



Date: _____
Series: **We Are in God's Family** (Spring)
Year 2, Lesson 54

Peter's Miraculous Escape

Bible Event: Acts 12:1-17

Take Home Point: *WE ARE GOD'S CHURCH – *We pray for each other.*

*Repeat this phrase throughout the lesson. The leader will say the first part of the phrase (CAPS). The children respond with the second part of the phrase (*italics*).

Jesus Link: Jesus frees us from the chains of sin by giving his life for us.

What kids will learn about God in this worship experience:

- Children will learn that God's work is miraculous. Just as Peter was freed from prison, God works miracles in our lives, too. God's power is not magic, though. When God's people pray for each other, God shows his power in miraculous ways because he loves us so very much. Kids will learn ***WE ARE GOD'S CHURCH – *We pray for each other.***
- Children will respond to God's love as they pray to him, thanking him for loving them and giving them Jesus. They will offer him their songs of worship, their offerings, and their actions of love as they actively learn God's word.



Welcome Zone: (15-20 minutes)

Purpose: While kids arrive, give them a simple learning readiness activity that requires minimal supervision. This might include a video, games, blocks, or puzzles.

Video Suggestion: List a video , if available.

Activity Suggestion: Blocks, toys, puzzles, paper, and crayons.



Opening Worship: (10-15 minutes)

Children can bring forward the cross, candles, Bible, offering plate, and treasure box. The treasure box contains the props used to tell or dramatize the Bible event. Open with a simple prayer, having the children repeat after you. Collect offering and talk about how God will use it.

Praise Songs:

Choose two or three songs and list them here.

Bible Event: Mystery Box

The Mystery Box contains objects that will help the presenter tell the Bible event in creative fashion. They can be lifted out and shown as the story is told. Another option is to have a hole cut in the top of the box so that a child could put a hand in and guess what the object is before it is shown.

As the presenter pulls out the props and headpieces from the Mystery Box, he should use voice and gestures to act like the person he is representing from the Bible event.

Objects should include a crown for King Herod, a sword or helmet for a guard, a cloak for Peter, handcuffs (option: Gospel Illusion handcuffs), a gold garland halo for an angel, and a woman's handkerchief or headpiece for Rhoda, the servant girl.

Explain to the children that this Bible event really happened in the Bible. Invite the kids to imagine that the presenter is acting out different characters from the story. Here's what happened...

Take crown from Mystery Box to become evil King Herod.

As King Herod: I'm King Herod and I don't believe anything about that Jesus person. I don't believe he was the Savior and I don't care about him at all. But I do care about catching his followers and punishing them! Ha, ha, ha, ha! I'm going to tell my soldiers to go find Jesus' best friend, Peter, and have him arrested! (Remove crown.)

Take out guard's sword or helmet. Pretend to look for Peter and find him.

You're under arrest, Peter! King Herod will be so happy!

Set down guard gear. While placing cloak and handcuffs on Peter, resume role of the narrator.

As Narrator: Peter was arrested and brought to jail. He spent his time praying. Many of his friends prayed for him, too.

Finish placing cloak and handcuffs and assume a kneeling, praying position.

As Peter: Here I am in jail, surrounded by all of these guards. Lord, how will I ever get out? (Stand up, unfold hands.) Just at the very moment, an angel appeared in my jail cell. I thought I was dreaming! And then my handcuffs just fell off all by themselves!

Wear handcuffs loosely enough that they can fall off or use Gospel Illusion handcuffs.

I couldn't believe it!

Remove cloak and place halo on head.

The gate of the jail opened and the angel spoke to Peter. Get your coat and sandals and follow me. We will walk right out of jail and you will be free. (Remove halo and place Peter's cloak back on.) And just like that, the angel was gone. Peter was left walking down the street by himself.

I looked around, but I couldn't find the angel. I knew I wasn't dreaming! I really was walking down the street free! I decided to go to the house where my friends were gathered. They all believed in Jesus and were praying for me. When I got there, I knocked on the door and asked to be let in. A servant girl named Rhoda came to the door, but she didn't let me in right away. Here's what happened next.

Remove cloak and put Rhoda's headpiece on.

As Rhoda: I heard someone knocking at the door and ran over to answer it. As I got close, I heard Peter's voice! I was so excited that I forgot to open the door! Instead, I ran back to all of Peter's friends who were in the house praying and told them Peter was here! But they didn't believe

me. They thought Peter was still in jail. So I told them again, "It is Peter at the door. Come see for yourself." So they did. They all went to the door and opened it and Peter was there! He came in and told them about the wonderful way that God had freed him. Then he thanked all of his friends for praying for him. And everyone was thankful that God had helped Peter.

Remove headpiece and conclude the story as the narrator.

As Narrator: You see, believers pray for each other and God hears them and blesses them. Peter and his friends prayed for him to be let out of jail, and God helped! Remember:
WE ARE GOD'S CHURCH – *We pray for each other.



Action Zones: (20-30 minutes)

Purpose: Children move at their leisure to the activities according to their interest. Adults are assigned to oversee each of the zones, watching for safety, assisting any activity, and helping the children connect to the lesson of the day. All zones are introduced at the beginning of Zone Time. Some suggested zones are included below. It is usually best to have all children go to the Snack Zone first. Sing a blessing song or say a snack prayer together before dismissing to the zones.

During the Zone Time, children may arrive from mid-service dismissal. If this is an option at your church, be prepared to welcome the children and invite them to choose a zone.

Snack Zone: Give each child a graham cracker square and several pieces of black or red shoestring licorice, cut the same length as the graham crackers. They should place the licorice on the cracker to create a 'jail' before eating.

Drama Zone: Provide an "owie" chair, where the children can take turns sitting and telling others about something they need to be prayed for. The other children can pray for that person.

Puppet Zone: Let the children use puppets to discuss who they know who needs prayer or who needs "covered in prayer."

Felt Zone: Use felt board materials to show the story of Peter's Miraculous Escape from today's Bible event. (For example, use Lesson #169, "An Angel Opens Prison Gates," from *Betty Lukens' Through the Bible in Felt*.)

Craft Zone: Pre-cut black, gray, or any color construction paper into strips. Have children make a chain of five or six rings using tape, gluesticks, or a stapler to secure each ring. Attach a pre-made label onto one of the rings: "Peter's Miraculous Escape – God's Church Prays for Each Other." The children can wear the chains at home to retell the story.

Play Zone: Play a variation of "Mother, May I?" called "Angel, May I?" Place two masking tape lines on the floor 12 to 15 feet apart. Have "the angel" on one line and the other children on the other line. The angel gives each child, in order, a direction. Examples include two baby steps out of jail, one normal step out of jail, three large hops out of jail, etc. In order to move, the child must respond "Angel, may I?" If the child forgets to ask first, the angel may tell the child to sit down. The object of the game is to be the first person to cross the line where the angel is. That child then becomes the angel and the game starts over.

Quiet Reading Zone: Create a jail from a table or large box as a place for kids to read. Use black streamers as the bars of the jail. Include any books that feature the story of Peter's Miraculous Escape.

Music Zone: Your choice of music.

Coloring Zone: "Peter's Miraculous Escape" coloring page.



Closing Worship: (20 minutes)

Purpose: As you empty the zones and clean up, begin the music so the children can start wandering over.

Worship Songs:

Choose one or two songs and list them here.

Bible Application with Puppet Presentation:

Purpose: The puppet demonstrates the need that will be met in today's lesson. The scripts are not written verbatim, but give a story line in which the group leader can interact with the puppet.

Bubba comes out giggling with a pair of Chinese handcuffs to put on the large group presenter. He tricks the presenter into putting them on his fingers and the presenter (who acts like he's never seen them before) can't get them off. Bubba thinks it's the funniest thing he's ever seen. He's very proud of his trick. After struggling, the presenter asks Bubba to please help him. Bubba tells him to just relax and quit pulling so hard. The presenter sighs loudly and relaxes and is able to pull each finger out.

The presenter tells Bubba that these trick handcuffs remind him of today's Bible event. The presenter invites the kids to help tell Bubba the story of Peter being arrested by evil King Herod and how an angel came and made Peter's handcuffs fall right off. The presenter explains that Peter's handcuffs coming off was no magic trick. Peter's handcuffs fell off because of God and the power of prayer. Peter and all of his friends who believed in Jesus were praying that Peter could get out of jail safely. God heard their prayers and performed a miracle by sending an angel to release Peter.

God doesn't need magic. He is even more powerful than that. He just needs to hear our prayers and know that we love him. He will do wonderful things for us, too. Remember:
***WE ARE GOD'S CHURCH – We pray for each other.**

Other options: If Chinese handcuffs are readily available (Oriental Trading Company, for instance), they could be distributed to the children. If they are not available, another trick would work for Bubba. He could, for instance, pull a handkerchief out of his hat.

Prayer Time:

Purpose: Allow children to contribute their own prayers. This will teach them to turn to God in both good times and in times of trouble. End with the Lord's Prayer.

"Children Pray" Options: (select one from the options below)

_____ **Prayer Train Option:** Children line up and take turns stepping in front of the microphone and speak their brief prayers of thanksgiving.

_____ **Prayer Chair:** Children stand in a circle around one child sitting on a chair in the middle. All children in the circle will lay a hand on the child sitting in the chair as they say a prayer together.

_____ **Popcorn Prayer:** The leader moves through the crowd with a microphone and taps children on the head to stand and speak their prayer.

Lord's Prayer: Lead the children through the Lord's Prayer, phrase by phrase, or let them pray the entire prayer along with you.

Blessing:

May God, who is all around you,
pour his love upon you.

(Beginning at the bottom of the circle, slowly make a large circle with your hands. Finish by bringing your hands down and wiggling your fingers to resemble rain.)

And Jesus, his life a sacrifice,
walk right there beside you.

(Slowly make a large sign of the cross. Then move your hands out to the sides.)

And may God's Holy Spirit,
the one who lives inside you,

(Cross hands over your heart.)

keep you strong,
comfort, lead and guide you!

(Move to a "strong man" position. Then cross your arms with your hands on corresponding upper arms to communicate comfort. Bring one hand forward with "lead" and the other with "guide" to complete the blessing.)

Song of Sending:

Choose one song and list it here.



Closing Zones:

Purpose: Children go to an activity zone, such as the coloring zone, quiet reading zone, and children's Christian music video zone, as they wait for their parents.

Supplies:

Welcome Zone:

- blocks, toys, puzzles, paper, and crayons

Opening Worship:

- Bible
- crown
- sword or helmet
- cloak
- handcuffs (option: Gospel Illusion)
- gold garland halo
- woman's headpiece or handkerchief

Action Zones:

Snack:

- graham cracker squares
- black or red shoestring licorice, cut

Drama:

- "owie" chair

Craft:

- black, gray or other construction paper cut into strips
- tape, gluesticks, or stapler
- pre-made label: "Peter's Miraculous Escape – God's Church Prays for Each Other"

Play:

- masking tape

Quiet Reading:

- basket of books
- table or large box made into a jail
- black streamers
- tape

Music:

- your choice of music

Puppet:

- various puppets

Felt:

- materials to reenact story (For example, use Lesson #169, "An Angel Opens Prison Gates," from *Betty Lukens' Through the Bible in Felt*.)

Color:

- coloring page
- crayons and markers
- plain paper

Closing Worship:

- Bubba, the puppet
- Chinese handcuffs

Closing Zones:

- colored pencils
- paper
- basket of books