



Peter Escapes from Prison

Lesson Aim: To join together in prayer and watch for God's answers.

THE WORSHIP

Who God is: The Spirit Who Changes Us

THE WORD

Bible Story: Acts 12:5-16

What He has done: God sent His angel to rescue Peter from prison.

Key Verse: Acts 12:5

THE WAY

Christ Connection: Psalm 65:2, 5

BIBLE MEMORY VERSE

"Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom. And we, who with unveiled faces all reflect the Lord's glory, are being transformed into His likeness with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord." 2 Corinthians 3:17b-18

Unit 2: The Promise of Change			
	Bible Story	What He Has Done	Lesson Aim
6	God Changes Saul's Heart, Acts 9:3-19	The Holy Spirit filled Saul and changed his heart.	To know God can change our hearts.
7	Saul Escapes from Damascus, Acts 9:19b-25	God made Saul a bold witness for His kingdom.	To speak boldly to others about Jesus.
8	Peter and Tabitha (Dorcas), Acts 9:36-42	God restored Tabitha's life to help people in Joppa believe.	To learn ways our lives can point people to Jesus.
9	Peter Visits Cornelius, Acts 10:11-12, 15, 34-36, 43-48	God proved to Peter that He saves Gentiles as well as Jews.	To know God washes away the sin of anyone who believes in Him.
10	Peter Escapes from Prison, Acts 12:5-16	God sent His angel to rescue Peter from prison.	To join together in prayer and watch for God's answers.
11	Barnabas Encourages the Church, Acts 9:26-28; 11:22-26; 14:19-23	God led Barnabas to encourage the church and its leaders.	To show the importance of encouraging one another.

TEACHER'S ENCOURAGEMENT

This week, read Ephesians 3:20-21. Please join us in praying, "Lord, thank You for Your grace in hearing and answering the prayers of Your people. Help us come together in prayer and trust You alone for the answers. Amen."

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THE WORSHIP THE WORD & THE WAY

Segment	Minutes	Activity	Supplies
THE WELCOME	Up to 15	Meet & Greet	None
		Game: Prison Walls	None
THE WORSHIP	Up to 20	Worship Sheet music and recordings for Bible Memory Verse Songs available at ResourceWell.org	Unit 2 Bible Memory Verse Song: "The Spirit of the Lord" Other Bible Memory Verse Song Suggestions: "Search Me, O God" "For God So Loved the World" "Chosen People" "Praise the Lord, O My Soul" "You Will Seek Me" Additional Hymn Suggestions: "Change My Heart, O God" "Open the Eyes of My Heart, Lord" "Amazing Grace" Additional Song Collection Suggestions: Worship Jamz Series Shout Praises Kids: Hymns
		Worship Scripture Reading: Acts 4:30	Bible
		Offering	Baskets
		Worship Illustration	Lesson 10 Commander Cosmos script or storybook
THE WORD	Up to 10	Read the Word: Acts 12:5-16	Readers' Theatre scripts, props, Bibles, Bible Story Scripture reference poster, highlighters
THE WAY	Up to 25	Discuss the Word	Three chain links (Treasure Treat sample), Bibles, Christ Connection Scripture reference poster, highlighters
		Christ Connection: Psalm 65:2, 5	
		Golden Bowl	
	Final 5	Final Five Minutes	Treasure Treat—Three chain links, W's, paper, pencils, crayons or markers, prayer notebook, Unit 2 Bible Memory Verse Song "The Spirit of the Lord," CD player
GOT TIME?	Up to 10	Snack: Pray Together	Any favorite snack
	Up to 10	Game: Prayer Web	Ball of yarn
	Up to 10	Craft: Prayer Pocket	Two paper plates, paper, yarn, assorted craft supplies (buttons, craft jewels, beads, craft sticks, ribbon, paint, glitter, etc.), 6 notecards, scissors, hole punch, tape, crayons or markers
	Up to 10	Discussion: Ask, Seek, Knock	Bible opened to Matthew 7:7
	Up to 10	Bible Memory Verse Activity: Erase It, Then Say It	Chalkboard and chalk or dry erase board and marker
	Up to 10	Bible Memory Verse Activity: Balloon Toss	Inflated non-helium balloon, Bible Memory Verse poster
	Up to 5	Bible Timeline Review	Date with story title or name printed on card

RESOURCES: Supplemental materials are available at ResourceWell.org.



Getting started

THE WELCOME

To spark anticipation, encourage arriving children to meet and greet one another with today's question.

Meet & Greet Question: What is the most exciting rescue you have seen or heard about?

GAME: PRISON WALLS

Purpose: Children will play a game with a prison escape theme to introduce the story of Peter being rescued from prison.

Supplies: None

Today, we are going to learn about the time when God sent His angel to rescue Peter from prison. In a few minutes, we will learn about Peter's escape. First, let's pretend we are the ones escaping from prison!

Directions:

1. Choose one child to be Peter and another child to be the angel.
2. The other children stand in a circle around Peter and the angel to form the prison walls. Children hold hands, spread out as far as they can, then drop hands.
3. The children who are part of the prison wall close their eyes.
4. At your signal, Peter and the angel try to sneak out of the circle without touching or being touched by any child who is part of the wall.
5. Children in the circle listen closely for Peter and the angel. If two children next to each other believe they hear Peter and the angel sneaking through the space between them, they raise their arms to trap the escaping pair.
 - Children forming the wall may not keep their arms raised. They may only raise them when they think Peter and the angel are about to sneak through their space.
 - Peter and the angel cannot crawl under the raised arms.
 - Peter and the angel should move quietly and/or quickly to avoid being caught.
6. When Peter and the angel are able to sneak through a space in the wall, the children on either side of that space trade places with them and become Peter and the angel.
7. Play several times until most or all of the children have had a chance to be Peter or the angel.

Optional: To make the game more difficult, have the children who are the prison wall face outward (away from the center).



The Spirit who changes us

THE WORSHIP

Teacher Tip: To help children identify time set aside for worship, designate a special corner or area for singing, collecting offering, and watching the worship illustration. Play music as children move to the designated area.



Today, we worship the Spirit who changes us. He changes us by bringing us closer to God and to each other. This happens when we join together in prayer and then watch for God's answers. He promises that when we seek Him, we will find Him. Sing: "You Will Seek Me."

Let's join together to pray that God will use our offering money to change the lives of others. Pray. Sing: "Open the Eyes of My Heart" while collecting the offering.



Now, let's read part of a prayer believers have prayed long before today's story took place. Close your eyes and we will make it our prayer, too. Read Acts 4:30.



Perform Commander Cosmos script or read storybook: Prophets & Promises Unit 2, Lesson 10.



Sing Unit 2 Bible Memory Verse Song: "Where the Spirit of the Lord Is." You may also choose to sing songs that focus on God's power or His presence.



Peter escapes from prison

THE WORD

Teacher Tip: As you move from worship to instruction, change rooms or locations within a room to help redirect the children's focus to the Bible story. During this transition time, have each child write his or her name on a card and place it in the Golden Bowl.

Before we read God's Word, let's go over our Class Covenant. A covenant is an agreement. Just as God made a covenant with His people, I ask each of you to make this covenant promise with me today. Listen as I read our Class Covenant: "I will keep my eyes on my teacher, my mouth in control, my ears on God's Word—knowing God is my goal."

Last time, we learned God gave Peter a dream to show him Jesus came to save all people, both Jews and Gentiles. What happened when Peter visited Cornelius' house? (Everyone there believed and was baptized.)

If a Bible Timeline is available, point out Peter Escapes from Prison. For a Bible Timeline Review activity, see the GOT TIME? segment of this lesson. **Today, we will see what happened while believers were praying together for Peter when he was in prison in Jerusalem.** If a map is available, point out Jerusalem, Israel.



Let's play Find It First! Bring out your Bible; keep it right in front of you. Hand out spare Bibles. **Today's Scripture verse is behind the curtain** (or secret door, secret window, etc.). Child reveals the Bible Story Scripture reference: Acts 12:5-16. **Let's see who can Find It First. Ready? Set? Go!** Children race to find it first. The winner helps others find it. **Let's highlight our Key Verse: Acts 12:5.**

Before we read, let's stand and ask God to open our eyes, ears, hearts, and minds to His Word today. Who would like to pray that for us? Child prays aloud. **Be seated. This story takes place after King Herod unfairly had Peter put in prison.**

READERS' THEATRE: Instead of reading our Bible passage, let's act it out. Distribute Readers' Theatre scripts to the children, assign roles, and hand out props. Read and act out Acts 12:5 -16.

Optional: The Readers' Theatre script directly quotes the Bible Story Scripture passages. If you choose to omit the Readers' Theater, read Acts 12:5-16.



Praying together

THE WAY

Additional Supplies: Three chain links (Treasure Treat sample)

Think about the light, the angel, the guards, the chains, and the iron gate. What do you think is the most amazing thing that happened in this story? (Children respond.) **Did Peter or his friends plan the big escape?** (No. Peter was sleeping and his friends were praying.) **What did Peter have to do to be saved from prison?** (Follow the angel.) **How was the angel coming down from heaven to wake up Peter and save him like a picture of Jesus and us?** (Children respond.) **Jesus came down from heaven to save us. He woke up our hearts and opened the way for us to get to God. Peter could not save himself from prison. He just slept, woke, and followed. He did not search for an angel, break his own chains, or open the iron gate. How is that like the saving of our souls?** (Children respond.) **We cannot do anything to save our own souls. There is nothing we can do to pay the punishment for our sins. Only Jesus can save us. He paid for all our sins.**

What did the others say when the servant Rhoda announced Peter was at the door? (They said she was out of her mind, and that it was Peter's angel.) **What did Peter have to do when she did not open the door?** (He had to keep knocking until they opened it to see him for themselves!) **Even though they were praying for Peter's safe return, they did not believe Rhoda. Have you ever been surprised to see God answer one of your prayers?** (Children respond.) Sit children in a circle or other sitting arrangement for prayer. **Peter's friends prayed for him as he faced an impossible situation. Let's pray for any of your family members or friends who are facing an impossible situation.** Children share prayer requests and pray.

Why is it important for believers to pray together? (Children respond.) **Jesus promised that wherever two or more are gathered in His name, He is there with them. When we gather to pray, we can encourage each other as we wait to see how God will answer our prayers. He always answers our prayers in one of three ways.** Display Treasure Treat: Three chain links. **This chain reminds us of the miracle when Peter's chains fell off his wrists. Each link stands for one way God answers our prayers.**

1. **RIGHT AWAY:** A sudden miracle that all can see.
2. **ALONG THE WAY:** An answer that comes slowly over a long time.
3. **SOMEDAY:** An answer we will finally see when we get to heaven and can celebrate with Jesus in person!



Connecting the Old Testament, the New Testament, and Us

CHRIST CONNECTION

1000 years before God answered the believers' prayer for Peter, David wrote a song about the way God hears and answers our prayers. Let's read a few lines from his song.



FIND IT FIRST > Everyone, place your Bible closed on your lap. Choose a child to reveal the Christ Connection Scripture reference: Psalm 65:2, 5. **Let's see who can Find It First! Ready? Set? Go! Find it and highlight it.** Read Psalm 65:2, 5.

When and where do you pray? (Children respond.) **How has God answered your prayers?** (Children respond.)

THE WAY *continued...*



Revelation 5:8

GOLDEN BOWL

Teacher Tip: Write the names of classmates, local church leaders, and children in other nations or others who need prayer on small pieces of paper. Place the papers in a golden bowl.

Revelation 5:8 says our prayers are like sweet smelling incense in the golden bowls at God's throne. I'm going to lift each one of your names to God's throne as you pray for each person silently. Then, we will pray the Lord's Prayer (Matthew 6:9-13) aloud together. Let's pray.

Lord God, we lift up to Your throne the name of each child here. We trust You to watch over us and our needs, the ones we say aloud and the ones hidden in our hearts. First, we lift up to You ____, ____, ____. Read names in Golden Bowl.

Now, we pray the prayer Your Son taught us: Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be Your name. Your kingdom come, Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. Forgive us our sins, as we forgive those who sin against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one. For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.



When only 5 minutes remain, begin this segment.

FINAL FIVE MINUTES

TREASURE TREAT: Today, your Treasure Treat is three chain links. (Teacher's Note: These can be metal links, links made from pipe cleaners, paper strips looped and secured with tape, etc.) **Tell someone the story of the believers praying for Peter and the angel rescuing him from prison. Explain that each link stands for a way God answers our prayers: today, along the way, or someday!**

W³: Take home today's W³ Journal Entry as your personal devotional study. Keep your journal entries together in a notebook or in your Bible. Distribute W³ Journal Entry #10. Complete this at home and let God speak to you through His own words in the Bible!

OFFERING OF ART: Until it is time to be dismissed, make an Offering of Art. For your offering, draw a picture of the angel leading Peter out of prison.

PRAYER REQUESTS: As children work on their Offering of Art, ask how you can pray for them this week. Write requests in a prayer notebook.

BIBLE MEMORY VERSE SONG: Play the Unit 2 Bible Memory Verse Song, "Where the Spirit of the Lord Is," in the background as children wait to be dismissed.



If time remains, choose from the connected activities below.

GOT TIME?

SNACK: PRAY TOGETHER

Purpose: Children will pray a blessing together before enjoying their snack.

Supplies: Any favorite snack

While Peter was in prison, his friends gathered together to pray for him. As we gather here today, let's pray together and thank God for this snack.

Directions:

1. Serve snack and drinks.
2. Child prays to thank God for the snack.
3. Ask the Snack Discussion Questions: **Have you ever prayed and asked God for something? Was that prayer answered right away with a miracle, along the way over time, or do you think it will be answered some day in heaven?**

GAME: PRAYER WEB

Purpose: Children will practice praying.

Supplies: Ball of yarn

Who prayed for Peter while he was in prison? (His friends who believed in Jesus.) **The Bible says they prayed earnestly; that means they were very serious about praying. Prayer is important because we are talking to God. We can talk to Him anytime. Let's pray right now!**

Directions:

1. Teacher and helpers sit with the children in a circle.
2. Teacher holds the ball of yarn and says **God, I think You are special because _____. Amen!**
3. Firmly grasp the loose end of the ball of yarn and toss the ball to a child.
4. Child catches the yarn and repeats the same sentence, filling in the blank with a different prayer.
5. Child holds onto the yarn and tosses the ball to another child to take a turn.
6. Continue tossing the yarn until all children are holding a section of the yarn and you are holding the ball of yarn. The crossed yarn will look like a spider web.
7. As time allows, repeat the above steps for each of the prayer sentences below continuing to unravel the same ball of yarn until it is gone.

God, I thank You for _____. Amen!

God, please help my friend (name) with _____. Amen!

God, please help (name) in my family with _____. Amen!

GOT TIME? *continued...*

CRAFT: PRAYER POCKET

Purpose: Children will make a pocket to hold prayer requests and praises.

Supplies: Two paper plates, paper, yarn, assorted craft supplies (buttons, craft jewels, beads, craft sticks, ribbon, paint, glitter, etc.), 6 notecards, scissors, hole punch, tape, crayons or markers

Prepare: For each child, cut a 2-foot piece of yarn. Wrap a piece of tape around one end of a 2-foot length of yarn to make the yarn easier to thread through the holes. For every two children, cut a paper plate in half.

When Peter was arrested, what did his friends do? (They prayed for him.) **What did God do to answer their prayers?** (God sent an angel to rescue Peter from prison.) **Just as Peter's friends prayed for him, we can pray for each other. Let's each make a Prayer Pocket.**

Directions:

1. Place a paper plate half and a whole paper plate together, fronts facing and with the round edges touching to form a pocket.
2. Punch holes around the edges where the two plates come together, spacing the holes about one inch apart.
3. Push the tape end of the yarn through the first two matching holes. Tie a knot around the side of the plate to secure the yarn.
4. Weave the yarn through the remaining holes. Knot the yarn around the side of the plate after threading through the last set of holes. Trim the yarn, saving the extra.
5. Decorate the pocket with assorted craft supplies.
6. Punch a hole in the top of the whole plate above the pocket. Thread and knot the extra piece of yarn through the hole to create a hanger.
7. Give each child three notecards.
8. Divide the children into groups of four. Within their groups, children share their prayer requests and praise reports. Write each name and prayer or praise on a notecard. Beginning readers may draw a symbol or picture. Place the notecards in your new Prayer Pocket.

Give each child three more notecards. **When you get home, ask three friends or family members for their prayer requests or praise reports. Write them on one of these notecards and keep them in your Prayer Pocket. Each day, pray for the prayer requests and thank God for any answered prayers.**

DISCUSSION: ASK, SEEK, AND KNOCK

Purpose: Children will understand the challenge Jesus gave us to pray.

Supplies: Bible opened to Matthew 7:7

Let's read what Jesus said about praying hard as Peter's friends did. Read Matthew 7:7. **Jesus tells us to keep praying and God will answer. The word "ask" here does not mean to just ask once; it means to keep on asking. "Seek" does not mean to just look once, but to keep looking for where God is moving and what He is doing. It's as if we are knocking on a door with a prayer to see if God will open it. What have you been praying about for a long time?** (Children respond.) **Does God mind if you ask Him more than once?** (No. He encourages it!) **We can boldly come to God with our prayers. Jesus challenges us to keep asking, seeking, and knocking on God's door with prayer.**

GOT TIME? *continued...*



BIBLE MEMORY VERSE ACTIVITIES

"Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom. And we, who with unveiled faces all reflect the Lord's glory, are being transformed into His likeness with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord." 2 Corinthians 3:17b-18

Teacher Tip: During both activities, review the meaning of each phrase in the Bible Memory Verse.

Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom. (The Holy Spirit frees us to follow Jesus.)

And we, who with unveiled faces (As believers, we can see Jesus is the Lord.)

all reflect the Lord's glory, (Our lives show others His greatness.)

are being transformed into His likeness (We are being changed to be even more like Jesus.)

with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord. (We will keep showing more and more of His greatness because His Spirit is in us.)

GAME: ERASE IT, THEN SAY IT

Purpose: Children learn the Unit 2 Bible Memory Verse.

Supplies: Chalkboard and chalk or dry erase board and marker

Directions:

1. Write the words of 2 Corinthians 3:17b-18 on the board. As you write each word, lead the children in saying it with you.
2. Say the whole verse together.
3. Review the meaning of the Bible Memory Verse as explained in the Teacher Tip above.
4. Choose a volunteer to erase one word. Children say the verse again, filling in the erased word.
5. Continue having children erase words and recite the verse until all the words are erased.
6. Choose a few volunteers to say the verse from memory by themselves or as a small group.
7. Say the whole verse together, one more time.

GAME: BALLOON TOSS

Purpose: Children learn the Unit 2 Bible Memory Verse.

Supplies: Inflated non-helium balloon, Bible Memory Verse poster

Directions:

1. Review the meaning of the Bible Memory Verse as explained in the Teacher Tip above.
2. Divide children into five teams.
3. Assign each team one of the following five phrases: **Where the Spirit of the Lord is,/ there is freedom. And we, who/ with unveiled faces all reflect the Lord's glory/ are being transformed into His likeness with/ ever-increasing glory which comes from the Lord.**
4. Give the teams time to memorize their phrase.
5. Children stand in a circle. Teams should be spread out within the circle.
6. The team with the first phrase tosses a balloon high into the air. They must recite their phrase before the balloon touches the floor.
7. As soon as the team completes its phrase, a member of the next team taps the balloon as high as possible. That team recites their phrase before the balloon touches the floor.
8. Continue until all five phrases have been recited.
9. Play again, as time allows.

GOT TIME? *continued...*



BIBLE TIMELINE REVIEW

Review the recent Bible stories studied to see the continuing story of who God is and what He has done. Create or purchase a Bible Timeline. Hang your timeline on a wall or other visible location. Point to the Bible Timeline and ask the corresponding questions.

Peter and Tabitha In Joppa, there was a woman named Tabitha. How did her life of doing good and helping the poor point the people of Joppa to Jesus? (Tabitha's kindness showed them the kindness of Jesus.) **What did Peter say and do at her bedside after she died?** (He prayed, asked Tabitha to get up, and lent her his hand to help her get up.)

Peter Visits Cornelius God gave Peter a vision to show Jesus came to save all who believe in Him—Jews and Gentiles (non-Jews). God has no favorites. At the same time, an angel told a Gentile named Cornelius to invite Peter to his home. What happened when Peter spoke to everyone there? (Cornelius' friends and family believed in Jesus and were baptized.)

Peter Escapes from Prison When King Herod put Peter in prison, what did the believers do? (They gathered to pray.) **A bright light shone in the prison cell and an angel appeared. What happened to the chains around Peter's wrists?** (They fell to the ground.) **The angel led Peter out of the prison. What happened when Peter knocked on the door where the believers were praying?** (At first they didn't believe it was Peter. They were very surprised to see him.)

How to create a Bible Timeline:

1. Print the story title or person's name with historical date (whenever available) on a card. Before each lesson, add that new card to the Bible Timeline. Specific dates and a confirmed chronological order of all events covered in Lessons 1-31 are not available. On the Bible Timeline for Lesson 1-31, the events will be ordered as they appear in the Bible.
2. Attach card to wall or clothesline in the following order for Prophets & Promises Lessons 1-31:

Acts – Revelation: Jesus Ascends (Circa 33 A.D.) > God Sends His Spirit > Peter and the Crippled Man > The Stoning of Stephen > Philip and the Ethiopian > God Changes Saul's Heart > Saul Escapes from Damascus > Peter and Tabitha > Peter Visits Cornelius > Peter Escapes from Prison > Barnabas and Paul (Circa 46-48 A.D.) > Peter Visits Macedonia (Circa 50 A.D.) > Paul and Lydia (Circa 51-53 A.D.) > Paul and Silas in Prison (Circa 51-53 A.D.) > Priscilla and Aquila (Circa 51-53 A.D.) > Paul's Third Journey (Circa 54-58 A.D.) > Paul's Arrest in Jerusalem (Circa 58 A.D.) > Paul and King Agrippa (Circa 60 A.D.) > Paul and the Shipwreck (Circa 60 A.D.) > Paul Imprisoned in Rome (Circa 61-63 A.D.) > New Testament Letters

Note: You may choose to add a card labeled Jesus on Earth (Circa 1-33 A.D.) to your timeline.

Teacher Tip: For a comprehensive list of stories for Genesis through Revelation in timeline form, see ResourceWell.org.