

32. Peter Is Rescued



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Peter Is Rescued

Leader Notes:

- View [this session's focus](#), faith nurture goals, leader devotional, and story symbol (click on the story symbol to download or print).
- For the full set of DWELL Flex story symbols use the link in the sidebar.
- Need this as a PDF? Just [print this page](#) and choose to save/print as a PDF.

Take a few moments to greet the children and let them know how glad you are to see them.

I love exploring God's story with you. Let's get ready to do that together.

Breathe

Use this time to focus your attention on God.

Do this with me: calm your head, heart, and hands as you slowly breathe in . . . and out. *(Demonstrate a few deep "in and out breaths" with eyes closed.)*

Tell and Wonder

Let's enter God's story together. Here's the story symbol for the part of God's story that we'll be spending time in today. I wonder what clues it gives us about the story we're about to hear? *(Show the story symbol. Accept any answers without giving away whether or not the kids have guessed correctly.)*

Listen closely as we read the story together to see which story our symbol represents.

Read "Peter Is Rescued" aloud (below), pausing throughout to allow children to answer the wondering questions. NOTE: It's always a good idea to read through the story beforehand so you'll be able to tell it well.

You can also read the story from a children's Bible or a simplified translation of Scripture like the New International Reader's Version (NIRV). Remember to pause throughout to allow time to wonder.

Pray

Spend a few minutes reflecting on some of the things we tell God when we pray. Remind the kids of the prayers of Peter's friends, and talk about some people you might pray for today—people who are sick,

people who are sad, people who are lonely. Invite your kids to name specific people for whom they would like to pray. (Write down any names and requests if you think you'll have trouble remembering them later.)

Spend some time in prayer together. You might encourage the kids to pray out loud for the people they mentioned. Let them know you'll pause during the prayer for them to do so—they could each take a turn around the circle, or they could all say their person's name at once in a "prayer chorus" style. Conclude the prayer yourself, making sure you've mentioned all the people and needs your group suggested.

See [5 Ways to Pray with Kids](#) for other ways to pray.

Respond

Select and do one or more of the response activities from God's Big Story card #152 or check out [5 Ways to Retell a Bible Story with Kids](#) for some fun ways to retell this story. Include older kids in the retelling by having them read the story aloud while the younger children act it out.*

**God's Big Story cards can be ordered from FaithAliveResources.org.*

Easy Extra

Before the session begins, print out one copy of this [paper chain printable page](#) for each child and for you. Using your copy of the printable, cut apart the seven paper prayer chain strips. Turn the strips into a paper chain by wrapping one strip into a circle and taping the ends together. Then pick up another strip, insert it through the first link, and repeat the taping action. Continue until you have taped five of the strips into a paper chain; save the remaining two strips for when you demonstrate the craft to the kids.

Show the children the paper prayer chain you created. Explain that they will be creating prayer chains to help them pray for others this week. Each day they can cut open one paper link on the chain and follow the instructions about who to pray for. Read through the different prayer ideas. Demonstrate how to make a paper chain by adding the remaining two loops to your own. Then give each child a set of seven strips to attach together.

If you're meeting virtually, remember to email or mail a hard copy of the printable page to families so that they can complete this activity at home.

Story: Peter Is Rescued [Acts 12:1-19](#)

King Herod had a lot of power, and he began to use that power to harm Jesus' followers. He arrested Peter and put him into prison, even though Peter didn't do anything wrong. King Herod was angry that Peter loved and praised Jesus. He was angry that Peter told people everywhere the good news about Jesus.

So he ordered his soldiers to lock Peter up in chains, place him in prison, and to guard him very carefully. "This will put an end to Peter's preaching," Herod snarled to himself. "Now we'll see what happens to all of the talk about Jesus and about the wonderful things Peter says Jesus can do!"

Herod's soldiers were careful to obey their angry king. They chained Peter up with two chains, and placed him in a cell with two guards. Two more guards stood at the entrance to make sure he didn't try to escape. They watched him every moment, and even made him sleep between the two guards in his cell.

Poor Peter. It wasn't hard for him to see that he was stuck! **I wonder how Peter felt when he was locked in his prison cell. (Pause for responses.) I wonder—do you know a Bible verse that might help Peter feel better? One that he could say or sing while feeling afraid? (Pause for responses. If they can't think of one, suggest Psalm 62:1-2)**

Peter's friends got together in a house near the prison to pray for Peter. Peter's friends believed that Jesus was with Peter—and that Jesus could do wonderful things that no person had power to do. So they prayed hard, day and night. **What do you think they asked Jesus to do in their prayers? (Pause for responses.)**

Then one night, while Peter was asleep between the two guards, all chained up in his cell, an amazing thing happened in that dark and quiet prison. Out of nowhere, an angel appeared in Peter's cell! The angel poked Peter in his side and whispered in his ear, "Quick, get up!"

The soldiers who were next to Peter didn't move a muscle, and the soldiers at the door continued to snore.

Before Peter could rub his eyes and discover what was happening, the chains that were holding him fell off with a thunk!

The soldiers who were guarding Peter didn't move a muscle, and the soldiers at the door continued to snore.

Then the angel said to Peter, "Put on your clothes and sandals. Then put on your coat and follow me. Hurry!" Peter thought he was dreaming. Without saying a word, he obeyed the angel.

The soldiers who were guarding Peter didn't move a muscle, and the soldiers at the door continued to snore. **I wonder why the soldiers didn't wake up. (Pause for responses.)**

Peter followed the angel and walked past the sleepy soldiers who guarded him, right past the snoring soldiers at the door, and right out of the prison gate, which opened all by itself! **I wonder how quiet Peter had to be as he tiptoed past the soldiers, out of the jail, and out of the city. I wonder if it was hard to walk without making any noise. (Pause for responses.)**

Peter thought he must be having a wonderful dream. A dream where he escaped from jail! Then he rubbed his eyes and looked around him. The angel was gone—but so were the guards! And the prison bars! And the heavy gates! Then Peter knew that he wasn't dreaming—it was real. Jesus had sent the angel to rescue Peter and to keep him safe.

Peter raced as fast as he could to Mary's house, where his friends were still praying. Wouldn't his friends be happy to see him? He could hardly wait to tell everyone about his amazing escape from prison!

Softly he knocked on Mary's door. "It's me, Peter! I escaped from jail! Let me in!" he said.

Mary's servant Rhoda was so excited to hear Peter's voice that she forgot to open the door and let him in. Instead, she raced back to the others with the good news. Peter was free and he was right outside their door!

"No way! How can that be? Peter's in prison," said the others as they shook their heads sadly. "You must be dreaming." But Rhoda wouldn't give up, and they could hear someone knocking, so they went to the door themselves. There they saw Peter. They were so surprised! **If you were Peter's friend, what would you have thought when you saw him at the door? (Pause for responses.)**

Peter motioned for everyone to be quiet. Then he told them how God had answered their prayers by sending an angel from Jesus to help him escape, walking him past the guards and out of the big prison gates. Then Peter left Mary's house to find a safer place to hide from angry King Herod.

Meanwhile, back at the prison, when the sleepy guards and snoring soldiers finally woke up and saw that Peter was gone, they wanted to find a safe place to hide too. They knew when King Herod discovered the wonderful way that God had answered the prayers of Peter's friends, King Herod would be angry indeed!

Looking for More Activities for This Story?

Click below to access the full age-specific *Dwell* session for this story:

- [Kindergarten-1st Grade: Peter Is Rescued](#)
 - [4th-5th Grade: Peter's Rescue](#)
 - [6th-8th Grade: Stories of the Transforming Power of Prayer](#)
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