**GROWING TOGETHER:** FOR OLDER CHILDREN

Session 1 of 4

# Peter and John

### MEETING AIM

To see how Jesus can change and renew lives.

### 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 is a story of healing and changing our lives around. This healing was an amazing, life-changing moment for the lame man, but it also tells us more about who Jesus is, what he came to do, and the gift he still is to us today. This session is a chance to explore what this story tells us about Jesus, to give us hope for ourselves and our friends, but also to get to join in the party with the lame man!

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### STARTING OUT – 5 mins

Start your time together with some simple refreshments and ask the children to share about the week they have had. Ask the group: “What is the best thing that you’ve ever been given?”

### INTRO ACTIVITY – 10 mins

**You will need:** a large sheet or curtain

Split the group in two. You and another adult helper should hold the sheet or curtain up to separate the two groups so that they can’t see each other. While the sheet is up, each group should choose a group member to remain standing, and the rest sit down. Then, after counting to three, drop the sheet. The challenge is a game of speed for each person to say the name of the person of the opposing team, before their name has been said! Repeat the game so that everyone gets the chance to play.

### BIBLE STORY – 10 mins

**You will need:** Bibles; The Message

Break the group into small groups, each with a leader to help. Ask each group to read Acts 3 – the leader should check that everyone knows what’s going on in the story.

Bring the group back together and chat together how you might re-enact the story. Don’t just think about the people in the story, but also the scenery and props. Be creative: if you have a large group, children could be the ‘beautiful gate’ or other people being crowds of people going into the temple. Read the passage out from *The Message*, while the children act it out.

### CHATTING TOGETHER – 5 mins

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

* What do you think the lame man was expecting from his day, and his life?
* What’s the difference between what the man asked for and what he was given?
* How would Jesus healing the man have changed his life?
* What does the healing of the man tell us about what Jesus is like?
* Can you think of other people whose lives were changed after meeting Jesus? These may be examples from the Bible or people you know who are alive today.

### CREATIVE TIME – 10 mins

**You will need:** kazoos (can be bought cheaply online); worship music and the means to play it

The man who had been healed responds to God by walking, jumping and praising God! Imagine being this man who was unable to walk, now having been healed by Jesus, wanting to worship God for all that he’s done for him! Give everyone a kazoo and explain or demonstrate how to use it.

The man couldn’t hold back his worship, he was jumping about and having a party to celebrate all that God had done! Explain that God doesn’t want us to always be solemn in our worship, but that he wants us to enjoy, and sometimes even go wild, worshipping him!

Explain that you’re going to have some wild worship in response to God being a God that makes us new and gives us more that we could even hope for. Lead the group in some kazoo worship; it might be easier to play a worship song to lead you all along. Choose a song that the group might be familiar wirh. Some suggestions are: ‘You have rescued me’, ‘Our God is a great big God’, ‘Lord, I lift your name on high’ or ‘Praise like fireworks’.

You could even arrange for the group to bring their kazoos back into the service and use them in the last worship song to share some of the fun of worship with the rest of the congregation.

### PRAYER – 5 mins

**You will need:** A4 paper; scissors

Hand out the paper and explain to the group how to make a people paper chain (where you fold the paper and cut it out so that it looks like a chain of people). If you need to find this out yourself, look online for some simple instructions. Have a practice run through so that you know what you’re doing and how to explain it, and have a prototype to show them what it’s supposed to look like!

Explain that one big thing we can learn from the story is that meeting Jesus heals and can really change people’s lives around! As the group are cutting out their people paper chains, ask them to think about the ways in which the people they know need Jesus’ changing and renewing touch in their lives. Maybe they have friends who are ill, or lonely, or struggling in different ways? Maybe this includes themselves?

Once everyone has cut out their people, give them a pen to either write the names of, or draw the people that they most think they’d like to pray that Jesus would meet and transform their lives. Give them a few minutes and tell them that these paper-chain people are for them to take home as a reminder to continue to hold these people in prayer. But for now, finish with a prayer for all the people in the paper chains:

Jesus, you changed this man’s life by healing him. You gave him hope and a new future. You worked a miracle that no one was expecting. We lift up these people that we’ve written on our paper chains to you now, and pray that you would be made known to these people, and that you would heal them by your power and love. Amen.

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