

Session 5

Peter in jail

Everything is possible for God

Scripture: Acts 12:1–19

Supplies:

- A pair of large sandals, a belt, and a jacket or coat
- A blackboard/whiteboard/flip chart with different colours of pens/chalk
- Jail biscuits: Tennis biscuits, pretzel sticks and some pre-made icing, a teaspoon and Jelly Babies
- Chains: Strips of paper with the words of Matthew 19:26 written or printed on them, stapler/sticky tape/glue, crayons/pencils



Welcome

Listen carefully: Let the group sit down in a circle. Place the sandals, belt and coat in the middle. Explain to the group that they are now going to do the following challenge: Everyone sits with their backs to the centre of the circle with closed eyes. One person, who is chosen to be “it”, goes to the centre. He/she tries to put on the clothes as quietly as possible without letting anyone hear or notice. The rest of the group who are sitting facing outwards with their eyes closed, must try their best to hear if someone is putting on the clothes. If anyone thinks he hears a noise, he can (with his eyes still closed) put up his hand and then say exactly what he heard. If the person heard correctly, he can then have a turn putting on the clothes.

Do this as many times as your time allows.

Discuss the following questions afterwards:

- What was it like trying to put the clothes on without making any noise?
- Is it even possible to be so quiet that no one can hear you?



Worship

Settle-down ritual: Children close their eyes in prayer.

- Touch your feet and thank God that you can go where He sends you.
- Touch your hands and thank God that you can help others.
- Touch your mouth and say thank you that God gives you words to be kind and nice to others.
- Touch your ears and thank God that you can make time for others and listen to their stories.
- Touch your eyes and thank God that you can see people who are suffering.
- Touch your head and thank God that you can make plans to help your friends.
- Touch your heart (put your hand on your chest) and thank God that you are his child and that He loves you.



Word

(Talk about the story of Acts 12:1–19 with the group while making a few sketches to keep the group's attention.)

Sketch block 1:

“Who knows anything about Peter?”

(Draw a red figure representing Peter. As the group mentions things, draw them in different colours.)

“Peter was one of Jesus’ disciples who went and told people about Jesus.”

(Draw 11 other smaller figures to represent the other disciples.)

Sketch block 2:

“In those years a king by the name of Herod ruled over Judea. He tried to arrest people who followed Jesus and throw them in jail.”

(Draw Peter as a red figure and draw just a few disciples around him.)

Sketch block 3:

“Herod captured James, one of Jesus’ disciples, and had him killed. Many Jews liked this so much, that Herod went ahead and captured Peter too and had him locked away in jail.”

(Draw a red figure as Peter with jail bars in front of him.)

“Herod didn’t want Peter to escape, so he had 16 guards sent to his cell to make sure that he stayed there.”

(Draw four figures at each corner of the cell.)

“Do you think that Peter could have escaped with all these guards around him?” *(Give the group a chance to share their thoughts.)*

“Peter did nothing to try to escape. He trusted that God would help him while he was in jail. All the believers started praying for Peter. How do you think Peter felt the night before his trial?” *(Give the group a chance to share their thoughts.)*

“The night before Peter’s trial he was sleeping between two guards, chained up.”

(Draw 2 guards on either side of Peter. Draw chains on Peter’s hands and draw a few “z’s” to indicate that everyone was asleep.)

Sketch block 4:

“Suddenly an angel appeared in the cell. The angel shook Peter to wake him up, and as he woke up, his chains fell off. The angel then said: ‘Put on your shoes, belt and coat and follow me!’ Peter followed the angel past the first and second guards while they still slept. He walked all the way to the gate of the jail which was standing open.”

(Draw the jail with the sleeping guards/soldiers and the red Peter figure with the angel leading him out.)

Sketch block 5:

“After Peter had walked down the road a short while, the angel quickly disappeared. Only then did Peter realise that this wasn’t a person but an angel who had been sent to free him. He then went to the house of Mary, mother of John, where he knew a few believers would be.”

(Draw a house on a road, with the red figure of Peter on the road too.)

Sketch block 6:

“When Peter arrived at the house, he knocked on the door and it was answered by a servant girl named Rhoda who went to see who was at the door.”

(Draw Peter next to the door of a house and a figure wearing a dress behind the door.)

“Rhoda recognised Peter’s voice and was so excited that he was at the door, that she completely forgot to unlock the door for him. She just ran to the other people to tell them that Peter was at the door. No-one believed her. Some thought that she had gone crazy, while others thought that it was only possible if it was Peter’s ghost.”

Sketch block 7:

“Peter didn’t stop knocking. When they eventually opened the door, they were very surprised to see that it was really him!”

(Draw a few faces with surprised open mouths and big eyes.)

“Peter told them everything that had happened and that they had to go and tell the story to other believers. He left then for another town because he was scared that the soldiers would come and lock him away again.”

(Draw speech bubbles next to the faces.)

Children reflect on the story:

1. I wonder which part of the story you liked the most.
2. I wonder how Peter felt about being locked up in jail.
3. I wonder what the soldiers thought when they saw Peter had gone.
4. I wonder how many people today still go to jail for believing in Jesus.



Working and Playing

- Jail biscuits: Give each member of the group 2 tennis biscuits, a few pretzel sticks, 3 jelly babies and some of the icing. Let each one then build their own jail cell. They can use the tennis biscuits as the roof and floor and the sticks as the bars. The icing holds it all together. Place 3 jelly babies inside while building it to represent Peter and the two guards.
- Chains: Give each group member a few strips of paper with the words of Matthew 19:26 printed or written on them. Let them write or draw on the other side of the strip something that is impossible for them. Once they have done it, let them join up all the strips into a long chain. While the group is making the chain, you can read Matthew 19:26 a few times out loud. Once the chain is finished, the group can stand in a circle and hold the chain together. They can now all say the verse together: "With man this is impossible, but with God all things are possible." When they have said this, let everyone help break the chain to help us remember that God can do anything.

Closing prayer to end the session.



Matthew 19:26: "With man this is impossible, but with God all things are possible."