



UNIT 32 | SESSION 4

PETER WAS RESCUED FROM PRISON

ACTS 12

CHRIST CONNECTION

God hears and answers prayers.

BIG PICTURE QUESTION

What is the church? The church is all Christians everywhere.

MEMORY VERSE

The church has many people who help. 1 Corinthians 12:12

PREPARE



Take time to reflect
on today's lesson

LEADER BIBLE STUDY

Acts 12 tells the story of God's divine and miraculous rescue of His apostle Peter. While King Herod sought to make an example of Peter, it was God alone who was able to showcase His power and might amidst the persecution of the church. This passage highlights the power of prayer amidst hardship and how God's purposes for His church will prevail despite the futile attempts of the enemy.

What can we learn about God's plans despite persecution and suffering? What can we learn about living on mission even during our most difficult circumstances?

God's plan for the good of His church, even during persecution, include the fervent prayers of the saints. The intercession of these faithful believers revealed that their only hope was in the Lord, and it was their prayers that were used by God to rescue Peter from prison. As God answered their prayers, He showcased His power to thwart the evil plans of those who wish to harm His church. Peter's incredible escape from prison reflects the same hope that those who have trusted in Jesus receive as the chains of sin fall off, and we are set free from condemnation. God's purpose for His church was by no means coming to an end in that prison cell; rather the word of God spread and multiplied. (Acts 12:24)

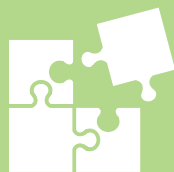
The consequence of declaring the gospel of Jesus Christ was costly for Peter and for James, who was executed by Herod. Though Herod's sentence for James was death, to die would mean this disciple's gain. Peter knew the consequences of sharing the gospel, yet he also believed that Jesus was worth giving his life to, trusting that the salvation of others was worth the risk. Even still, God granted Peter salvation from this prison cell so that he could continue living on mission for Him.

May we be aware God has done more than send an angel to rescue us from earthly hardship. He sent His Son to rescue us from the eternal consequence of our sins. Christ's sacrifice on our behalf offers the hope we need to endure difficulties and the boldness we need to share His divine hope with others.

TERMS TO KNOW

Prayer: talking to God and listening to Him. Prayer makes a difference in what happens (James 4:2), and faith is a condition for answered petitions (Mark 11:24).

OPENING & ACTIVITIES



Connect with children through games and activities

WELCOME

Play music in the background as you greet children coming into the classroom. Help them transition in and feel welcome as they play games and interact with other children.

ACTIVITY 1: PRAY TOGETHER

Work with children to make a list on construction paper of people they can pray for such as pastors, church staff, teachers, friends, family, etc.

Lead children to pray together. Allow willing children to pray for someone, but don't make anyone pray. If no child wants to pray aloud, model praying aloud for the group.

CONNECT THE DOTS



One thing we can do as believers in the church is to pray for others. In our story today, we learned that the people of the church were praying for Peter. Peter was in prison and needed help. The believers in the church knew that God could help Peter. God heard their prayers and rescued Peter.

CONNECT THE DOTS



Peter was thrown in prison for teaching people about Jesus. The believers in the church prayed to God, asking Him to help Peter. God heard their prayers and sent an angel to walk Peter out of the prison. Peter went to the house where the people were praying for him. At first, no one believed he was knocking on the door. But once he was inside, they welcomed him. God had a plan for Peter's life. Peter continued teaching people about Jesus.

ACTIVITY 2: BUILD A PRISON

Set out the blocks in your classroom for children to build a prison. Tell or retell the Bible story points as they work.

Encourage them to expand their building to include a house with a door that could be knocked on, if time allows.

Help children relate their buildings to the Bible story by talking about the prison building Peter was in and the house where the believers gathered to pray.

CRAFT & EXAMPLE



Help children with a craft connected to the Bible story

CONNECT THE DOTS



Peter was in prison for telling people about Jesus. Who did God send to rescue Peter? That's right! When God sent an angel to rescue Peter from prison, the chains on Peter's wrists fell off! Peter followed the angel out of the prison.

CRAFT: LINK CHAINS

Supplies: paper strips, tape

Take a paper strip and tape and demonstrate how to curve the paper into a circle, then tape the loop in place.

Help children link a second strip through the first to start a chain. Review the Bible story as children work.

Write **“God sent an angel to rescue Peter from prison”** on the last paper strip. Secure the last strip to the two ends of each child's chain.

Read aloud the last strip and allow children to break their chains, if desired





PREPARE

Open your Bible to **Acts 12** and tell the following story.

PETER WAS RESCUED FROM PRISON

King Herod was mean to believers in the church. He hurt some of them, and he put Peter in prison. The king told groups of soldiers to stand guard at the prison so Peter could not escape. While Peter was in prison, other believers in the church prayed and asked God to help him.

That night, Peter was sleeping in the prison. There was a guard on his left and a guard on his right. He was tied up with chains. All of a sudden, an angel appeared and a bright light shone in the prison.

The angel woke up Peter. "Quick, get up!" the angel said. The chains fell off of Peter's wrists. He put on his shoes and his coat, and he followed the angel.

The angel led Peter out of the prison. He walked past the guards. The gate opened for them, and they walked out onto the street. Then the angel left. Peter looked around. The Lord had rescued him!

Peter hurried to a house where other believers were praying. When Peter knocked at the door, a servant named Rhoda answered. She heard Peter's voice and she was so happy she ran back inside without letting Peter in.

"Peter is here!" she said. "He is at the door!"

No one believed her. "You're crazy!" they said. But Peter kept knocking, so they opened the door and welcomed him in. Peter told them how the Lord had rescued him from prison.

CHRIST CONNECTION

God heard the prayers of the people. He had a plan for Peter, and He helped him escape from prison. Peter wanted to share the good news about Jesus no matter what. God hears and answers prayers!

SNACK & CLOSING



Continue to engage children near the end of the morning

SNACK TIME

Wash hands or use hand sanitizer. Serve a snack. Show children the Bible story picture as you ask the following questions and retell parts of the Bible story as needed.

1. What was your favorite part of today's Bible story?
2. What did you learn about God in today's Bible story?
3. What happened after the angel visited Peter in prison?
4. What is the church? The church is all Christians everywhere.

CLOSING ACTIVITIES

Pick up toys and games from around the room and put them away. After the room is cleaned up, set out markers or crayons and let children work on today's Bible story coloring page or activity page until their parents arrive.

You can also choose a book to read to children as they work or for those who don't want to work. Please make the effort to have children quietly engaged in the last few minutes of the service. When parents arrive to pick up their child, share about something their child enjoyed doing or did well today.

BEFORE YOU GO...

Please clean up by doing the following:

1. Spray down toys with disinfectant
2. Spot sweep if needed
3. Return toys to closet, close door
4. Throw away any trash left on counters and in room
5. Return storage cubes to Room 108

THANK YOU FOR SERVING WITH US!