



WEEK
FOUR
JUNE 2023

LARGE GROUP
PRETEEN

PRELUDE **SOCIAL** **STORY** **WORSHIP** **GROUPS** **HOME**

25 MINUTES

10 MINUTES

TODAY'S BIBLE STORY

Jailbreak
An Angel Helps Peter
Escape from Prison
Acts 12:1-19

TODAY'S KEY QUESTION

What does it feel like to be stuck?

TODAY'S BOTTOM LINE

God is with you even when
you feel stuck.

MONTHLY MEMORY VERSE

**"Faith is being sure of what
we hope for. It is being sure
of what we do not see."**
Hebrews 11:1, NIV

MONTHLY VIRTUE

**Faith—Trusting in what
you can't see because of
what you can see**

BASIC TRUTH

I can trust God no matter what.

LARGE GROUP

ENGAGE KIDS' HEARTS THROUGH A DYNAMIC AND INTERACTIVE BIBLE STORY, WORSHIP, AND PRAYER EXPERIENCE IN A LARGE GROUP SETTING.

AUDIO: PLAY HIGH-ENERGY MUSIC AS STUDENTS ENTER.

SLIDE: THEME

OPTIONAL VIDEO (MEDIA PACKAGE): THEME LOOP

Host enters . . .

OPTIONAL VIDEO (MEDIA PACKAGE): COUNTDOWN (30- OR 60-SECOND VERSION)

OPTIONAL VIDEO (MEDIA PACKAGE): THEME

WELCOME

Host has lots of energy as he or she welcomes everyone to [Name of Environment]. Host is relatable and inviting. Host can talk about something that happened culturally throughout the week like a big sports game, movie opening, a viral video on YouTube, etc. Host tells them how excited he or she is that they're there and briefly runs through what they can expect. This is especially helpful for first-time guests to make them feel like they know what's happening.

OPENER

HOST: "Welcome, welcome, welcome! Ooh, June is almost over. Hopefully you've stuck your bare feet in some sand or stood in the warmth of the sun! Sometimes summertime is about being lazy and laying around without moving for hours at a time . . . but this is [Name of Environment], and we can't sit still for like five seconds. We've had a great month together. But it is not over yet!

"Let's kick it off with a game that guarantees you to get movin'! I call it 'Ready, Set, Shake!'

SLIDE: "READY, SET, SHAKE"

"To get us started, I need three volunteers who are ready to really get moving this morning!

Host chooses three volunteers and brings out game boxes (made of tissue boxes and belt). Each has eight ping-pong balls inside.



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“Put these on, like a belt. Box goes in the back. Each box has eight ping-pong balls in it, and when I say go and the music starts, you will shake and move around and try to get all eight ping-pong balls to come out. The first to do so wins. You can’t use your hands to touch the box. Just your shakin’ dance moves. Get it? Let’s move, people!”

AUDIO: FUN BACKGROUND MUSIC

Provide commentary and play several rounds if there is time.

“(After the game) Whew, I need a nap just watching you! Let’s keep the momentum going and channel that energy into worshipping our great big God. Let’s stand up and sing together!”



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COMMUNICATOR SCRIPT (STORY)

SLIDE: THEME BACKGROUND

Communicator enters as Worship Leaders exit.

INTRODUCTION

COMMUNICATOR: "Good morning, everyone! I have to say, I'm really enjoying the summer so far. What about you?"

Allow for a few responses. Affirm each response.

"Sometimes, though, I feel like . . . I don't know, just kind of stuck. I want to do things, but don't have the energy to do them. Anyone ever feel like that? Just kind of stuck?"

Allow for a few responses. Affirm each response.

"Sounds like I'm not alone. Turn to someone next to you and tell them about a time when you felt that way. Just at a standstill. Maybe it was a situation you didn't know how to get out of, maybe you were actually stuck physically somewhere, like in an elevator!"

After a few minutes, get everyone's attention. Consider having some kids share or sharing a personal story of a time you were stuck (car breakdown, getting stranded somewhere without a ride, etc.)

TENSION

COMMUNICATOR: "We've all heard stories about people who were stuck and saved—like a soccer team in a cave, or people in an elevator. But what about when you just feel stuck? When life around you is moving at light speed, but you feel like you're standing still? How do you get moving again when you feel stuck?"

"Good questions. And with questions like these, answers might not be found in the 'Self-Help' section of your school library. So the first place we should check out is the Bible. This book has all sorts of wisdom from people who experienced God in their lives and were inspired to write down what happened and what they learned. And because of that, we can have a relationship with God and learn the best way to live just by reading what they wrote down. The story we're looking at today deals directly with those kinds of questions—of being stuck and how to get moving."

TRUTH

COMMUNICATOR: "We've been traveling through God's Big Story over this past year, through the Bible. (Hold up Bible.)

If you're using a Bible timeline on your wall, you can reference it here as you recap.

"We talked about God's Son, Jesus—how He died on the cross for our sins and then came back to life. We've seen how Jesus' friends, the disciples, shared the good news about Jesus. They told other people about Jesus, and THOSE people put their faith in Jesus, too. Soon there were gatherings of people in lots of different places who decided to believe and follow Jesus. We can learn a lot about them from the book of Acts in the New Testament of our Bible, the same book we've been exploring all month. Acts picks up soon after Jesus resurrected and ascended back to Heaven.



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“Then, God sent the Holy Spirit, and the early followers of Jesus, what we now call the church, grew like crazy in those early days. Unfortunately, not everybody was happy to see the church growing, especially the religious leaders who had Jesus put to death—as well as the Roman leaders who were responsible for keeping peace in the empire. As more and more believers spread the good news about Jesus, there was more and more tension with these leaders.

“And on one particular occasion, King Herod, the grandson of Herod the Great—as in the Herod the Great from the Christmas story who ordered the babies in Bethlehem to be killed, that Herod—his grandson was out to cause trouble for the followers of Jesus.

Communicator references “sound jars” on the table.

“These are Sound Jars. I went ahead and captured some sounds that will help us better understand the story. (Pause) You don’t get it?”

Communicator opens Jar #1 “No . . . we don’t get it.”

AUDIO: JAR #1: “NO . . . WE DON’T GET IT!”

“Oh, you will, I promise. Let’s dig in.

Open the Bible to Acts 12:1-3a (NirV) and read.

“‘About this time, King Herod arrested some people who belonged to the church.’

AUDIO: JAR #2: CELL DOOR CLANKING SHUT

“‘He planned to make them suffer greatly. He had James killed with a sword. James was John’s brother. Herod saw that the death of James pleased some Jews. So he arrested Peter also.’

Communicator reopens Jar #2.

AUDIO: JAR #2: CELL DOOR CLANKING SHUT

“You might remember Peter from last week in the Cornelius story? He had previously been one of Jesus’ closest disciples, and at this point he was one of the main leaders of the early church. No wonder Herod had him arrested! As far as spreading the message of Jesus, Peter was the main guy. And this pleased the religious leaders who were against the Jesus movement.

Communicator opens Jar #3: Evil laughs.

AUDIO: JAR #3: EVIL LAUGHS (BWA HA HA)

Open the Bible to Acts 12:4a (NirV) and read.



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“After Herod arrested Peter, he put him in prison. Peter was placed under guard. He was watched by four groups of four soldiers each.”

Communicator opens Jar #4: Guard

AUDIO: JAR #4: GUARD (NOW DON'T GET ANY IDEAS OF ESCAPING . . . YA HEAR?)

“Peter, imprisoned and shackled, was stuck under the watchful eye of sixteen prison guards. Herod planned to put him on public trial. And we know what happened to Jesus when He was put on public trial...”

Open the Bible to Acts 12:5 (NirV) and read.

“So, Peter was kept in prison.’ All alone.

Communicator opens Jar #5: Voice singing

AUDIO: JAR #5: VOICE SINGING (NOBODY KNOWS . . . THE TROUBLE I'VE SEEN . . .)

“Here’s the question: while Peter was by himself in prison, apparently singing bass, what was everybody else doing? The other disciples and Jesus followers? After all, their main guy just got arrested! Were they freaking out? Were they planning some elaborate prison break?”

Open the Bible to Acts 12:5 (NirV) and read.

“So Peter was kept in prison. But the church prayed hard to God for him.’

Communicator opens Jar #6: Voices murmuring

AUDIO: JAR #6: VOICES MURMURING (INDISTINGUISHABLY)

“Peter might have been alone . . . but he really wasn’t! The church, Peter’s fellow followers of Jesus, they banded together and prayed for him.

“It was the night before Peter’s trial, and Herod was doing everything to make sure there was none of this funny business he’d been hearing about with this early church—strange, unexplained miracles; a bizarre empty tomb. He had Peter locked down tight.

Communicator reopens Jar #2: Cell door clanking

AUDIO: JAR #2: CELL DOOR CLANKING

Open the Bible to Acts 12:6-7 (NirV) and read.

“It was the night before Herod was going to bring him to trial. Peter was sleeping between two soldiers.’

Communicator opens Jar #7: Snoring



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AUDIO: JAR #7 SNORING

Communicator opens Jar #8: Angelic "Ahhhh!!!!!"

AUDIO: JAR #8: ANGELIC "AHHHH!!!!!"

Communicator quickly closes it and then opens it again.

AUDIO: JAR #8: ANGELIC "AHHHH!!!!!"

"A light shone in the prison cell. The angel struck Peter on his side. Peter woke up. "Quick!" the angel said. "Get up!" The chains fell off Peter's wrists.'

Communicator opens Jar #9: Chains clanking

AUDIO: JAR #9: CHAINS CLANKING

"The angel led Peter through the prison, past the guards and all the way out of the city gate, which opened by itself! Peter thought he was dreaming but it was really happening! And then the angel left Peter. There he was . . . all by himself outside of the prison!

Communicator reopens Jar #8: Angelic "Ahhhh!!!!!"

AUDIO: JAR #8: ANGELIC "AHHHH!!!!!"

"Imagine that for a minute. Huge angel, bright light, chains falling, gates swinging open, and then as suddenly as it happened, it was gone. Peter stood there by himself. No one else around. Maybe he looked around for a moment, shrugged, and then walked away. He figured he would go to somewhere familiar, most likely where everyone was gathered—so he walked over to Mary's house.

Communicator opens Jar #10: Footsteps

AUDIO: JAR #10: FOOTSTEPS

"And Peter knocked at the door."

Communicator opens Jar #11: Door knock

AUDIO: JAR #11: DOOR KNOCK

Open the Bible to Acts 12:13-14 (NirV) and read.

"Peter knocked at the outer entrance. A servant named Rhoda came to answer the door. She recognized Peter's voice. She was so excited that she ran back without opening the door. "Peter is at the door!" she exclaimed.'



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"This was hilarious. She ran away without even opening the door, leaving Peter standing outside by himself. In her excitement, she forgot to let him in! And when she told everyone . . . nobody believed Rhoda! They told her she was out of her mind! But Peter was still there!

Communicator opens Jar #11: Door knock

AUDIO: JAR #11: DOOR KNOCK

Open the Bible to Acts 12:16-17 (NirV) and read.

"Peter kept on knocking. When they opened the door and saw him, they were amazed. Peter motioned with his hand for them to be quiet. He explained how the Lord had brought him out of prison. "Tell James and the other brothers and sisters about this," he said. Then he went to another place.'

"In the morning when the soldiers saw Peter was gone, they were completely bewildered.

Communicator opens Jar #12: Dah . . .Which way did he go?

AUDIO: JAR #12: (DUMFOUND VOICE) "DAH . . . WHICH WAY DID HE GO?"

"And Herod, well . . . he ordered the all-out search for Peter and the death of the guards. Wow! What a story, right? What a moment when Peter was freed and showed up where the other believers were praying for him. The only way to describe it is . . ."

Communicator reopens Jar #8: Angelic "Ahhhh!!!!!"

AUDIO: JAR #8: ANGELIC "AHHHH!!!!!"

APPLICATION

COMMUNICATOR: "In short, Peter was stuck. In jail. In chains. Behind bars. It's hard to get more stuck than that! For a guy like that, who had done so much for Jesus and the early church, it was probably confusing how he could end up there. I mean, it wasn't a stretch to think that authorities were arresting people, but surely God wouldn't allow that to happen to Peter. Right?"

"Of all the people to end up in prison! Yet in that moment, Peter had the opportunity to show genuine faith . . . that he could trust in what he couldn't see because of what he had already seen. Even if this time spent in prison would be it for him, he knew that God was good and that Jesus would use it for good somehow. He could trust God's goodness, even though he didn't understand what was going to happen.

SLIDE: GOD'S BIG STORY TIMELINE

SLIDE: WEEK 4 TIMELINE IMAGE

If you're making a timeline of printed images on your wall, take this moment to place today's timeline image on the clothesline.



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"I wasn't able to hear everything that was shared earlier when you talked about being stuck. My guess is that some of you have found yourself in some pretty tough spots already in life and you just weren't sure how you were going to get out. Maybe there was a difficult family thing going on and you weren't quite sure how it would all work out. Or maybe you got in trouble and didn't think you'd ever be able to fix the broken relationships.

"Like Peter, we can trust that God can see what we can't . . . the full and complete picture. And we can put our faith in God. We can trust that God is with us in the middle of it all and is always good to us."

LANDING

COMMUNICATOR: "Today as you go to groups, think about this:

SLIDE: KEY QUESTION

"What does it feel like to be stuck? When have you most experienced it? What made it so hard to trust God? If you're not quite sure how you'd answer that, don't worry! You'll have a chance to chat all about it with your small group. Before you head out, let's pray and remember how God is always with us. . . especially when we feel stuck! Let's pray!"

SLIDE: THEME BACKGROUND

Communicator leads group in a prayer related to what they just heard. After prayer, Communicator dismisses kids to Small Group.

AUDIO: PLAY HIGH-ENERGY MUSIC AS THE KIDS EXIT.

SLIDE: THEME

OPTIONAL VIDEO (MEDIA PACKAGE): THEME LOOP