



Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Series: Pass the Promise  
Fall Year 1, Lesson 21

# Jesus Was Jailed for Us So We Could Be Free

**Primary Scripture:** Matthew 27:11-26; Mark 15:10

**Key Verse:** Luke 4:18, "He has sent me to announce forgiveness to the prisoners of sin."

## **How does this address a need in our kids' lives?**

Children struggle with envy and jealousy. Every child knows how easy it is to become jealous and then organize others to follow in that path. Jesus dealt with the Pharisees and their jealousy. It led to his arrest and death. Jesus' death and resurrection gives us the victory over this area in our lives. Praise God for this freedom.

## **How does Jesus fill this need?**

**Jesus for us:** Jesus was taken prisoner for us so we could be free.

**Jesus in us:** Jesus helps us let go of envy in our lives.

**Jesus through us:** Jesus helps us rejoice in the victories of others and not live in the bondage of envy and jealousy.

## Stamp of Excellence:

*Remind the kids what excellent worship looks like. We are in God's presence to honor him. Put on your best manners. This might include wearing your name tag, participating eagerly at all times, listening when the Presenter is talking, raising your hand to speak, not distracting others, playing the learning game with cooperation, singing enthusiastically, and praying reverently. Offer rewards or positive reinforcement to those who worship with excellence.*



## Worship

### Invocation:

*Let kids bring forward the worship symbols such as the cross, candles, Bible, and offering plate. Invite God's presence and call by name Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.*

### Attention Grabber:

*Capture the children's attention and help them focus on the worship theme for the day.*

*Supplies:*

- *two poles or broomsticks*

**What does it mean to be jealous of someone else? Before you answer, let's recall what happened to Joseph in the Bible. Joseph's brothers were jealous of him because his dad seemed to like him best and gave him a coat with many colors.**

**To be jealous of someone means that when you see what someone else has, you want what he has, and you don't want him to have it anymore. When you are jealous, you feel bad or sad about what you have because you are too worried about what someone else has.**

Pick up the poles (or broomsticks) and hold them like bars of a jail cell.

**The sad thing about being jealous of others is that it becomes just like a jail on the inside. We can get locked in our own sadness wanting what someone else has. Jealousy "jails us!" Today, when we worship and come to God, let's ask him to free us from jealousy and the way it can jail us on the inside. Praise Jesus with me as we thank him for all he has done for us.**

## Songs of Worship:

*Choose two or three songs. Briefly introduce songs so kids can better understand what they are singing and be drawn into a more focused worship. Keep the attention on God!*

## The Power of the Cross:

*Jesus has given his life for us that we might have forgiveness and power to live for him.*

*Supplies:*

- *eight poles or broomsticks*
- *cross*

This interactive event will use eight children who will be seated on the floor in a tight circle with backs facing one another. There will be an additional child standing in the center of these children. Each child in the circle will hold a pole or broom handle. When they hold the poles upright, the poles will have the effect of encircling the child in the center, putting her in a “jail.”

After calling for volunteers and arranging them in a circle, give them their poles. Have the kids keep the poles down on the floor until the presenter taps them on the head. Then they are to raise them one by one. As they hold them still, this will become a “jail.”

After the presenter has situated the volunteers in a circle and given them poles, he pulls a volunteer from the audience.

**Even though this person is not named Jane, I am going to call her Jane. You and I are going to make up a story about Jane.**

**Jane had a problem. She was often sad because she wanted what other people had. That made her feel bad about herself. She would feel so jealous that she wanted the other person not to have something and she wished she had it instead.**

Have Jane stand in the middle of the circle.

**Now let's make up some of the things that “Jealous Jane” was jealous over.**

You might use some of the following examples as you invite children from the audience to add their own. Each time an example is mentioned, tap a child on the head so they raise their jail bar.

- **Jane saw that her friend made an “A” on a test and wasn’t happy for her. Jane wished her friend made a “C” and she made the “A.”**

- Jane wanted her sister's curly blonde hair instead of her straight black hair. So she teased her sister and said her hair looked like mixed up spaghetti.
- Jane wanted to play the attacker on the soccer team like her friend Nicki. So she complained to everyone that Nicki couldn't shoot the ball very hard.
- Jane's neighbor got a new car. Her family never got a new car. She complained to her dad, and that didn't make him too happy.
- Jane's friend got elected to student council. Jane wanted to be popular like her friend. Since she wasn't, Jane made up bad secrets about her friend.
- All the girls went skating, except for Jane. She didn't go because she didn't know how to skate. Jane secretly wished the girls would fall and break their noses!
- Jane saw someone wearing a *(insert the kids' answer)* and she wanted it so badly she wished *(insert the kids' answers)*.
- Jane felt jealous when *(insert the kids' answers)*.

Keep gathering them if the kids have more examples.

**Can you see what has happened to "Jealous Jane?" She has been jailed. And that's what happens in one's heart when one is jealous. Being jealous can *jail us*! But the way out of this jail is to get unlocked with a special key. That key is the cross.**

Take a cross and use it like a key to unlock the pretend door of the jail. As you unlock the door, help take the bars down.

**In Luke 4:18, Jesus said, "*He has sent me to announce forgiveness to the prisoners...*"**

**Jesus was never jealous in his life. He didn't want what someone else had or wish they didn't have it. Instead, Jesus gave up his life for us on the cross so we could be free. When he died for us, he paid for our sin so we could be forgiven and not be trapped by our own jealousy. Jesus was "jailed" for us so we could be free.**

**Close your eyes. Think of someone that you are jealous of, someone who has something you wish you had. It might be a brother or sister. It might be someone on your sports team or someone at school.**

Help kids really picture how they do this in their lives.

**When you think of someone you are jealous of, how do you feel? Do you feel bad toward that person? Do you feel bad about yourself and what you have? Maybe you aren't happy the way God made you. That's a sign of being jealous. Having this attitude jails you on the inside. It makes you a prisoner of selfishness, bitterness, and hate. Yuck!**

**Let's tell God we are sorry for being jealous and ask him to free us.**

**Dear God, you know my jealousy. Please forgive me because Jesus has paid the price for my sin. Now let him unlock the jail in my heart and fill me with love. Help me to have so much love for this person that I will not be jealous of him or her. In Jesus' name, I pray. Amen.**

**When we ask Jesus for his forgiveness and ask him to fill us with his love, we really don't need to want other people's stuff to feel better about ourselves. We can be happy for them instead of wanting what they have! Since we are freed inside, let's sing and worship.**

## **Song of Response:**

*Choose a song to help the children turn to Jesus. Or, you may want to help them celebrate what God has done by singing a song of praise.*

## **Offering:**

*Teach the importance of giving and talk about the mission activities they are supporting.*

*Supplies:*

- *some of the poles or broomsticks used earlier*

Place some of the poles used for the previous illustration on the altar or in that area. Place the offering basket on top of it. Invite the children to place their offerings in the basket.

**Kids, when you give your offerings to God, you are telling him thank you for giving you Jesus. Jesus helps you not get trapped by money or jealousy. If you think that you just need more money (or more of what someone else has) to be happy, then you can be trapped. Jesus wants you to know that you'll be happiest when you serve him and not serve money or things.**



# The Word

## Learning Game:

*Some churches dismiss children from the adult service at this time to join Kids Church. The learning game provides a fun kinesthetic activity to help kids connect with each other. The learning point will help reinforce the theme of the day.*

### Streets and Alleys:

This game demonstrates the principle of getting locked into certain places and then freed. To play put children into groups with even rows (see diagram).

```
x x x x x F
x x x x x R
x x x x x O
x x x x x N
x x x x x T
  S I D E
```

Have all children face the front and stretch their arms out at shoulder height. This creates a “street” between the rows. Two children are chosen to be the runners. One starts out down a “street” and the other person needs to chase him. After a few seconds the presenter calls “alley.” All the children turn right and face the side. The “streets” now turn into “alleys.” The presenter alternates between “streets” and “alleys.”

Play this round until the person who is “it” catches the other person. Have more rounds with children as the two chasers. Play this game for a few minutes and then stop and discuss.

**How did it feel to get locked into a certain area? Were you frustrated? How did it feel when your path was suddenly freed up? Today’s Bible event is going to teach us how Jesus came to set us free from the prisons we are in.**

**Luke 4:18 says, “He has sent me to announce forgiveness to the prisoners of sin.” Say that with me. Let’s listen and watch as we see how Jesus became jailed for us so we could be free.**

## Bible Presentation:

*Help children pay attention by giving them a word or concept to listen for as you read. Consider letting a child read who could do so with excellence.*

*Supplies:*

- video, *The Visual Bible: Matthew* (Visual Bible International, 1997)—order from [http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/B0002UBX54/sr=1-1/qid=1154971822/ref=sr\\_1\\_1/103-2452802-8726231?ie=UTF8&s=dvd](http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/B0002UBX54/sr=1-1/qid=1154971822/ref=sr_1_1/103-2452802-8726231?ie=UTF8&s=dvd)

Watch Matthew 27:11-26 from the video, *The Visual Bible: Matthew*. Challenge the children to listen carefully and raise their hands when they hear the word “envy,” which means jealousy.

**Who was jealous? Why?** (*Mark 15:10 says, “Pilate knew that the chief priests had handed Jesus over to him because they were jealous.”*)

**Who got out of jail? How?**

**Who was punished?**

**How is this like our lives?** (*Jesus was punished so we could get out of our jails of jealousy. Jesus was “jailed” for us so we could be “free.”*)

## Application:

*Supplies:*

- book, *Julius, the Baby of the World* by Kevin Henkes (Mulberry Books, 1995)—order from [http://www.amazon.com/gp/offer-listing/0688143881/ref=olp\\_pg\\_new/103-2452802-8726231?ie=UTF8&startIndex=0&condition=new](http://www.amazon.com/gp/offer-listing/0688143881/ref=olp_pg_new/103-2452802-8726231?ie=UTF8&startIndex=0&condition=new)

**Today we are going to read a special book called *Julius, the Baby of the World* by Kevin Henkes. It is a fun story about a little girl named Lilly who has a new baby brother, Julius. Sometimes our hearts get frozen or jailed because of jealousy and we don’t end up seeing God’s blessings to us. As I read this book to you, I want you to watch for when Lilly’s attitude changes and what you think made the change.**

After reading the story, ask these follow-up questions.

**How did Lilly’s jealousy make her act?** (*She was mean and cruel to Julius.*)

**Do you think Lilly was happy with the way things were going? Why?** *(No, because it only made her more and more unhappy. An example is the morning she ran away seven times.)*

**Did Lilly's parents stop loving her because she acted this way?** *(No, they kept showing her in many different ways how important she was to them and how much they loved her.)*

**What happened to change Lilly's attitude?** *(Cousin Garland pointed out all the things that he didn't like about Julius. Lilly suddenly discovered that she loved Julius.)*

**What happened inside Lilly's heart?** *(She fell in love with Julius.)*

**We are a lot like Lilly when we get jealous of someone. We want to hurt them because we are not happy about the things that God has given them. Sometimes it may even seem to us that God loves them more because of what they have. When we feel like this we are jailed on the inside just like Lilly was. This may cause us to act nasty on the outside. But God keeps loving us just like Lilly's parents kept loving her. They showed her love in many different ways just like God shows us his love.**

**What has to happen to change us from the inside out?** *(Our heart has to be filled with a whole lot of love.)*

**Who has to do the changing?** *(The Holy Spirit has to fill our hearts with love.)*

**When we are changed by the Holy Spirit, how does that change how we treat others?** *(He gives us his love to share and we start to see others through God's eyes. Then we see how God made each of us different and special.)*

**I know that sometimes it is very difficult to change our attitudes about other people but the cool thing is that we don't have to do the changing. We just need to let God do the changing in our hearts. God will change us if we ask him.**





# Witness

## Witness and Tell:

*Give children opportunities to share how God is working in their lives. It is best to use a microphone to ask children interview questions around the theme for the day.*

**Tell about a time that someone else got something and you were happy for him instead of feeling jealous.**

## Prayer:

*Let the kids pray out loud. If you are using a microphone, invite children to form a prayer line and speak their thanksgivings or requests. If you have portable microphones, you can roam the audience. Kids can also go to prayer stations set up for specific types of prayer.*

**Dear Jesus, thank you that you were “jailed” for me so I could be free. Thank you that your blood has changed me from the inside out. Holy Spirit, I know with your help that I will be able to show love to others and rejoice over their special gifts. Thank you, Father, for giving me so many special gifts, also.**

Let the children then add prayers of praise, intercession, and thanksgiving.

## Blessing:

*Speak a blessing prayer over the children. Personalize this to your setting. Use a special scripture verse or blessing around the theme of the day.*

## Song of Sending:

*Choose one song. Briefly introduce song so kids can better understand what they are singing and be drawn into a more focused worship. Keep the attention on God.*

# Supplies:

## *Attention Grabber:*

- two poles or broomsticks

## *The Power of the Cross:*

- eight poles or broomsticks
- cross

## *Offering:*

- some of the poles or broomsticks used earlier

## *Bible Presentation:*

- video, *The Visual Bible: Matthew* (Visual Bible International, 1997)—order from [http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/B0002UBX54/sr=1-1/qid=1154971822/ref=sr\\_1\\_1/103-2452802-8726231?ie=UTF8&s=dvd](http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/B0002UBX54/sr=1-1/qid=1154971822/ref=sr_1_1/103-2452802-8726231?ie=UTF8&s=dvd)

## *Application:*

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