Invite everyone to think about people they could be nicer to, or make an effort to include more, then write their names on pieces of paper. Explain that they don't need to show anybody. Ask everyone to seal the names in their envelopes and write their own names on the front. They keep them sealed or open and pray over the names, thinking about how they might make an effort to be kinder.

Life from a different angle

Look at the picture together and discuss the following question:



When have you ever experienced life from the viewpoint of an outsider?

Take it further

Use the Children's Sheet to recap what you have been thinking about and do the activities together.
Spend some extra time on the 'Family time' section: www.rootsontheweb.com/media/20740/16-aug-2020-childrens-sheet.pdf

A better story

JESUS TALKS ABOUT WHO HE IS AND PROMISES PETER

AN IMPORTANT ROLE MATTHEW 16.13-20 • 23-29 AUGUST 2020



Read the [Introduction for leaders](#), or [Introduction for parents and carers](#) for guidance on how to use these ideas.

You will need these items: colouring sheet www.rootsontheweb.com/media/20756/23-aug-2020-colouring-sheet.pdf; sticky notes; key templates printed out (see below) or scissors and paper; (optional: play dough or Lego™/building bricks or paper and pens); images of famous people; cardboard boxes and masking tape or cushions and throws, chunky felt tip pens or pens and paper; the song 'Thank you God' at <https://sameboatmusic.com/pages/roots> and a phone/tablet to play it on.

Part 1

Meet Peter

Use the Colouring Sheet to introduce Peter and think about Jesus' words to him:

www.rootsontheweb.com/media/20756/23-aug-2020-colouring-sheet.pdf

Who am I?

Prepare sticky notes with the names of famous people/characters from fiction, e.g. the Queen, Harry Potter, Pikachu, written on them, one for each person. Stick a name onto each person's forehead. Everyone is allowed to ask the others 10 'yes' or 'no' questions, to help them work out who they are.

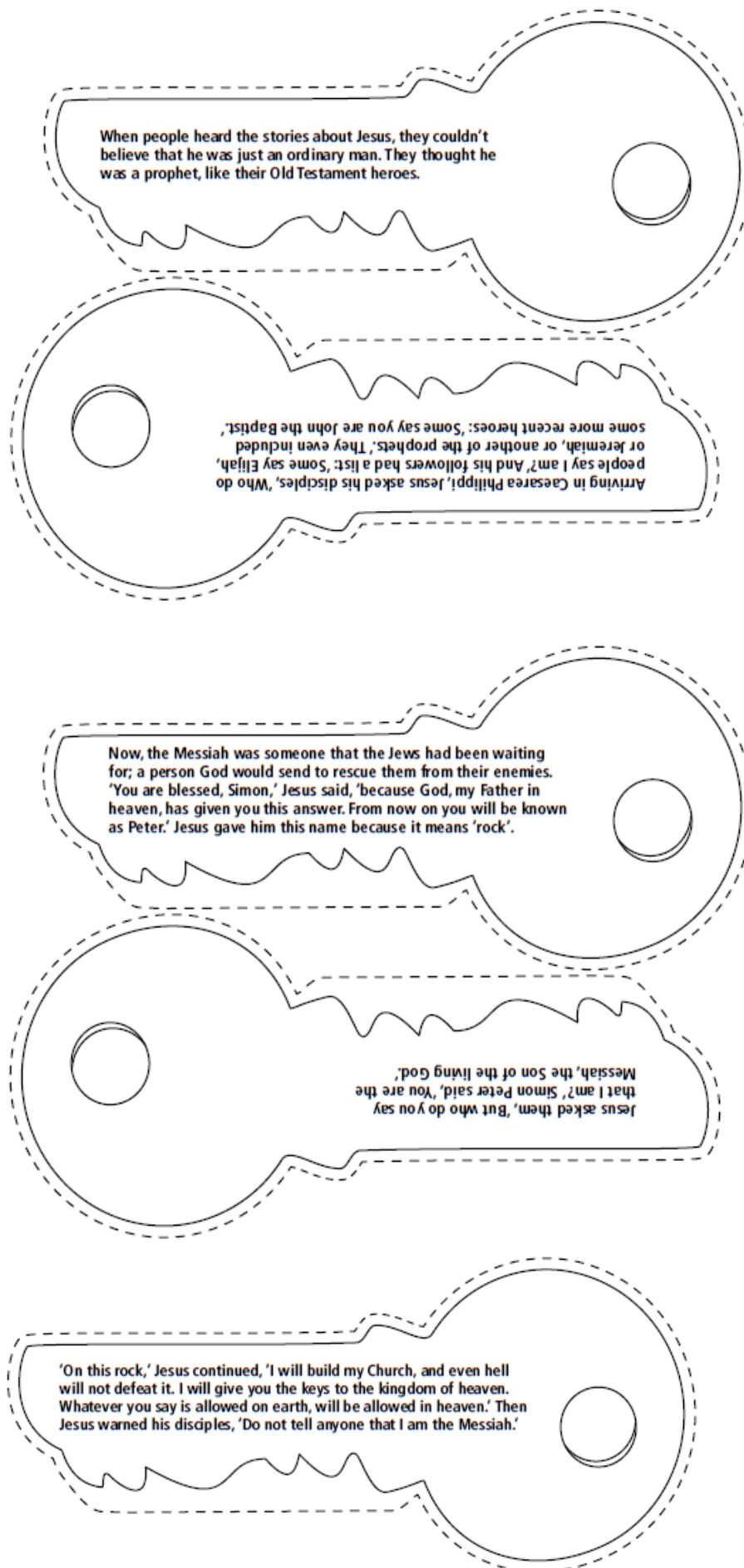
A gathering prayer

Father God,
as we come together here today,
build us together as your Church,
one family, together in this place.
Amen.

Part 2

The key to it all

If you can, use the template below with the Bible passage printed on five key shapes and cut round each key. On the back of each key – in the correct order for the story – write one word of the phrase, 'The keys to the kingdom' then mix them up. Read out the story in full, then ask everyone to read the story again and put the five keys in the correct order to make the phrase. They can then make a hole in each key, and thread a piece of string through it, to tie them together in a loop like a keyring. Together you can use the big keyring to remember the phrase and reread the Bible passage. If you can't use the template, cut out five key shapes from paper, and write one of the words from the phrase, 'The keys to the kingdom' on each key.



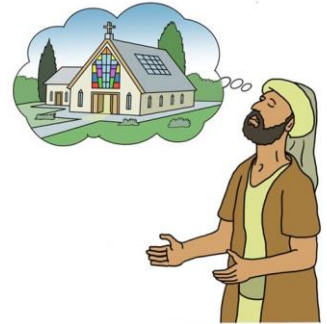
When people heard the stories about Jesus, they couldn't believe that he was just an ordinary man. They thought he was a prophet, like their Old Testament heroes.

Arriving in Caesarea Philippi, Jesus asked his disciples, 'Who do people say I am?' And his followers had a list: 'Some say Elijah, or Jeremiah, or another of the prophets.' They even included some more recent heroes: 'Some say you are John the Baptist.'

Jesus asked them, 'But who do you say that I am?'

Simon Peter said, 'You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God.'

Now, the Messiah was someone that the Jews had been waiting for: a person God would send to rescue them from their enemies. 'You are blessed, Simon,' Jesus said, 'because God, my Father in heaven, has given you this answer. From now on you will be known as Peter.' Jesus gave him this name because it means 'rock'.



'On this rock,' Jesus continued, 'I will build my Church, and even hell will not defeat it. I will give you the keys to the kingdom of heaven. Whatever you say is allowed on earth, will be allowed in heaven.' Then Jesus warned his disciples, 'Do not tell anyone that I am the Messiah.'

Action time

Retell the story in this shortened version, encouraging everyone to join in the actions as indicated in italics.

Jesus and his friends were walking along. (*walk on the spot*)

Jesus said, 'Who do you think I am?' (*turn both hands upwards*)

Simon Peter was the first to answer. (*point one finger up*)

He said, 'You are the Son of God.' (*point a finger on the other hand up*)

Jesus said, 'You will be called Peter – the rock. (*clench one fist to make a 'rock'*)

I will build my Church on you and I will give you the keys to the kingdom of heaven.' (*clench both fists together and 'build'*)

A prayer for forgiveness

Lord Jesus, we are sorry
that we do not always recognise who you are.

Help us to see you as our Messiah,
the Son of the living God.

Amen.

Part 3

Film it

Work together to create a short film of the action from Matthew 16.13-20. You can do this yourselves by acting it out or create animation using play dough or Lego™ or with paper and pens www.youtube.com/watch?v=uhrpck7mg1c. It can be serious or tongue-in-cheek. You should be able to film using a phone, or use more professional equipment if you have it.

Prayer cairn

Give everyone a small stone. Say together, 'Jesus, help us to build our lives on you'. Then ask everyone to place their stones, one at a time, in a pile to make a prayer cairn. As they do, say, 'May (insert name of person) build their life on you.'

A prayer of praise

Invite everyone to join in with the response: **You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God.**

Lord Jesus,
you came to earth and walked among us.
You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God.
You have shown us the truth.
You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God.
You are living with us, showing us the way to live.
You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God.
We thank you and praise you that
You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God.
Amen.

Part 4

Who do you trust?

Print a selection of images of famous people, cut them out of magazines/newspapers, or look at them online. Ask everyone to arrange these people in order of how much they trust them. Ask for explanations about why they do or don't trust these people.

Cardboard church

Explain that you are going to build a cardboard church, but you need to build proper solid foundations first. Allow everyone to work together and make a flat base. Then to construct a building on top of it, out of the cardboard boxes, held together with masking tape. Ask everyone to write some of the Bible verses from today's story on their cardboard church, and times when they feel able to trust God on the inside. If you haven't got boxes, use cushions, throws, etc. and write the Bible verses on paper to tuck into your building. Talk and pray about these times of trust.

A prayer for others

To the God we can trust,
we pray for those who
do not have you in their story:
for those who have stories of pain;
for those who have stories of loss;
for those who have stories of fear;
for those who have stories of need.
Help them find a better story in you.
Amen.

Part 5

Sing

Learn and sing the song 'Thank you God' from Same Boat Music:

<https://sameboatmusic.com/pages/roots>

Jump!

Make a large pile of cushions. Allow a few minutes for everyone to pray quietly about anything that's currently worrying them. Afterwards, let them take turns to fall safely backwards onto the cushions as a mark of trusting Jesus with these difficult situations.

A closing prayer

Through our words and actions, make us

Ready to take every opportunity

Under your protection and guidance.

Send us out to share your story

The good news for all people.

Amen.

Take up your cross

JESUS INVITES US TO SHARE HIS STORY, WHICH IS AS
TOUGH AS IT IS GOOD MATTHEW 16.21-28 • 30 AUG-5 SEPT 2020



Read the [Introduction for leaders](#), or [Introduction for parents and carers](#) for guidance on how to use these ideas.

You will need these items: sweets or chocolates; books or heavyish items you've got several of; play figures, a road map and a cloth; scraps of wood, nails, string and a hammer or card, string and scissors; potatoes or sponges, paints; equipment to play a DVD, the film *Frozen* [PG]; paper, paint, paintbrushes, felt tip pens, other art materials.

Part 1

Hold it!

Invite everyone to line up against a wall. Keeping their backs against the wall, ask them to walk their feet outwards until their thighs are parallel with the floor. Challenge everyone to hold this position for as long as possible. It will soon start to hurt. See who can hold the position for the longest – you may wish to reward them with a prize. Afterwards, ask: what keeps us going in difficult times in life? Does it make a difference if there is a clear reward?

Can you resist?

Have a bag of sweets or chocolates ready and give one to each person. Tell them that if they can resist eating it until the end of Part 5, they will receive another one, but they won't get another one if they eat it before you finish.

A prayer of thanksgiving

Heavenly Father,
thank you for your promise,
that no matter how hard
the path we walk,
we can be confident that we will share in your reward.
Amen.

Part 2

One line each

Read Matthew 16.21-28, with everyone taking it in turns to read one sentence each. The first reader must hold a heavy book or other heavyish item while reading, the second reader two books, the third reader three books, and so on. Afterwards, reward the readers with a number of sweets, equal to the number of books they had to hold.

The followers of Jesus didn't like everything he told them. Some things he talked about were difficult to hear and others were difficult to do.

Peter had just been praised by Jesus, for saying that Jesus was the Messiah, but as Peter listened now, he couldn't believe what he was hearing. Jesus was saying that he would have to suffer and die. 'I will be killed,' he said, 'but on the third day I will rise again.'

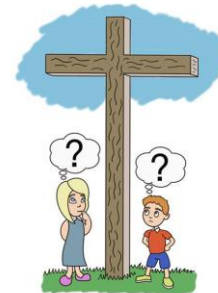
The Messiah can't die, Peter thought. 'God forbid it, Lord!' he said. 'This must never happen to you.'

Jesus got angry. 'You're not thinking as God thinks, Peter. You can only see things like humans do. If I thought like that, it would make me stumble instead of doing the right thing. Get behind me, Satan!'

This was hard for Peter to hear, but then Jesus told his followers to do things that sounded very tough too.

'If someone wants to follow me, they have to stop putting themselves first and take up their cross. If they want to save their own lives, they will lose them, but if they lose their lives following me, they will find them again.

'What is the point of having whatever you want, if it means losing your life? What can someone give in exchange for their life?'



Jesus said, 'When the Son of Man comes in glory with his angels, he will repay everyone for what they've done. Truly, I say, some of you standing here now will see the Son of Man coming in his kingdom before you die.'

Retell the story

Provide play figures, a road map and a cloth. Allow everyone to use these to retell the story in their own way.

Prayer picture

If space allows, everyone stands and makes the shape of a cross together.

We bring our crosses
as we gather here today,
crosses of worry, fear, hope or love. Thank you, God,
that you are always ready to welcome us,
whatever crosses we are carrying.

Amen.

Part 3

Take up your cross

Provide scraps of wood, nails, string and hammers, or card, string and scissors. Invite everyone to create simple crosses – ensure careful supervision at all times. Discuss what Jesus means when he challenges us to 'take up our cross'. Is it just about carrying a piece of wood around? If not, what does it mean?

Print it

Cut cross shapes into potatoes or sponges. Put paint onto plates and encourage everyone to print lots of crosses onto a large sheet of paper.

A prayer for others

For those who carry crosses of:
uncertainty or anxiety,
fear or hurt,
sorrow or concern,
joy or laughter,
goodness or hope,
peace or love,
we ask you to walk with them.
Amen.

Part 4**Frozen heart**

Play a clip from Disney's Frozen: from 1:19:10 to 1:25:25 – or watch the whole film if you have time. Talk about the way Anna was prepared to sacrifice her own life to save her sister, and how that sacrifice resulted in both of them being saved from harm. Make the connection between Anna and Elsa, and the concept that those who try to save their lives will lose them, and those who give up their lives will save themselves.

Sacrifice artwork

Invite everyone to use paint, pens or any other resources available to create their own picture depicting sacrifice – thinking about Jesus' death on the cross and his words to us about 'taking up' our own cross.

A rhyming prayer

It may be good,
it may be tough,
but God you are with us
and your love is enough.
Amen.

Part 5**Rewards**

Bring out a special snack, e.g. a box of chocolates, for anyone who successfully denied themselves the snacks and drinks earlier (see Part 1). However, ensure everyone has something nice to eat. Let everyone enjoy the chocolates and reflect on the rewards Jesus offers his followers, and thank him for the good things he gives us.

Picture discussion

Look at the picture together and discuss the following question:

- How do you respond when life is tough?

**A prayer for forgiveness**

Pass around a simple holding cross or any cross you have/have made as you pray:

Lord Jesus,
thank you that you went to the cross,
and that through your death
we can be forgiven.
We are sorry for the times
when we fail to pick up our own cross
and walk in your way,
choosing instead to do things our way.
Help us to follow you always.
Amen.