

PETER'S FRIENDS PRAY FOR HIM

All Activity Sheets

KEY WORDS

FAMILY PERSECUTE PRISON PRAY FRIENDS

BIBLICAL REFERENCE

Acts 12:1-17

LESSON OBJECTIVE

To assist the children to learn to pray for their friends and family who need the help of God.

MEMORY VERSE

"They never stopped teaching and proclaiming the good news that Jesus is the Messiah" (Acts 5:42b, NIV*).

PREPARE YOURSELF TO TEACH

We see prayer as a divine gift from God, who always longs to encounter us. Prayer is lifting our thinking and believing into the presence of God, as well as asking him for those good things that align with his will. Prayer flows from our personal and living relationship with the Lord. God's Spirit dwells in our hearts and intercedes for us in accordance with the will of God (Romans 8:26). Christlike disciples need to be engaged in fervent, keen, avid, ardent, eager, enthusiastic prayer.

King Herod wanted to maintain a good relationship with the Jews so that his government's reputation was favorable, so he decided to oppose everything that had to do with Jesus and his followers.

One of his first steps was to persecute the believers. He took many to jail and mistreated them. He also killed James, John's brother. The leaders of the Jews and the priests were very pleased, so Herod decided to find Peter to kill him too.

The soldiers captured Peter and took him to prison, where he was chained. King Herod wanted to display Peter in the public square before his execution to show his authority to the people.

That night, while Peter was trying to sleep in the prison, the brothers and sisters of the church were gathered in the house of Mary, praying for him.

Suddenly, a light shone in the prison and an angel of the Lord woke up Peter and led him through the halls of the dark prison, without any soldier realizing anything. At last they passed through the door that led to the street. They walked a few more steps and the angel disappeared. Peter understood that it was the hand of the Lord who delivered him from Herod.

Peter hurried to the house of Mary, John's mother. Everyone was stunned when they saw him enter. Then they realized that God answered their prayers and they thanked and praised him.

This story teaches us that God answers the earnest prayers of his people. As you prepare to teach, pray for each child in your class. You have the privilege and responsibility to lead preschoolers to Jesus and to teach them, by your example, the power of prayer.

This is the last lesson about Peter. Here we celebrate the power of prayer. Prayer is vital for believers, so it is important to foster it from the early stages of development of children.

They need to know that prayer is a direct channel of communication with our God. Just as they converse with their school friends or family members, they can also do so with the Lord.

Many preschoolers are reluctant to pray because they do not know how to turn to God. Let them understand that he does not want long or complicated sentences. He just wants us to talk to him as our best friend. If your children experience prayer in class time, they will want to repeat the experience in their homes.

Encourage prayer times with your group, and allow them to express their requests to intercede for them.

INTRODUCE THE LESSON

Hands of prayer

Draw praying hands on a card and cut them out. You will need a pair for each child. If you wish, you can take the template found on the activity sheet in the children's resources for lesson 26. Give your children the hands, and let them decorate them. Talk to them about what they stand for. Tell them that many times when we pray, we clasp our hands in reverence. Today's story tells us about people who prayed with great faith and God answered their prayer.

TEACH THE LESSON

This activity will help teach them the biblical truth.

Let's talk about prayer

Have your children form a circle. Let them express what they think and know about prayer. Throughout the year they learned about this subject, and they must have certain experiences they can mention.

Encourage them to tell the group how God has answered their prayers. Remind them that praying is talking to the Lord. Tell them: We can talk to God about any subject; and although he already knows everything that happens to us, he likes us to tell him.

God always has time to listen to his children.

In the Bible story, we will learn about people who had a very special request and prayed for it. God answered in a wonderful way. Do you want to know how? Pay close attention throughout the story so you know what the answer was.

Peter is set free

Peter was in prison because he was telling people about Jesus, the Son of God. Peter was one of his followers and wanted people to know the Lord.

Many soldiers guarded him. They were to ensure that Peter remained in prison, so they were given two heavy chains so that he could not escape. Two soldiers were also guarding him while he slept, in addition to other guards in front of the door.

While Peter was in prison, his friends gathered in the house of Mary, the mother of John, to pray for him. They all begged God to look after and protect their friend Peter. God listened to the prayers and, while the apostle slept, an angel appeared in prison and filled everything with light. Very gently he awoke Peter and said, "Quick, get up!" Suddenly, the chains fell from his hands, and he put on his sandals and followed the angel through the dark corridors of the prison until he reached the street. No soldier noticed anything.

Peter thought it was a dream, but it was true. "It is not a dream! God sent his angel to save me from prison. I am free!" he exclaimed. Then he hurried to Mary's house, where his friends were gathered. When a young woman opened the door, she could

not believe that Peter was in front of her. They all thanked God for answering their prayer and for Peter's release Peter from prison.

CONNECT THE LESSON

Peter's book

Give the children Student Activity Sheet #48 and scissors. You may need to prepare several figures of Peter and the angel from the activity sheet in advance to assist some children. Then assist those who are able to cut out the figures of Peter and the angel. Next, help them trim the biblical scene along the marked line. Assist the children to bend the back of the sheet horizontally, following the dotted lines. Then, help them fold it vertically, to form a small book. They are to stick the figure of Peter in the jail in the first page of the booklet, and the figure of the angel in page number three. Give them time to color it. During this activity review the Bible story.

Encourage them to use their little book to tell their friends and family the story of Peter's wonderful liberation.

PRACTICE THE MEMORY VERSE

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Write the memory verse on the board and repeat it together with your children. Erase some of the words and let the children say it again. Repeat this action until you clear all the words and the children recite it from memory.

Review game

Ask the children what they learned in class today. Make this review as a game: Throw a ball or other soft object to a member of your class. The one who receives it will have to tell something of what he or she learned. Then they will throw the ball or soft object to another person, and so on until everyone participates.

WRAP-UP

Pray

Set aside a special time of prayer with your children. Ask two volunteers to pray aloud, thanking God for the teachings of this unit and for the assurance of knowing that he answers our prayers. Conclude by praying for your children and their families.

Encourage

Give the children the activities they did during the previous lessons. Encourage them to pray with their families at home.

Invite

Give a brief introduction to the new unit to arouse the children's interest. Say goodbye with a song that speaks of the power and love of God.