



LESSON SNAPSHOT

BOTTOM LINE:

God is always in control!

OBJECTIVE:

Kids will learn that God can provide a way when there seems to be no way.

KEY PASSAGE:

Acts 12:1-17, Peter's Escape From Prison

MEMORY VERSE:

"His signs are great. His wonders are mighty. His kingdom will last forever. His rule will never end." Daniel 4:3 (NIRV)

SUMMARY:

The great illusionists can escape from seemingly inescapable bonds. When Peter escaped from prison, it was no illusion. It was God displaying that He is powerful and He is always in control.

SIMPLE PRAYER:

Dear God,

Thank you for your amazing power!

In Jesus' name,

Amen



MEMORY VERSE

“How great are his signs, how mighty his wonders! His kingdom is an eternal kingdom; his do-minion endures from generation to generation.” Daniel 4:3 (NIV)

“His signs are great. His wonders are mighty. His kingdom will last forever. His rule will never end.” Daniel 4:3 (NIRV)

LARGE GROUP:

Split the main group in two. See which group can recite the memory verse from memory the loudest.

SMALL GROUP:

Pair the kids off and have them recite the verse to each other.



SKIT

MEET THE ESCAPE ARTIST

ITEMS NEEDED:

A ringmaster's costume for Adam

A Biblical costume for Peter

CHARACTER BREAKDOWN:

2 M

CHARACTERS:

Adam - A circus ringmaster

Peter - The apostle

Adam enters and takes center stage.

ADAM: Ladies and gentlemen, children of all ages, gather 'round, and step right up! The Bible Circus is back to astound you with feats and sights, strange and rare! Step right up and be the first to see what God has done for these amazing people. How amazing? What if I were to tell you that one of the most daring, amazing, incredible escape artists of all time was here, right here in this building? Friends and fans, prepare to be astounded by the story of the incredible, the stupendous, the amazing escape artist known as... THE ROCK!

Peter enters.

PETER: Hello, thanks for having me.

ADAM: You? Who are you?

PETER: I'm Peter, also known as the Rock.

ADAM: You're the Rock?

PETER: Who were you expecting, Dwayne Johnson?

ADAM: I was expecting the man who made a daring escape from prison and certain doom!

SKIT

PETER: Well look no further, because I'm your guy.

ADAM: Tell me, Peter, where did the idea for your great escape act come from?

PETER: It wasn't my idea.

ADAM: It wasn't?

PETER: No way. I didn't want to get tossed into a jail cell, and when I did, I certainly didn't think I would escape. I was preaching the Good News that Jesus is alive, and King Herod had me arrested. He had already put James, the brother of John, to death for speaking about Jesus. I was sure that it was my time!

ADAM: But you escaped!

PETER: Yes, I did!

ADAM: Peter, what's the secret? How did you do it?

PETER: I didn't do a thing. It was all God.

ADAM: Come on, every escape artist has a trick.

PETER: I'm not an escape artist. I'm just a sinner saved by grace. That day, God sent an angel to break me out of jail. It was an honest to goodness miracle.

ADAM: That's incredible!

PETER: Tell me about it. My friends thought I was a ghost when I showed up at the door. They thought I was a goner.

ADAM: That's an amazing escape, Peter. Any plans for an encore?

PETER: No plans on my end. I know one day, I will probably die for Jesus, but as long as God wants me to keep on preaching, I know He will find a way to protect me.

ADAM: What a remarkable story, and a remarkable escape. It's good to know God is always in control.

PETER: Tell me about it!

ADAM: Thanks for sharing your story, Mr. The Rock.

SKIT

PETER: Just call me Peter.

ADAM: We've got one more exciting act. Don't miss our grand finale next week. Bye, kids!



OBJECT LESSON OR KIDS SERMON

ITEMS NEEDED:

A Terrarium (actual pet optional)

If you have small pets at home, you know they require a lot of equipment to take care of them. Whether it's fish or gerbils or turtles or even snakes, you have to have a place to keep them. It needs to be comfortable for the animal. It needs to provide them with food and water. And most important for your parents – it needs to keep them contained. As much as we like to think our pets are content to be in their little terrariums, every pet wants to explore what lies beyond the glass. Even the most fool-proof of terrariums can be escaped by a clever rodent or reptile.

Sometimes we can feel trapped like a gerbil in a terrarium, but even when we can't find a way out of a bad situation, God can. God is always in control, and he can provide a way when it seems like there's no way out. Whether it's hard times, peer pressure, or some other circumstance, God will lead you through if you trust Him.

God is powerful, and He is in control. We can trust Him to guide us no matter what!



LARGE GROUP GAME

BLIND PUZZLES

ITEMS NEEDED:

Two 12- or 24-piece kids puzzles

INSTRUCTIONS:

Choose two players for this game. Have each player sit at a table, and place one unassembled puzzle in front of each player with all the pieces facing DOWN. The players will race to see who can assemble their puzzle first, going only by the shapes and not by the pictures. The first one with a fully assembled puzzle wins.

VARIATION:

For younger kids, you can let them peek at the pictures underneath, but they must still assemble the puzzle upside down.

WHAT'S THE POINT?

God will make a way to save us, even if we can't see it.



LARGE GROUP LESSON

BOTTOM LINE:

God is always in control!

OBJECTIVE:

Kids will learn that God can provide a way when there seems to be no way.

KEY PASSAGE:

Acts 12:1-17, Peter's Escape From Prison

INTRO:

Have any of you noticed that a good number of circus acts are all about putting people in danger? Back in week one we talked about the lion tamers, who risk their lives by stepping into a cage filled with dangerous lions and tigers. In week three we talked about the high wire artists and the trapeze artists who work high in the air with no net to catch them. We talked about fire eaters, about people jumping through flaming hoops, and even strong men who could catch cannonballs with their stomach.

Today we're going to talk about another circus performer cheating death – the escape artist. These daring performers are the men who deal in straight jackets, handcuffs, and giant tanks of water. They are men like Harry Houdini, who could escape from any prison cell man could devise. They are men who seemingly cheat death on stage, escaping from the most impossible of situations. They are tied up, dropped in a tank of water that is then chained up and locked from the outside. And yet, moments later, they are safe and sound on the outside of their watery tomb.

While it is true that men like Houdini could pick just about any lock and escape from legitimate challenges, most escape artists had some trick up their sleeve. You don't allow yourself to be bound up, dunked in water, and locked into that watery cabinet unless you have a fool-proof escape route already planned. Even so, there were on occasion escape artists who panicked, forgot the plan, and died on stage! These tragic events made the successful escapes of other escape artists all the more astounding to paying audiences.

Sometimes life puts us into some sticky situations that can make us feel trapped. You're at a friend's house, and all of a sudden, they're asking you to do something you know isn't right. All your other friends are doing it. Why don't you? Or maybe your family is trapped in a bad situation.

LARGE GROUP LESSON

Your parent is out of a job. You may have to move. No matter what they try or do, nothing ever seems to get better. How in the world are you going to escape?

In moments like these we can remember the story of a man who was trapped in a hopeless situation in the Bible. He was in jail, facing certain death, when God did something amazing.

READ ACTS 12:1-17

MAIN POINT:

Peter had to believe he was going to die. King Herod had already executed James, one of the twelve disciples, and the persecution against the early believers was growing by the day. Peter had long accepted that one day he would die for Jesus, and he was willing to lay down his life for the gospel.

Although Peter would later die for his faith, it would not be on this day. God had more work for Peter, and He made a way for Peter to escape. God was faithful to his faithful servant. Peter's miraculous escape reminds us that God is all-powerful, and no matter how bad things may be, God is still in control. Where we see no way out, God can make a way!

DRIVE IT HOME:

In the last several years, escape rooms have become a very popular form of entertainment. Escape rooms are a great activity for family, friends, and co-workers. You pick a scenario, which can be horror-themed, kidnapping themed, or even spy-themed, and you are led into a room that is filled with hidden clues. You are given a set amount of time to find the clues, solve the mystery, and make your escape. These escape room challenges are not easy, and while you're fully aware that it's only a game, escape rooms can lead to a lot of stress and tension. There may even come a moment when you wonder if you actually can escape.

Of course, every escape room has a way out. The game administrator knows the way, and while he or she won't give you the answer, they can still see the way out. That's how God sees our inescapable situations. He is in control. He is all-knowing. He knows where the clues are, and He alone knows how to lead us there. The difference is where the escape room game administrator is only there to observe, God is there to help. If we place ourselves in God's hands, He will show us a way, even if we can't see it. He will be faithful to His people.

What makes Peter's escape so amazing is that there was nothing he himself could have done to escape. There were no clues lying around. There was no key to be found on the floor. Peter needed a miracle to escape that situation, and that's exactly what God did.

LARGE GROUP LESSON

God made a way where there was no way, and He still does miracles like that to this day.

Some of you may be in a tight spot in your life right now. Maybe it's a home situation. Maybe it's a problem at school. It seems hopeless, and it feels like there's no solution to be found. God already knows the way out, and if you trust him to guide you, He will show you the way to go. God saved his servant Peter from certain doom. Whatever trouble you are facing, God can save you too.

CLOSE WITH A SIMPLE PRAYER:

Dear God,

Thank you for your amazing power!

*In Jesus' name,
Amen*



SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION (K-2ND)

ICEBREAKER:

Have you ever tried to find your way out of a corn maze? If so, how did it go?

MEMORY VERSE ACTIVITY:

Daniel 4:3

Pair the kids off and have them recite the verse to each other.

SMALL GROUP GAME/ACTIVITY:

Have everyone stand in a circle. Reach into the middle and grab hands with other people at random. Then start the clock. See if the kids can unravel themselves in a minute or less!

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

Read Acts 12:1-17

What happened to the apostle James?

What do you think Herod was going to do with Peter?

What happened the night before Peter's trial?

Can God help us out of tight situations like Peter's?

What should we do when we need help from God?

SIMPLE PRAYER:

Dear God,

Show us the way out when we can't see it ourselves.

In Jesus' name,

Amen



SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION (3-5TH)

ICEBREAKER:

Have you ever been to an escape room or done an escape room type activity? If so, how did it go?

MEMORY VERSE ACTIVITY:

Daniel 4:3

Pair the kids off and have them recite the verse to each other.

SMALL GROUP GAME/ACTIVITY:

Have everyone stand in a circle. Reach into the middle and grab hands with other people at random. Then start the clock. See if the kids can unravel themselves in a minute or less!

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

Read Acts 12:1-17

Why did Herod have Peter arrested?

What did everyone think was going to happen to Peter?

How did Peter escape?

When might we need God's help to show us how to escape from a bad situation?

How do we know God will rescue us?

SIMPLE PRAYER:

Dear God,

Show us the way out when we can't see it ourselves.

*In Jesus' name,
Amen*



POWERPOINT REVIEW GAME

TRUE OR FALSE

Peter was arrested and thrown in jail by King Herod.

TRUE

Herod had arrested James but let him go.

FALSE

Peter escaped with help from the other prisoners.

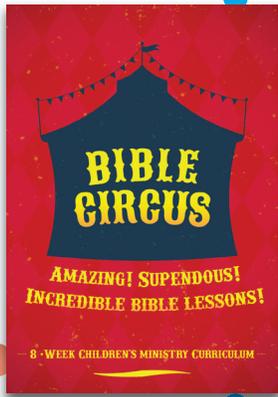
FALSE

God made a way to rescue Peter.

TRUE

God can provide a way when there seems to be no way.

TRUE



MAKE IT STICK

5 Simple Ways You Can Make This Lesson Stick With your Kids

Bible Circus Lesson 7

THIS WEEK'S LESSON: PETER



IN THE CAR:

Ask your child what they learned about this week on the drive home:

The great illusionists can escape from seemingly inescapable bonds. When Peter escaped from prison, it was no illusion. It was God displaying that He is powerful and He is always in control. Acts 12:1-17, Peter's Escape From Prison



HANGING OUT:

Make this week's lesson real:

Just for fun, work with your kids to create an "escape room game" at home. Ask the kids how they can make the game challenging but still solvable. Then ask them how they know God will help them escape when they need His direction.



AT DINNER:

Here are some great discussion starters:

- How did Peter escape from prison?
- How do we know that God will rescue us when we need Him?
- What should we do when we feel trapped and there's no way out?



AT BEDTIME:

Quiz your child on this week's memory verse:

"His signs are great. His wonders are mighty. His kingdom will last forever. His rule will never end." Daniel 4:3 (NIRV)



PARENT TIME:

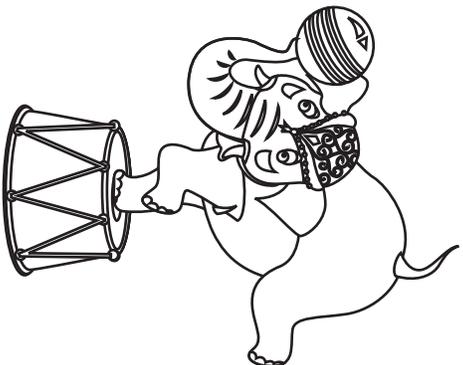
What you need to know:

Our kids are going to face challenging times when they will need an escape. Pray that they will remember to call on God when they are tempted, when they face peer pressure, and when they are challenged in their faith so they can stand strong and follow God.

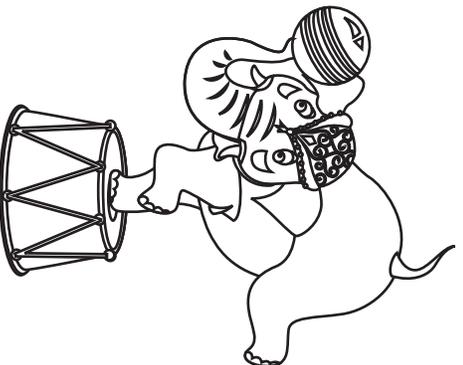


CRAFT ACTIVITY

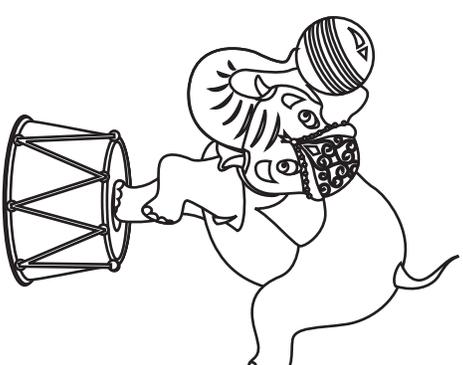
Have the kids draw and color a circus style poster showing Peter's miraculous escape from prison!



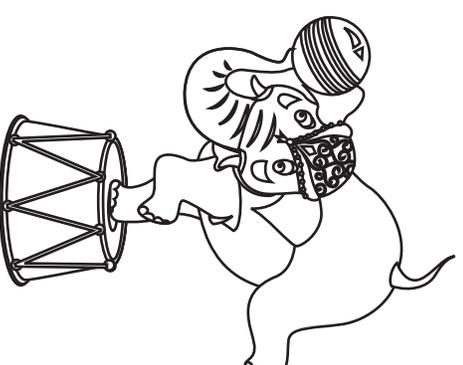
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