



**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Series:** A Miraculous Church  
Spring Year 2, Lesson 57

# A Miraculous Escape—Peter

**Take Home Point:** \*In tough times, call on God to rescue you. \*Repeat this phrase throughout the lesson.

**Bible Event:** Acts 12:1-18; 2 Corinthians 12:7-10

**Key Verse:** Psalm 46:1, “God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in times of trouble.”

**We will help kids know:**

- The Bible event of Peter’s miraculous escape from prison.
- Tough times can feel like a prison. But, we can call on God and he will rescue us.
- Sometimes God will use miracles to change our situation (take us out of our prisons). Sometimes God uses the situation to help change us (change us in our prisons).




**We will help kids feel:**

- Confident when they think about their future challenges and how God will rescue them.
- Dependent on God regardless of circumstances.

**We will help kids do:**

- Identify tough times in their lives and talk about them.
- Identify people going through tough times and needing prayer and praying for them.

# THIS LESSON'S ROADMAP

DESTINATION	PAGE #	DISCOVERIES ON YOUR JOURNEY	SUPPLIES NEEDED
<b>Small Group Warm-Up</b> 	3	Kids talk about “tough” times and that God can use his “key” to set us free from these situations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• set of keys</li> </ul>
<b>Large Group</b> 	4  7-9  9  10-11	<b>Overview:</b>  <b>Puppet Presentation:</b> <i>Gordy is Sent to Prison</i> ---Gordy wants God to break him out of “time out.”  <b>Video:</b> <i>Visual Bible: Acts</i> —Acts 12:1-18  <b>Puppet Conclusion:</b> Gordy learns that God can change the situation, or God can use the situation to change us. It is important to call on God when we are in need and he will rescue us.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gordy</li> <li>• hat for Gordy that says “Newsboy”</li> <li>• video: <i>The Visual Bible: Acts</i>, produced by Visual Bible International 1997</li> </ul>
<b>Small Group Application</b> 	4-6	Kids receive “keys” with names of specific people to pray for.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• set of keys pattern (p.12)</li> <li>• pencils</li> <li>• In advance, research specific needs in your church to pray for. Also, research Christian missionaries or people in other countries that are persecuted for their faith in Jesus. (<a href="http://www.persecution.org">www.persecution.org</a>)</li> </ul>

# Small Group Warm-Up: 15 minutes



**Purpose:** *Get pointed in the right direction!* Build relationships and help guests feel at ease. Do the learning readiness activity that will point your group in the right direction for the lesson.

*Supplies needed: set of keys*

To begin, I'd like you to tell about a "tough time" you have gone through. For example, maybe you went through a tough time when you felt left out on the playground or when you moved to a new home or school. Maybe you went through a tough time when you had an argument with your brother or sister.

Hold up your keys and say:

**Today we will talk about what "key" unlocks the problems of tough times.**

Have kids pass around the set of keys as each shares his/her story of a tough time.

**When you were going through your tough times, did you pray to God about it? Did he answer your prayers the way you wanted?**

Let kids explain more. Take the set of keys back and explain the purpose of each. Say:

**I have a lot of keys on my key chain. As you know, they all go to something different. One key is to unlock the door of my house, another is to unlock my car. (Indicate what other keys might be for.)**

**God wants us to pray to him when we go through tough times. When he answers us, it is like using a key to solve a problem.**

**God can use this key to change the situation around us. For example, if I am praying for someone on the playground who has left me out, maybe that person will become my friend. Then again, God might use another key. The person who left me out may not become my friend, but God might bring a better friend for me.**

**When God uses his key to unlock tough times, it reminds us that no matter what, *\*in tough times, call on God to rescue you.***

## Large Group: 20-30 minutes



**Purpose:** *Help kids observe what the Bible says. Present the Bible event in creative fashion. Help kids begin to interpret what it means.*

### Overview

**Puppet Presentation:** *Gordy is Sent to Prison*---Gordy wants God to break him out of “time out.”

**Video:** *Visual Bible: Acts*—Acts 12:1-18.

**Puppet Conclusion:** Gordy learns that God can change the situation, or God can use the situation to change us. It is important to call on God when we are in need and he will rescue us.

## Small Group Application: 20-25 minutes



**Purpose:** *Help kids map out the meaning of the Bible event in their lives. Use the questions to stimulate discussion but don't feel tied to them. Allow the Holy Spirit to guide you. Include personal examples from your own faith journey. The example of Christ at work in your life will leave lasting impressions of how Christ can work in the children's lives.*

*Use your Bibles! Children need to learn how to look up references and follow along when scripture is read aloud. Allow for quality time of prayer at the close of the lesson.*

### Observation Questions: What happened?

Have kids look up Acts 12:1-18 in their Bibles.

**How many soldiers guarded Peter when he was thrown into prison?** (Acts 12:4. Sixteen.) **Why do you think Herod had so many soldiers guarding this one man?** (He knew Peter was a follower of Jesus and knew that Jesus rose from the dead, alive.)

**What did the church do for Peter while he was in prison?** (Acts 12:5. They prayed very hard to God for him.)

**Tell how Peter's escape was so miraculous.** (Acts 12:6-10. Peter had been sleeping between two soldiers. His hands were bound with two chains and guards were watching in front of the door. An angel appeared to Peter and woke him up, told him to hurry and get on his coat and shoes and get ready to go. Peter thought he was seeing a vision as he followed the angel past the first and second guardposts. Then the iron gate opened

*up by itself as he and the angel went into the city. The angel suddenly left Peter and he came to his senses realizing he was free.)*

**Where did Peter go as soon as he was free?** *(Acts 12:12. He went to the home of some believers who were praying.)*

**How was Peter greeted at the door?** *(Acts 12:13-16. When Peter knocked at the door, the servant was so excited to see it was Peter, she left him standing outside. She ran in to tell the others that Peter was standing at the door.)*

**How did the believers respond to this news?** *(Acts 12:15-16. They told the servant she was crazy and then thought maybe it was Peter's angel. When they opened the door, they were shocked to see Peter actually there.)*

### **Interpretation Questions: What does this mean?**

**Why do you think the believers were so surprised that God actually answered their prayers?** *(Jesus and other disciples had already been killed, i.e. Stephen, see Acts 7 and James, see Acts 12:2.)*

**Why do you think God unlocked Peter's prison doors and freed him instead of letting him be put to death like some of the others?** *(Peter still had work to do for God. God wanted to demonstrate his power to Peter and the other believers.)*

**What do you think this did for the faith of the praying believers? For Peter's faith?**

### **Application Questions: What does this mean to me?**

**Our key verse from Psalm 46:1 says, "God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in times of trouble."**

**How did this miracle demonstrate that God was Peter's refuge and strength, an ever-present help in times of trouble?**

**How does this Bible event and God's promise in this key verse help you?**

#### Application Activity:

*Supplies needed: set of keys for each child (see appendix) and pencil or pens*

**Today we will be like the believers who prayed for Peter, and we will pray specifically for people going through tough times. We will pray that God will unlock the chains that hold these people in hard times.**

**We will trust God and know that he will either change the situation or use the situation to change them or us for his glory.**

Pass out the set of keys to each child and pens or pencils. Say:

**The first key says to pray for specific needs in our church. Maybe you know of someone who is going through a tough time right now. Put their name down on the key. Here is another person for whom you can pray...**

Have kids write a name that you have gotten permission to pray for from your church family.

**The next key says to pray for people in our city. Maybe you have neighbors or friends who are going through a tough time. Write their names down.**

Give kids some ideas if they don't know of anyone. For example: homeless people or people in the hospital.

**On the third key, write the name of a person or people in our country. This could be people who have just been through a natural disaster, are homeless, or government leaders.**

**On the last key write names of persecuted Christians in other countries.**

Have kids write names of specific people you have found in your research, or maybe names of missionaries your church supports.

**Today we learned *\*in tough times, call on God to rescue.* We are going to do that right now as we pray for these people. Remember to continue praying for them when you go home. The believers prayed for Peter very hard. That means they continued praying until God gave them an answer.**

#### Closing Prayer:

Have kids pray specifically for persons on their keys. Then thank God that he is a God of miracles and that we can call on him to rescue others and us in tough times.

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# **Large Group Presentation:**    20-30 minutes

## **Gordy is Sent to Prison** Puppet Presentation

*Supplies: Visual Bible: Acts, produced by Visual Bible International 1997, cued up at Acts 12:1-18, Gordy's "Newsboy" hat from previous lessons*

**Mr. King:**            **Shall we call Gordy?**

Kids call for Gordy, "Gordy, Gordy, Gordy."

Gordy:                Hi, kids!

**Mr. King:**            **Hi, Gordy. Hey, I'm interested to hear what you shared in small group warm-up today.**

Gordy:                You mean going through tough times?

**Mr. King:**            **Yes. Did you have a hard time thinking of one?**

Gordy:                Well, I thought way, way back to 8:00 o'clock this morning.

**Mr. King:**            **This morning? You already had a tough time this morning?**

Gordy:                Yeah! I was in jail.

**Mr. King:**            **Jail? What jail?**

Gordy:                My room!

**Mr. King:**            **Oh, you were in "timeout" this morning.**

Gordy:                Yes, and it wasn't fair.

**Mr. King:**            **So, what happened?**

Gordy:                I hit my sister.

**Mr. King:**            **Now, that seems to be a very good reason to be in "timeout."**

Gordy:                But she made me!

**Mr. King:**            **What did she do?**

Gordy: She looked at me!

**Mr. King: That doesn't sound so bad!**

Gordy: But, she gave me that sister look. You know, the kind of look that irritates.

**Mr. King: Even if you are irritated, Gordy, it isn't right to hit your sister.**

Gordy: I still have time to serve when I get home today. What a bummer!

**Mr. King: You mean you will still be in "timeout" this afternoon?**

Gordy: I thought that maybe I could pray to get out of "timeout." Do you think that God could get me out of jail?

**Mr. King: You mean "timeout?" Sure, he can. As a matter of fact, today we will see how God miraculously took Peter out of jail.**

Gordy: All right! I am home free.

**Mr. King: Just because he can, doesn't mean he will.**

Gordy: What do you mean?

**Mr. King: We are talking about different keys that God uses to set us free.**

Gordy: You mean setting us free from jail?

**Mr. King: Yes, like from jail.**

Gordy: But, they aren't real keys, are they?

**Mr. King: Well, they aren't keys that are put in doors, but rather, keys that unlock problems.**

Gordy: Like being in "timeout"?

**Mr. King: Yes. You see, God could answer your prayer and rescue you in two ways.**

Gordy: What are those two ways?

**Mr. King: One way is for God to change the situation so you wouldn't have to do "timeout".**

Gordy: I'm for that one!



**Mr. King:** Or, God might use another key. He might want to change you, instead of the situation.

Gordy: I like the first key better.

**Mr. King:** Sometimes it's best you learn from the situation, and in this case, I think it is.

Gordy: I was afraid you would say that.

**Mr. King:** Gordy, what do you think you could learn from being in "timeout"?

Gordy: Not to hit my sister.

**Mr. King:** I think you're right. In a way, God is rescuing you from your own temper. Anything else you could learn?

Gordy: To say "I'm sorry."

**Mr. King:** That's good. You also need to tell God you are sorry.

Gordy: Okay.

**Mr. King:** Gordy, remember that *\*in tough times, call on God and he will rescue you.* We will learn today that our God is a miraculous God. He rescued Peter in a very miraculous way.

**Are you ready to get the "scoop" on today's story, Newsboy?  
Why don't you watch with us and see what happened to Peter.**

### **Video**

Watch the video clip from *The Visual Bible: Acts* produced by Visual Bible International, 1997. Show Acts 12:1-18.

## **Gordy is Sent to Prison**

### **Puppet Conclusion**

Gordy: Wait a minute I think I missed part of it.

**Mr. King: Let's bring up an eyewitness to help you.**

Bring up a volunteer to answer Gordy's questions.

Gordy: Who was the main person in this story and what happened to him?  
*(Peter was freed from prison.)*

Gordy: What were all the other believers doing while Peter was alone in prison? *(They were praying.)*

Have the volunteer return to his/her seat.

**Mr. King: It's important to call on God when we are in need and he will rescue us.**

Gordy: I understand that. But, I really want God to break me out of "time out" today.

**Mr. King: Remember that sometimes God uses a miracle to change the situation and sometimes God uses the situation to change you.**

**Here are a couple of verses from 2 Corinthians 12:7-10. Let me paraphrase it. Paul says that God had given him great understanding of what God wanted people to understand. It would be easy for him to brag about it. So, God gave Paul a thorn in his flesh. This meant he had some kind of physical problem.**

**Paul prayed three times for God to remove this thorn. Do you think God took it away? No, he didn't. Instead, God said, "My kindness is all you need." God's power is strongest when we are weak.**

**I learn from this that when I go through hard times, I can be glad. God's power is strongest when I am weak.**

**Gordy, I have a great idea for you.**

Gordy: What's that?

**Mr. King:** When you have “time out” this afternoon, ask your parents if you can check out the web site “The Persecuted Church.” It has stories about people today who are put into jail because they are followers of Jesus.

**Gordy:** Does that really happen? Do you have a story to share?

**Mr. King:** You know I do. I can read it to you right now.

On August 6, 2004, more than 100 house church leaders had been arrested in Henan Province. According to an eyewitness reporter who managed to escape from the arrest scene, the group was just starting their first day meeting of a two-week retreat when they were surrounded by more than 200 military police, Public Security Bureau and other officers, who arrived in about 20 police and military vehicles along with 6 minibuses. No arrest warrants or even official identification papers were shown by officers as they carried out the assault.

The meeting was held at the house of one of the retreat organizers whose name is unavailable. His family members, including his wife Ms. Xiang Zi and three 8 to 11 year old children, were also arrested. “These children were crying a lot when being dragged away,” this eyewitness said. (<http://persecutedchurch.com>)

**We do not know for sure what happened to these people after their arrest, but we need to continue to pray for them. Gordy, would you say a prayer?**

**Gordy:** Sure. Dear God, I really am sorry about slugging my sister even though she gave me that sister-look. I guess I do deserve “time out,” and maybe you can help me learn from it.

There are other people who *do not* deserve it, yet are going through tough times. I pray for those people and ask you to rescue them.

Thank you that you gave us Jesus. He is our rescuer. He rescues us from sin and all the bad stuff that we can get into. In Jesus’ name we pray. Amen.

Person going  
through a  
tough time  
in our world:

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Person going  
through a  
tough time  
in our country:

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Person going  
through a  
tough time  
in our city:

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Person going  
through a  
tough time  
in our church:

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