

Cultural Value:

# Taking a Stand

Have you ever been in a situation where you needed to "take a stand" on something you believed was right? Or defend someone who was being mistreated? You are not the first! When Abraham Lincoln became president, he was forced to take a stand against the southern states that decided to leave the Union. In the Bible we read about Peter who failed to take a stand and denied his Lord three times.

Will you take a stand for what is right? Will you learn from Peter's mistakes?



Cultural Example:

# Them Are Fighting Words!

On April 12, 1861 a southern army attacked Fort Sumter, a U.S military installation located in South Carolina. South Carolina had seceded from the Union and was now part of the newly formed Confederate States of America under Jefferson Davis. The Confederate States of America consisted of states that chose to secede from the United States of America. This was the beginning of the American Civil War. Over the next four years 620,000 Americans would die, making it the deadliest war in American history.

What would lead to such a terrible tragedy? Why would so many men and women be willing to die? What would cause eleven southern states separate from the United States of America?

From the beginning, slavery was either at the center of the political conflict between the North and South, or it was the backdrop for Congressional political maneuvering. The Northern states were free states without slavery, while the Southern states depended upon slavery for their way of life.

Northern states sought to limit slavery's expansion or eradicate it completely, while the Southern states fought to both preserve and expand slavery in the United States. The Southern states feared that if slavery was not allowed to expand to new states, their influence and eventually their way of life would be ended.

The election of Abraham Lincoln added to the South's unrest. During his campaign, Lincoln made it clear that he stood for ending the expansion of slavery in new states. All new states would be free states, according to Lincoln. After Lincoln's election, but before he could even take office, seven states seceded from the Union. Four more states would follow shortly thereafter.

Abraham Lincoln believed that secession was unconstitutional. He did not believe that any state had the right to declare its independence from the United States of America. The South believed otherwise.

The culmination of the debate on secession took place in the Civil War's first battle at Fort Sumter. The debate over slavery would continue throughout the war. When Lincoln penned the Emancipation Proclamation, he wrote the words that would, in time, put an end to slavery in the United States of America. It would take two more years of conflict to make a reality the promises contained in the Emancipation Proclamation. After the war's end, the Thirteenth Amendment was ratified, finally bringing an end to slavery.



Biblical Truth:

## *Taking a Stand*

There are some things in life that we must stand up for. This does not mean that we need to fight or go to war, but we do need to make a stand.

In the passage below, Jesus is on His way to the cross. This is a very fearful time for the disciples who followed Jesus. If their master was to be arrested, who is to say that it would not happen to them?

**READ JOHN 13:36-38 AND WRITE YOUR ANSWERS:**

1. What does Peter claim he is willing to do? (v.37)
2. What does Jesus predict about Peter's ability to take a stand now? (v. 36)
3. What does Jesus predict Peter will do? (v. 38)

Peter failed to make a stand for Christ. After Jesus' arrest he was given three opportunities to declare his love and allegiance to Jesus. Each time Peter denied his Lord. Why do you think Peter did this?

## Building Your Values for God:

# "Play Out" Your Stand

Today we will dramatize Peter's denials of Jesus recorded in the Gospel of John. Feel free to get into costume, set the stage or just read aloud your own dramatization of this event in the life of Peter. Be sure to discuss this with the other members of your play.

### ***Peter's Denial: Take One (John 18:15-18)***

Characters Needed:

Narrator  
Young Girl  
Peter

### ***Peter's Denial: Take Two (John 18:18, 25)***

Characters Needed:

Extras standing around a fire  
The Questioner  
Peter

### ***Peter's Denial: Take Three (John 18:26-27)***

Characters Needed

Extras standing around  
Servant of the High Priest  
Peter  
Rooster

In John 21 Jesus returns to the disciples and He reinstates Peter by giving him three opportunities to affirm his love and devotion for the Lord.