

## Peter is Released - Faithfulness, Patience, Peace

Scripture Passage: Acts 12:1-18

Memory Verse: Hebrews 11:1 (NirV abbreviated) Faith is being sure of what we hope for even when we cannot see it.

Beliefs: The Spirit helps me to be faithful, have patience, and have peace in good times and hard times.

Actions: I can believe in God's plan, feel peace, and wait patiently for my instructions with the help of the Holy Spirit.

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### Materials

male peg - Peter

yellow peg - angel

popsicle stick cube - prison

popsicle stick gate - house gate

4 male pegs - soldiers

female peg - Rhoda

male peg with crown - King Herod

grey felt - prison

misc group - church

green felt - Mary's house

twisted wire links - chains

grey popsicle gate - city gate

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Large Group Worship - 15 minutes

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Main Passage: Acts 12:1-18

About this time, King Herod arrested some people who belonged to the church. 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. This happened during the Feast of Unleavened Bread. After Herod arrested Peter, he put him in prison. Peter was placed under guard. He was watched by four groups of four soldiers each. Herod planned to put Peter on public trial. It would take place after the Passover Feast.

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

It was the night before Herod was going to bring him to trial. Peter was sleeping between two soldiers. Two chains held him there. Lookouts stood guard at the entrance. Suddenly an angel of the Lord appeared. 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.

Then the angel said to him, "Put on your clothes and sandals." Peter did so. "Put on your coat," the angel told him. "Follow me." Peter followed him out of the prison. But he had no idea that what the angel was doing was really happening. He thought he was

seeing a vision. They passed the first and second guards. Then they came to the iron gate leading to the city. It opened for them by itself. They went through it. They walked the length of one street. Suddenly the angel left Peter.

Then Peter realized what had happened. He said, "Now I know for sure that the Lord has sent his angel. He set me free from Herod's power. He saved me from everything the Jewish people were hoping would happen."

When Peter understood what had happened, he went to Mary's house. Mary was the mother of John Mark. Many people had gathered in her home. They were praying there. 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.

"You're out of your mind," they said to her. But she kept telling them it was true. So they said, "It must be his angel."

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 the soldiers were bewildered. They couldn't figure out what had happened to Peter.

### Setting the Tone

Remind the children of the Fruit of the Spirit Tree by laying it on the floor in your story circle or setting your circle cushions out so that you are sitting next to where it hangs on the wall. Pass the bag containing the fruit pieces around the circle instructing each child to take one out and hold it.

- Say - In this unit we are going to be hearing true happenings from the Bible where God's people lived in a way that showed they loved him. We know this because they showed their God Fruit. Who knows what God Fruit is? accept answers
- Say - (open your bible to Galatians) In the book of Galatians Paul says this, "the fruit the Holy Spirit produces is love, joy and peace. It is being patient, kind and good. It is being faithful and gentle and having control of oneself. There is no law against things of that kind."
- Say - Our God Fruit, or Spirit Fruit, is the kind of things we DO when we are letting the Holy Spirit be our Boss, helping us to live the way God wants us to live - the best way!
- Say - Let's go around the circle to see which characteristic of God's Fruit we're each holding.
- Do - go around the circle, reading each child's characteristic. Have the child stick it to the tree as theirs is read.
- Ask - Can anyone remember which characteristics of the Fruit of the Spirit Peter and John showed to the man in our Bible Happening last week? gentleness and kindness
- Ask - Who would like to take Gentleness and Kindness from the tree and put them with the box? (do it)
- Ask - Hmmm, can anyone remember which characteristics the Macedonian Church showed when they gave money to help the others? joy and love
- Say - That's so great! You are all such good learners! Who would like to put joy and love with that box?
- Let's quickly remember those Bible Happening.

### Review

Do - Lay out all the pieces for the final part of the week 1's story (Corinthian & Macedonian churches)

Do - Indicate correct pieces where text is underlined and italicized

Say - Paul wrote a letter to the Christians of the churches in Corinth. Some of the letter was about how much joy and love the Christians of the churches in Macedonia had when they gave to support the missionaries even when they didn't have very much money.

Paul encouraged the Corinthians telling them they were doing so good at a lot of things like: faith, knowledge, and telling people about Jesus. He also said they had started off really well at collecting money to send to the missionaries, but then they stopped. Paul encouraged them to finish what they had started and to show love to others in that way trusting that the Holy Spirit would give them joy because of it. (pointing out the Macedonians had it)

Say - That is such a wonderful bible happening and I'm so glad Paul wrote about it so that we could know that story too! Now let's remember what happen with Peter and John in the temple courtyard.

Do - Lay out all the pieces for the final part of the week 2's story (Peter & John healing the man who couldn't walk)

Do - Indicate correct pieces where text is underlined and italicized

Say - One afternoon Peter and John were going to the Temple to pray like they did alot. This time though something special happened. A man who had been born unable to walk noticed them and asked them for money. Peter and John were poor and didn't have any money, but Peter said he would give the many what he did have. What did he have? He had the power of Jesus in him to do miracles in Jesus' name! So Peter told them man, "In the name of Jesus Christ get up and walk." And the man did!! The man began praising God, jumping up and walking and for the first time got to go into the Temple area to go praise God and pray there. All the people around noticed him and were amazed!

### Story Telling

• Do - Turn your bible to Acts 12:1-18

Say - What amazing bible happenings! God uses us to do such amazing things with his power! We can have the power of the Holy Spirit in us too and the Spirit will help us to show his love with our God Fruit. Tonight we are going to hear another bible happening about Peter where he shows the Fruit characteristics of Faithfulness, Patience, and Peace.

Ask & Do - Who would like to get tonight's characteristics of the Fruit from the tree and put them by my bible?

• Do: Set the scene - Grey felt for prison with cell, green felt with yard gate away from the prison, city gate somewhere between the two

Say - King Herod had arrested and killed many Christians, including Jesus' brother, James. (This is the grandson of the Herod who was king when Jesus was a baby.)

• Do - put King Herod near the prison

Say - King Herod noticed that the Jews liked it when he was mean to the Christians so he decided to arrest Peter too.

• Do - Put Peter into the prison

Say - King Herod was worried that Peter would escape prison either himself or someone would help him so he required that 4 soldiers guard Peter at ALL times. He also had them put chains on Peter so he couldn't move around easily.

• Do - put the soldiers with Peter and the chain at his feet

Say - But the Christian church was praying, asking God to help Peter be brave.

- Do - put the church onto the green felt behind the gate

Say - The night before King Herod was going to decide what would happen to Peter something amazing happened. An angel appeared and a light shone in the cell! The angel poked Peter in the side and said, "Quick!! Get up!!" and the chains fell off Peter's wrists!

- Do - lay Peter down, put angel in the cell, bump Peter with angel, move chain

Say - The angel told Peter, "Put on your clothes and sandals." So Peter did. "Put on your coat and follow me." Peter did, but he thought it was a vision in a dream!

- Do - walk Peter and angel out of cell

Say - They passed guards when they left the prison and got to the iron city gate. It opened BY ITSELF and they went through it. After they walked down one street the angel disappeared, leaving Peter alone.

- Do - walk Peter and the angel out of the prison area through the gate and into the city then move angel out of the story space

Say - Peter suddenly realized he was awake and God really had sent his angel to rescue him from King Herod and the evil things the Jewish people were planning to do to the Christians. After he understood, he decided to go to Mary's house (Mark's mom) where the church had gathered to pray.

- Do - Have Peter jump or something as he realizes what's going on, maybe do a little praise God dance - then begin walking toward Mary's house

Say - Peter knocked on the gate and a servant, Rhoda, asked who it was.

- Do - Peter knocks, Rhoda speaks

Say - "Who is it?" Peter answered, "It's Peter." And she got super excited because she recognized his voice! She got SO excited that she forgot to let him in and ran to tell the others!

- Do - Leave Peter outside the gate with Rhoda leaving

Say - Rhoda told the others, "Peter is here!" and they said she was Out of Her Mind! It must be his angel. (They thought maybe he had died in prison.) But Peter kept on knocking and waiting for them to come back.

- Do - Rhoda tells the church. Peter is knocking.

Say - Finally they open the gate and see Peter! They were amazed! Peter had to tell them to be quiet so he could tell them what God had done. He told them to go tell all the Christians about it and then he went to tell others as well.

- Do - church opens gate, all go in, Peter tells then leaves

Say - There was a big fuss the next morning at the prison while the guards tried to find Peter. King Herod was so angry he had the guards killed.

Say - You were great learners today. I think this is such an encouraging Bible Happening. It really encourages me to be faithful and believe that God will take care of things in the best way when I am patient; that gives me peace.

- I wonder why the Christians thought Rhoda was crazy when she told them Peter was at the gate.
- I wonder what the angel was thinking when he woke Peter up.
- I wonder what Peter's face looked like when he realized he wasn't dreaming!

Say - We're going to go to our Reflection Stations so you can keep thinking and the Holy Spirit can keep talking to you.

Reflection Activities - 30 minutes

- **listening station - bible passage, Fruit of the Spirit song**
- **pipe cleaners station**
- **missions station**
- **watercolor painting station**
- **fruit of the spirit tree**
- **prayer station**
- **bible station - marked full bible, marked children's bible**

Memory Verse - 5 minutes

- **Spend a few moments creating motions or a rhythm to go with the bible verse.**
  - Session Verse: Hebrews 11:1 (NirV abbreviated)  
Faith is being sure of what we hope for even when we cannot see it.
  - Unit Verse: Galatians 5:22-23 (abbreviated from NirV)  
But the fruit the Holy Spirit makes is love, joy and peace. It is being patient, kind and good. It is being faithful and gentle and having self-control.

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Family Component

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Personal Study

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Related Sources: