



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

Series: Pass the Promise  
Fall Year 1, Lesson 24

# In the Midst of Hard Times, Trust God!

**Primary Scripture:** Acts 16:16-40

**Key Verses:** Acts 16:22a, “The crowd joined in the attack against Paul and Silas...” Acts 16:26a, “suddenly, a violent earthquake shook... and all the prisoners chains came loose.”

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

In children's lives, there are many events that occur that seem insurmountable. These events can range from things that seem very insignificant to us as an adult (such as a fight with a best friend) to major problems (like parents getting a divorce). In today's worship experience, we offer children hope that their God is a God who cares in a world that often has many overwhelming difficulties. We can help children understand that, through the power of the Holy Spirit, there is nothing—not even a huge problem—that God isn't bigger than. What a joy to teach children to trust the heart of God.

## How does Jesus fill this need?

**Jesus for us:** The Father's love for us was powerfully shown by his Son's death on the cross. Because of this, there is absolutely nothing God won't or can't do for us in our life.

**Jesus in us:** When we are in the middle of a personal crisis, God asks us to trust him to do what is best for us.

**Jesus through us:** God can use us to minister to others in need and to point them back to God. He is stronger and more powerful than anything that could happen to us.

## 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:*

- ping-pong ball
- hair dryer

**Have you ever felt like things are such a big mess that you can't fix them? Maybe you had a big fight with your friend and there seems to be absolutely no way to fix the friendship. Maybe you ran through the house and knocked over your Mom's favorite vase and you knew she was going to be really mad. How about the time you got a horrible grade on your math test and you knew it was going to do bad things to your report card?**

**Did you feel like there was no hope? Is there something going on in your life right now that makes you feel out of control? Do you feel there is just no way to fix it?**

Let the kids share examples.

**I want you to watch this cool science experiment. It will teach us something just as cool about God.**

Ask for a volunteer and hand her a ping-pong ball.

**I want you to suspend this ping-pong ball in the air. You may not touch it.**

Let the child try and point out that this may seem impossible.

**It looks like you are having a problem fighting gravity, a force that pulls objects to the earth. This looks like a pretty impossible job. This reminds me of the things in our life that seem impossible.**

Hold a hair dryer up on its end. Place the ping-pong ball on the nozzle. Turn on the hair dryer and the ping-pong ball should hover above the nozzle.

**Like the power of the hair dryer overcoming the gravity problem we were having, God's power can overcome any problem we are having in our life. God steps into our problems and uses his power to solve them. Praise God that he is willing to step into our lives because of his great love for us. We can have hope in any situation because God will come to us and help 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:*

- *two ping-pong balls (one that can be dented)*
- *hair dryer*

**Sometimes our lives get dented when we sin.**

Dent the ping-pong ball.

**A sin is a way that we have disobeyed God or haven't trusted him. In our lives we get things out of balance or broken and dented when we don't trust God. We might try to "fix" our problems by ourselves. When that doesn't work, we might give up hope and say there is nothing we can do to fix the problem. We feel defeated. We become like this ping-pong ball.**

Try to float the dented ping-pong ball with the hair dryer. It won't work.

The ping-pong ball has a big dent in it that will keep it from floating. That's because it won't let God's power carry it. Our lives can be much the same way. If we forget to let God have all of our problems, we are kept from floating on his power. We feel sad and discouraged. Satan likes it when we feel that way. He doesn't want us to trust God with everything in our lives.

It is a sin when we don't trust God to fix everything in our lives. Proverbs 3:5-6 says, *"Trust the LORD with all you heart, and do not rely on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make your paths straight."*

Let's ask God to forgive us for all the areas in our lives that we haven't trusted in him. Repeat after me.

Dear God, please forgive me/ for the times I haven't trusted you/ to be bigger than my problems./ Please help me learn to trust you/ and your great love for me./ You loved me so much that you died for me./ In Jesus name. Amen.

Do you believe in Jesus? Do you know him as Savior? Then that means you trust him right now. God has forgiven your sins. In his eyes, he sees you perfect because you are forgiven. It's like this ping-pong ball.

Show a smooth undented ping-pong ball and float it on the hair dryer.

**God's power now holds you up and carries once again!**

## **Song of Response:**

*Choose a song to help the children turn to Jesus. Or, you may want 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.*

Place the ping-pong ball from the previous example in the offering basket. Remind the children that when they give their offerings to the Lord, he can do powerful things through them. He will use their gifts to help others come into God's kingdom.



# 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.*

*Supplies:*

- *ping-pong paddle*
- *several ping-pong balls*
- *four large tub lids or trash can lids*
- *candy*

In this game the children will learn that God can make possible things that seem impossible. God is more powerful than anything that can possibly happen.

Have children line up in two straight lines facing each other. The lines should be about five feet apart. Hand out as many ping-pong balls as you feel works with your group.

Choose one child to be “it.” Hand him the ping-pong paddle and tell him that he must walk through the center of these two lines from one end to the other.

The children in the lines will throw ping-pong balls at the child who is “it” from the waist up. If the child can make it to the other end without getting hit, he will win a piece of candy. The child will probably realize this is impossible.

**When you call on someone to help you, the impossible can suddenly become possible.**

Coach the child to call for help. Have four other children come up and make a shield around the child by using large tub lids or trashcan lids. Remind the group that they may only aim the ping-pong balls from the waist up. Have the volunteer walk from one end to the other with his “protection.”

As time allows, let others take turns walking between the lines and being the “shields.” When the game is finished, have the children sit down. Discuss how walking between the lines of people throwing ping-pong balls and not getting hit is impossible without help.

**How is God like our “shield” and “protection”? What do we have to do to have God step into our lives and take our problems?**

# 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: Acts (*Visual Bible International, 1997*), cued to Acts 16:16-40

The video will cover the Bible event of Paul and Silas and the conversion of the jailor. After the video, ask the following questions.

## Application 1:

**Paul and Silas were having a very bad day. In fact, it seemed like they were in an impossible situation. They didn't seem worried even though they were in jail. What were they doing?** (*Singing and praying to God.*)

**God took a situation that seemed impossible to fix and turned it into something that only he could fix. What did God do?** (*God caused an earthquake to occur; Paul and Silas were set free. More importantly, God caused faith to occur in the heart of the jailor.*)

**What do we know about how Paul and Silas were feeling in their heart while they were in jail?** (*They felt trust for God who loved them.*)

**Why do you think they could trust God like that?** (*They had already seen him work things out before in their lives, and the Holy Spirit gave them the ability to trust.*)

**An important part of trusting God is allowing the Holy Spirit to work in us, even when situations seem impossible. It is important to praise God as the giver of all good things in our lives. It is also important to pray to him.**

**When we look at what God has done for us, we understand his heart and how much love he has for us. Do you think God can handle impossible situations in your life?**

## Application 2: Optional

You may have a missionary from your church come forward to speak to the children about his mission trips and things he has encountered that seemed impossible to fix but God did.



# 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.*

**Describe a time that you were facing a very hard problem and didn't know how it could be fixed. What happened? How did God help?**

## 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.*

## 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:*

- ping-pong ball
- hair dryer

## *The Power of the Cross:*

- two ping-pong balls (one that can be dented)
- hair dryer

## *Learning Game:*

- ping-pong paddle
- several ping-pong balls
- four large tub lids or trash can lids
- candy

## *Bible Presentation:*

- video, *The Visual Bible: Acts* (Visual Bible International, 1997), cued to Acts 16:16-40—order from <http://www.goccc.com/vibiacdvd1of.html> or [www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com)

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