



LESSON SNAPSHOT

BOTTOM LINE:

God does the unexpected when we pray and ask him to move.

OBJECTIVE:

Kids will learn that God often works in ways we do not expect.

KEY PASSAGE:

Acts 12:1-17, Peter Freed From Prison.

MEMORY VERSE:

"I know what it is to be in need, and I know what it is to have plenty. I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation, whether well fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or in want. I can do all this through him who gives me strength."

- *Philippians 4:12-13*

SUMMARY:

Things can change in an instant. There you are, drifting on a log through a peaceful marshland with cartoon animals to keep you company, when suddenly the bottom falls out and you're sent plummeting down a waterfall that leaves you soaking wet and ready for more. When Peter was arrested for following Jesus, his friends gathered in a house to pray for him. God answered their prayers and in a way that was so unexpected, they almost didn't believe it was real.

SIMPLE PRAYER:

Dear God,

Thank you for the miracles you have done. Thank you for all the unexpected ways you answer our prayers.

*In Jesus' name,
Amen*



MEMORY VERSE

"I know what it is to be in need, and I know what it is to have plenty. I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation, whether well fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or in want. I can do all this through him who gives me strength."

- *Philippians 4:12-13 (NIV)*

"I know what it's like not to have what I need. I also know what it's like to have more than I need. I have learned the secret of being content no matter what happens. I am content whether I am well fed or hungry. I am content whether I have more than enough or not enough. I can do everything by the power of Christ. He gives me strength."

- *Philippians 4:12-13 (NirV)*

LARGE GROUP:

Choose four kids who think they know the verse. Line them up on stage. Have the kids recite the memory verse, with each kid saying one word, starting left to right. When you get to the kid on the right, go back to the kid on the far left. Keep going until they get through the whole verse.

SMALL GROUP:

Have the kids create a picture puzzle that spells out the memory verse. Write the memory verse on a piece of paper. Give the kids 3-5 minutes to decorate the page with something that reminds them of the memory verse. Then cut the page into puzzle pieces, mix the pieces up and let the kids put the puzzle back together.



SKIT

WATER RIDE

ITEMS NEEDED:

Large cup of water
Table
Chairs

CHARACTER BREAKDOWN: 1M/1F

CHARACTERS:

Harry - A ride expert
Dawn - An amusement park worker
George - An amusement park visitor

George is sitting at the table, sipping his water. Dawn stands near him.

DAWN: This way for Splash Bomb, the wettest and wildest ride in the park! More gallons of water than any ride in the world! Expect the unexpected on Splash Bomb, right this way!

Harry enters.

HARRY: Excuse me, Miss, I wish to register a complaint.

DAWN: I'm sorry, sir, what seems to be the problem?

HARRY: Let me answer your question with a question: do I look wet to you?

DAWN: No, not at all.

HARRY: Exactly! I'm dry as a bone!

SKIT

DAWN: So I see!

HARRY: Don't you think there's something wrong with that?

DAWN: Is this a trick question?

HARRY: I just went on Splash Bomb, the wettest and wildest ride in the park!

DAWN: Really? How did you like it?

HARRY: I hated it! I didn't get wet!

DAWN: Not at all?

HARRY: Not a drop!

DAWN: Well, that's all for the best. It's a tad chilly today.

HARRY: Look, lady, I don't know if you know water rides, but they're supposed to get you wet! You're supposed to come off those rides completely soaked!

DAWN: Not always.

HARRY: Yes always! You ride along, bouncing past a bunch of cartoon animals, and then WOOSH!!! Soaking wet, right when you least expect it.

DAWN: Well, see, that's just it. You were expecting to get wet, weren't you?

HARRY: Yes!!!

DAWN: Then how can getting you wet be unexpected when you're expecting it?

HARRY: Don't play your amusement park mind games on me! I went on that ride fully prepared to be soaked. Maybe it'll be around turn one, or turn B, or the big drop at the end. It doesn't matter when it happens, I just want to be unexpectedly soaked.

DAWN: I don't know what to say, sir. You want to be surprised, and yet you want us to soak you. We can't surprise you when you're already waiting for it.

HARRY: This is ridiculous! Everyone knows that you get soaked on a water ride! It's not a matter of if, but when! I got on Splash Bomb waiting to get soaked, but did I get soaked? No! I want to get wet! I want the unexpected! I want—

SKIT

George stands up and dumps his water on Harry's head.

HARRY: I did not see that coming!! Best! Water ride! Ever!!

End.



OBJECT LESSON OR KIDS SERMON

ITEMS NEEDED:

Emergency road kit

Bring in an emergency road kit from a car. Open the kit, pull out the tools, and see if the kids can identify what they are and what they do.

Having an emergency repair kit is a wise idea when you own a car. Can anyone tell me why?

No one ever leaves the house in their car planning to run down their battery or get a flat tire, do they? When you get in the car with Mom or Dad, you plan to get where you're going and get home safely with no trouble at all. But sometimes the unexpected happens, and when it does, it's good to be prepared.

Unexpected things happen in life all the time. A phone call can bring bad news at any moment, and a surprising event can happen at any time. The good news is God can be unexpected too. He can show up in a friend who just happens to be there at just the right time. He arrives in a gift that comes out of nowhere just when it is most needed. When we least expect it, God arrives, and he does a miracle that only he could have caused.

Let's thank God for his goodness, and for the amazing power he has. And let's all keep our eyes open. You never know when God is going to surprise you!



LARGE GROUP GAME

SURPRISE CATCH

ITEMS NEEDED:

A large sheet, strung up on stage

A baseball glove

Lots of balls of various sizes

INSTRUCTIONS:

Choose one player for this game. Give them a glove and have them stand on one side of the sheet. Tell them their goal is to catch ten balls in 60 seconds. The balls will be tossed over the sheet. When explaining the game, show them the baseball, and give them the idea that all you will be throwing at them are baseballs. When the game begins, start by throwing two baseballs, then start throwing other balls: soccer balls, volleyballs, golf balls, tennis balls, basketballs, footballs, etc. If they catch ten, they win.

VARIATION:

For younger kids, reduce the number of balls they have to catch to win.

For older kids, kick it up a notch. Have two adults on the other side of the sheet and start tossing balls two at a time.

WHAT'S THE POINT?

Sometimes the unexpected happens, but when it does, God often responds in unexpected ways for our good.



LARGE GROUP LESSON

BOTTOM LINE:

God does the unexpected when we pray and ask him to move.

OBJECTIVE:

Kids will learn that God often works in ways we do not expect.

KEY PASSAGE:

Acts 12:1-17, Peter Freed From Prison.

INTRO

How many of you plan to get wet when you go to the amusement park? Amusement park rides didn't start out wet and wild, but over the years, water rides became one of the featured attractions at many parks. The raging rapids ride is one of the first you probably got to ride as a kid. You sit in a big round boat with eight people and ride through a series of obstacles, each one splashing water into the boat. The great part about that ride is, there's no "safe" seat in the boat for someone who wants to get wet. You can sit in one seat on one time through and barely get sprinkled. The next time through, you can sit in the same seat and get completely soaked!

Water rides can give you thrills too. There are the log flumes with the small, log-shaped boats that take you up a hill and send you splashing back down. Then there are the big boat rides with room for about twenty people. Not only does it soak the riders, many of these rides have a bridge you can stand on to feel the full brunt of the wave the boat makes when it hits the bottom.

Even on those big rides, you never know if this is the time when you'll get sprinkled or soaked. That's why it's wise to think ahead, wear a bathing suit, and don't carry anything in your pockets that shouldn't get wet!

Just like water rides, life is full of the unexpected. At any moment, something bad and unexpected can happen and send us reeling. But just as quick as something bad can happen, something miraculous can happen as well.

LARGE GROUP LESSON

As the early church began to grow, the persecution of the Christians grew. Christians were being put in prison, beaten, and even killed. Once the Romans had you in their custody, there was rarely any escape. In today's story, it's Peter who is thrown in jail for preaching about Jesus. But just when Peter thinks his time is up, God does something unexpected!

READ Acts 12:1-17

MAIN POINT

Peter was in big trouble. King Herod had already killed James, one of Jesus' disciples, and he was ready to make an example out of Peter. Just to make sure Peter would not get away, he had Peter chained up to two guards while he was in prison.

Peter's friends prayed that he would be released, and that's when God did the unexpected. An angel appeared to Peter in the prison, released him from his chains, and opened the doors to the prison! When Peter reached his friends, they didn't believe it was real. God did a miracle, and he saved Peter from certain doom!

DRIVE IT HOME

When people talk about miracles these days, they have different ideas. Some people talk about miracles in sports, like a great Hail Mary pass that wins a football game. Other people think that if they pray for something, even something small, and it happens, that is a miracle.

Miracles are when God steps into our world and does something supernatural. It can be something big, like miraculously removing the cancer from someone's body. It can be something small, like a gift of money that arrives just when a family needs it most. Miracles big and small are things that cannot be explained, things that only God could have done. They are reminders that we have a big and loving God looking out for us.

Life is going to throw some unexpected twists at us. You never know where they will come from, or how they will change your life. When they do happen, remember that you are not alone on this adventure. God is with you, and he listens to our prayers. When life throws an unexpected swerve at you, take your problems to God. Don't be surprised if something truly unexpected happens.

CLOSE WITH A SIMPLE PRAYER

Dear God,

Thank you for the miracles you have done. Thank you for all the unexpected ways you answer our prayers.

In Jesus' name,

Amen



SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION (K-2ND)

ICEBREAKER

What's your favorite water ride?

MEMORY VERSE ACTIVITY

Philippians 4:12-13

Have the kids create a picture puzzle that spells out the memory verse. Write the memory verse on a piece of paper. Give the kids 3-5 minutes to decorate the page with something that reminds them of the memory verse. Then cut the page into puzzle pieces, mix the pieces up and let the kids put the puzzle back together.

SMALL GROUP GAME/ACTIVITY

Have the kids each share a story about a time when they got a surprise.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Read Acts 12:1-17

Who was King Herod?

What did Herod do to Peter?

What did Herod plan to do with Peter?

Who saved Peter from prison?

Why do you think God saved Peter?

SIMPLE PRAYER

Dear God,

Thank you that you hear our prayers when the unexpected happens, and please help us to remember to call on you when we are in need.

In Jesus' name,

Amen



SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION (3-5TH)

ICEBREAKER

What's your favorite water ride?

MEMORY VERSE ACTIVITY

Philippians 4:12-13

Have the kids create a picture puzzle that spells out the memory verse. Write the memory verse on a piece of paper. Give the kids 3-5 minutes to decorate the page with something that reminds them of the memory verse. Then cut the page into puzzle pieces, mix the pieces up and let the kids put the puzzle back together.

SMALL GROUP GAME/ACTIVITY

Have the kids act out today's Bible story.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Read Acts 12:1-17

What did Herod do to Peter?

What do you think would have happened if Peter had not been released from jail?

Why do you think God intervened to save Peter?

How did Peter's friends respond when they saw him?

Do you think God still does miracles? Why or why not?

SIMPLE PRAYER

Dear God,

Thank you that you hear our prayers when the unexpected happens, and please help us to remember to call on you when we are in need.

In Jesus' name,

Amen



POWERPOINT REVIEW GAME

True or False.

Herod had Peter arrested after he beheaded James.

TRUE

Herod was going to execute Peter without a trial.

FALSE

Two guards were chained to Peter so he could not escape.

TRUE

One of the guards helped Peter to escape.

FALSE

God doesn't do miracles anymore.

FALSE

MAKE IT STICK

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

THIS WEEK'S LESSON: WATER RIDE



IN THE CAR:

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

Today we talked about water rides and the unexpected things that happen in life. Sometimes life throws us for an unexpected curve, but God often responds in unexpected ways Himself. Acts 12:1-17 – Peter Freed From Prison.



HANGING OUT:

Make this week's lesson real:

When something surprising or unexpected happens this week, take some time to talk about it with the kids. How should you respond?



AT DINNER:

Here are some great discussion starters:

- Why was Peter put in jail?
- How did Peter escape from jail?
- Do you think God still does miracles?



AT BEDTIME:

Quiz your child on this week's memory verse:

"I know what it is to be in need, and I know what it is to have plenty. I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation, whether well fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or in want. I can do all this through him who gives me strength."

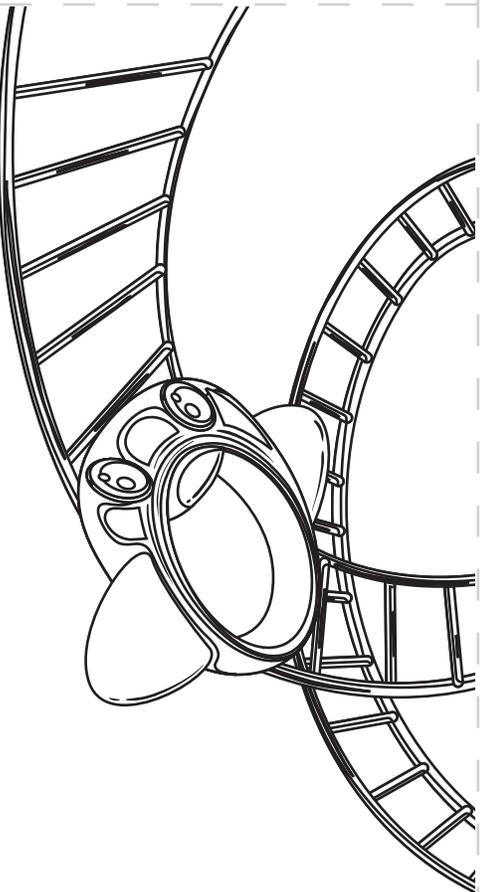
- *Philippians 4:12-13*



PARENT TIME:

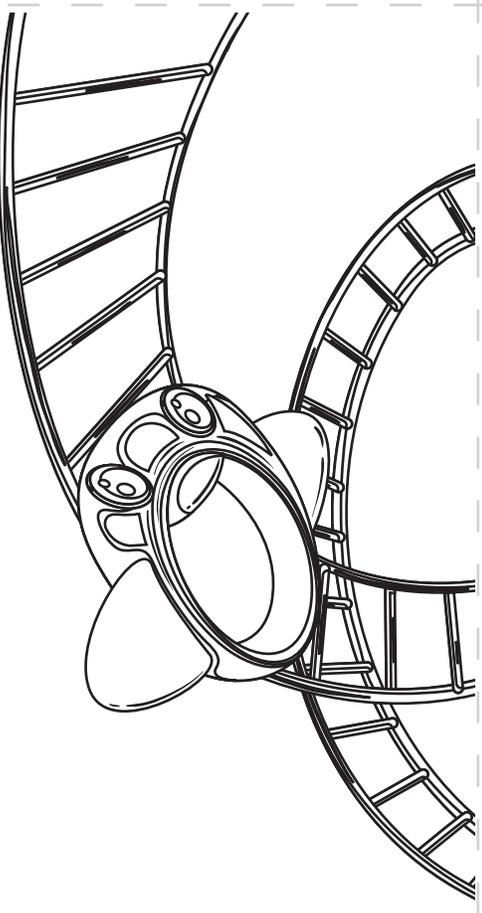
What you need to know:

When unexpected things happen, we need to remember we have a God who still does miracles. Pray with your kids that God will be with your family, and expect him to do the unexpected when needed.



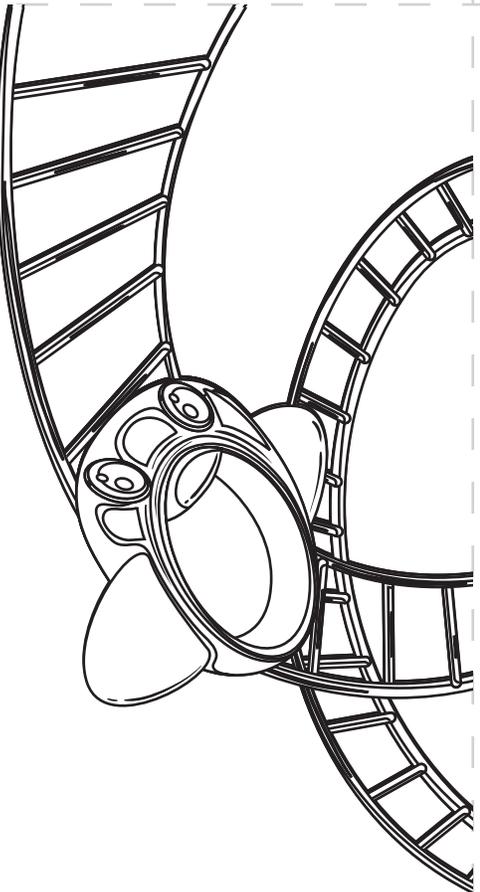
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- Philippians 4:12-13



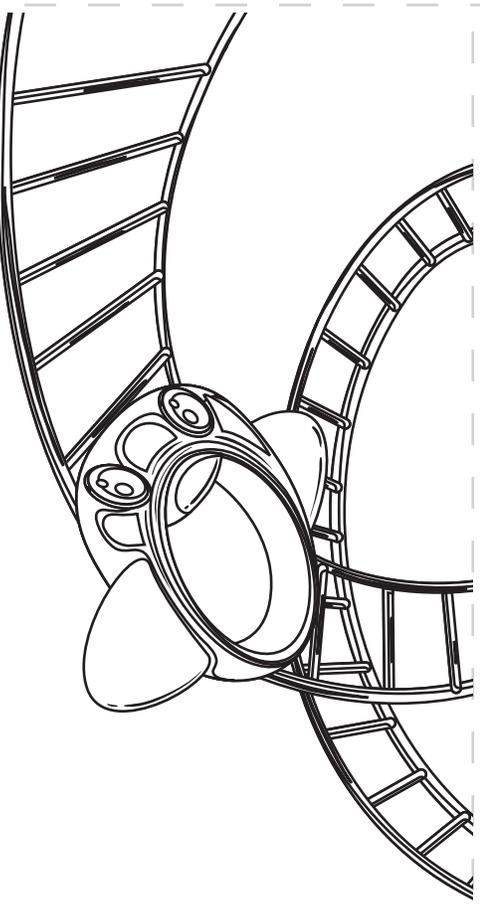
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CRAFT ACTIVITY

Give all the kids mystery flavored Dum Dums or Airheads as they leave today, a little unexpected treat.