

ADULT STUDY GUIDE

This is the adult component of the Enduring Faith Bible Curriculum. This piece follows the **same scope and sequence** as the other levels: **Early Childhood, Elementary, and Youth**. This alignment presents some amazing opportunities.

- First of all, it helps all ages speak a **common theological language**.
- Second, it helps God’s people build an understanding of the **lifelong nature of learning God’s Word**—that we don’t just learn the narratives once or twice before moving on to other matters.
- Third, and critical to this curriculum, it helps **equip households** to teach the faith at home.

If parents and other adults spend time meditating and discussing the narratives of the Bible while the younger generations in the congregation study the same narratives, then there will be greater opportunity throughout the week to **reflect together** upon what the narrative says and what it means. In other words, studying the narratives of the Bible as adults is a blessing in and of itself, but it also helps **equip parents and faith leaders** to be more confident and feel empowered to extend those conversations into the household.

FEATURES OF THIS STUDY

This study guide is meant to provide some guidelines and springboards for discussion in your Bible study groups.

- The **first page** of each lesson provides the central focus statements, not only for the Adult level, but also for the other levels. Use this as a way to orient yourself to the **main themes and goals** of the lessons across all levels. You’ll also find helpful **tips for preparation**.
- The **middle two pages** begin with an introductory “**Launch**” section, which provides prompts for beginning the study and an open-ended reflection question to kick off group discussion. The following “**Learn & Live**” section breaks down the text into three to five narrative sections. Each one of these sections has some additional commentary, a reflection question, and some helps to better understand possible answers to the reflection question. The “**Leave**” section provides prompts for a final reflection question and some other considerations to close the lesson. The **sidebars** include leader tips and bonus activities to help you think through options for extending the lesson.
- The **final page** of each lesson is the student piece. Copy one lesson handout per learner, and distribute this at the beginning of class.

TIPS FOR USE

This study guide is designed primarily to help give you, the leader, some thoughts and prompts to help guide and assist facilitation of the class. Below are some tips for how to use it.

- This is meant to be a Bible study, so each learner will need access to a Bible. Encourage your learners to bring their own to class.
- Don’t neglect the lesson handout. The primary reason for this page is to create some space for each learner to reflect and engage the questions on his or her own. Often, any given group will have one or two vocal learners and others who may not speak up. Consider using techniques to help engage all learners in the process, such as having each learner write down his or her reflection privately before sharing, having each learner share with a partner before opening up discussion, or changing the seating arrangements to create small groups.
- Use the opening reflection question as a time to build community. Adult learners, generally speaking, desire to share their experience with one another, and this lesson starter provides an opportunity for this.
- For each narrative section, ask volunteers to read the text aloud while the rest follow along. Don’t force anyone; adults, like children and youth, may be self-conscious about their reading or public speaking ability.
- Download the Enduring Faith Page from the online digital resource center and hand out copies to your learners. Near the end of the lesson, talk through the prompts, which help the learners extend the lessons in their households throughout the week. Encourage learners to take this page home along with the lesson handout to be used throughout the week.

A REVEALING RESTORATION

Jesus Appears
in Galilee
John 21:1–19
AD 33

BIBLE TRUTH

Jesus forgives and sends us.

LEARNER GOAL

I can consider how the events of the text help me better understand what it means that Jesus forgives me and sends me.

BIBLE VERSE

Jesus said to him, “Feed My sheep.” John 21:17

LAW & GOSPEL

God demands that I love Him and none other, solely and completely. **Even though I deny Him, God forgives me and assures me of His love for Christ’s sake.**

SCRIPTURE SNAPSHOT

Peter, James, John, Thomas, and a few of the other disciples fish all night on the Sea of Tiberias without catching anything. At dawn, Jesus appears on the beach and tells them to cast their nets on the right side of the boat. Immediately, the nets fill to overflowing, and John realizes Jesus is there. Peter swims ashore to see Jesus, who prepares breakfast. Addressing Peter directly, Jesus asks three times, “Do you love Me?” With each question, Peter becomes more distressed. Through these questions, the Lord restores and reinstates Peter to lead His Church.

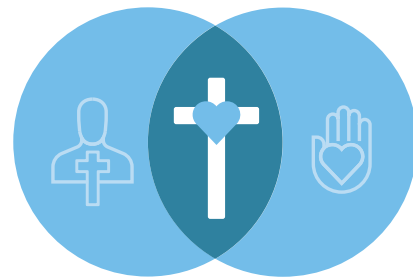
LESSON PREP

BASIC Read the narrative and study notes in *The Lutheran Study Bible (TLSB)*.

MORE TIME Read **John 21:20–25**.

IN DEPTH Read the section “Enigmatic Sayings” in *TLSB*, page 1775.

This lesson can be used for Easter.



CONNECTING IDENTITY & CALLING

IDENTITY: WHO AM I?

God reveals Himself to me as my risen and living Savior.

CALLING: WHY AM I HERE?

I can trust God to forgive and restore me through the death and resurrection of Jesus, my Savior.

GROWING IN FAITH FOR LIFE

See how this lesson builds on previous learning for each age.

ADULT

I can consider how the events of the text help me better understand what it means that Jesus forgives me and sends me.

YOUTH

I can relate how Jesus forgives and sends Peter to how He forgives and sends me.

ELEMENTARY

I understand that Jesus forgives me and sends me out to tell the Good News to others.

EARLY CHILDHOOD

I know Jesus loves me and wants me to tell others about Him.



LEADER NOTE

In many ways, forgiveness as a concept can feel cheap. It's easy to throw the term around like forgiveness is meaningless. At times, though, forgiveness can really mean a lot. For those with guilty consciences or burdens of past mistakes, hearing "I forgive you" can be a massive relief. Encourage your learners to write down words or phrases that describe what being forgiven by somebody else feels like. Learners can share with small groups or in the large group to look for patterns. Then direct them to the lesson, where we see what it means that Jesus forgives and sends His people to do His work.



BONUS ACTIVITY

Consider reading over or directing your learners to **Luke 5:1–11**. As a group, consider the parallels between the first time Jesus calls the disciples to be fishers of men and the narrative from this lesson. How do they complement each other?

LAUNCH

WELCOME

Welcome the group, and open in prayer. It may be a good time to take prayer requests and pray, either now or at the conclusion.

REVIEW

Review the Bible Truth, Bible Verse, and Learner Goal. Then, begin with the opening question.

OPENING REFLECTION

In your own words, describe what it feels like when somebody forgives you for something wrong you did against them.

LEARN & LIVE

JOHN 21:1–3

BIBLE COMMENTARY

Now that Jesus has risen from the dead and appeared to His disciples and many others, He sends them ahead to Galilee to await Him there. As they wait, Peter has the idea of going fishing, and a number of named and unnamed disciples agree to fish with him. It is unclear the extent to which the fishermen disciples continued their trade of fishing over the last few years of following Jesus. Regardless, Peter, the man of action, decides to spend the night fishing. His friends, notably John and James from the old family fishing business and now-believing Thomas, join him. Jesus will use this opportunity to show these fishermen how they will be fishers of men from here on out.

REFLECTION QUESTION

Is it surprising to you that the disciples decided to go fishing here? Why or why not?

REFLECTION HELPS

Answers will vary. On one hand, it may seem strange that they go fishing as they had just seen the Lord. On the other hand, they were waiting for more directions from Jesus, and Peter, a man of action, likely wanted to use the time wisely.

JOHN 21:4–8

BIBLE COMMENTARY

The men fish all night yet catch nothing. Though perhaps an unusual thought to us, it was not unusual during Jesus' day to fish at night. Yet they fish all night and, shockingly, they catch nothing! Jesus appears in the dim light on the shore, and the disciples do not recognize Him. He calls to them, using the term "children," which is an address that does not indicate condescension but instead friendliness, like "lads," or "guys." He commands them to cast the net on the right side of the boat and, surprisingly, they all agree and catch a massive quantity of fish. This is so shocking because the disciples likely had cast the net on that side of the boat many times during the night and caught nothing. In addition, the bizarre nature of the scene continues as the disciples unquestioningly follow the unsolicited advice of a stranger on the shore. Jesus is in control, knows what He's doing, and provides for His followers. John, recognizing the miracle, identifies Christ. Peter, displaying his impulsiveness, quickly rearranges his garments for a swim to shore and dives in, leaving the other disciples to drag the net to shore.

REFLECTION QUESTION

Identify different ways, from the text, that Jesus shows His control of the entire situation. How is this significant in our understanding of His mission to the Church?

REFLECTION HELPS

Jesus comes to the disciples, calls to them, commands them to act, and the disciples follow. As the Church, we recognize Jesus is at work and in control and, like Peter, we follow and listen to Him in all things.

JOHN 21:9–14

BIBLE COMMENTARY

When the disciples make landfall, they are presented with an amazing scene. Jesus is there and has already prepared a charcoal fire with fish on it and bread for their breakfast. He provides enough for all the disciples. He then says to bring some of the fish that they caught, which possibly means that Jesus commands the disciples to first sort through their miraculous haul of fish, sorting out the larger fish they will keep from the smaller fish they will throw back. When the disciples do this, they find 153 fish. Though some have tried to find a symbolic rationale for the inclusion of this number, it is best to read this as simply a poignant memory from John who couldn't believe what he saw at the time. In addition, the fact that the net isn't torn alludes to Christ's hand in providing this miraculous catch for them. The facts make it clear that it is Christ; the disciples need not question His identity. He who provides everything that's needed for the fishermen will also provide everything they need to fulfill their callings as fishers of men. This is the third time Jesus appears to His disciples in this prominent way, though He has revealed Himself to individuals and small groups in the weeks since His resurrection.

REFLECTION QUESTION

Looking over the text, in what ways did Jesus provide for His disciples here? How might these correlate to us today in the Church?

REFLECTION HELPS

Jesus provided breakfast for His disciples, passing it out to them and revealing Himself to them. Life in the Church today is about receiving the gifts that Christ graciously gives out to us—most important, forgiveness, life, and salvation in the Means of Grace.

JOHN 21:15–19

BIBLE COMMENTARY

After breakfast, Jesus and Peter have a conversation, wherein Jesus asks Peter if he loves Him three times and Peter responds by confessing his love for Christ. This is generally interpreted as Jesus reinstating Peter after Peter's three denials. Then, Jesus informs Peter of the cost of discipleship, or following Him. In an enigmatic saying, Jesus alludes to Peter's future crucifixion. Peter had previously denied and abandoned Christ in the garden; now Peter would follow Christ even to the cross. Even to us, Jesus says, "Follow Me."

REFLECTION QUESTION

What does Jesus tell Peter to do and expect to be done to him? How does the Church follow that same mission today?

REFLECTION HELPS

Peter is to feed and tend Christians with the Means of Grace, expect to carry his cross even unto death, and follow Christ. Today, pastors administer Word and Sacrament publicly in the congregation. And all baptized believers are called to follow Christ in their own lives.

LEAVE

FINAL REFLECTION

Consider how the events of the text help you better understand what it means that Jesus forgives you and sends you.

TAKE HOME

Equip your learners with ideas for taking the lesson into their households by giving them access to the Enduring Faith Pages.

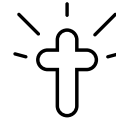
CLOSE WITH PRAYER

If you haven't yet, take prayer requests, or encourage a volunteer from the class to pray as you prepare to leave.



BONUS ACTIVITY

Jesus' distribution of the fish and the bread is reminiscent of Jesus' feeding the five thousand in **John 6:1–15**. If you have time, read over this miracle and discuss how the feeding of the five thousand sheds light on Jesus' provision for His people and what that means in this narrative. Also, consider how Christ continues to distribute His Means of Grace among His Church today, and what these two narratives continue to uncover for us about Christ's gracious character.



CHRIST CONNECTION

Christ forgives us our sins and sends us into the world to proclaim the Gospel.



LEADER NOTE

Jesus controlled the situation, provided for His disciples, forgave them, and told them to follow Him. Though we are not the Twelve, we, too, are forgiven and follow Jesus in our daily discipleship in our different vocations.

