



WEEK 3

ELEMENTARY LESSON OUTLINE

TRUE STORY

BIG IDEA

Jesus gives us freedom.

THE BIBLE

Peter is Rescued from Jail: Acts 12:1-17
(Matthew 1:21; Galatians 5:1)

THIS WEEK AT A GLANCE

LARGE GROUP TIME

- **ACTIVITY** | Cross the Lava
- **ACTIVITY** | Jail Ball
- **QUESTION** | Rescue Stories
- **OBJECT LESSON** | Elephant Toothpaste
- **BIBLE STORY** | Acts 12:1-17
- **THE BIG IDEA** | Jesus gives us freedom.
- **ACTIVITY** | Steal the Bacon
- **ACTIVITY** | True Story Comic Book
- **VIDEO** | Rescue Videos
- **SCRIPTURE** | Matthew 1:21
- **OBJECT LESSON** | Toilet Paper Chains
- **PRAYER** | Prayer Chain
- **MEMORY VERSES** | Psalm 119:105; Galatians 5:22

SMALL GROUP TIME

- **DISCUSSION**
 - What amazing thing did God do for Peter?
 - What were Peter's friends doing when he was in jail?
 - How do you think Peter's friends felt when they saw him at the door?
 - What is the biggest thing God can set us free from?
 - What do you need God to help you with or rescue you from?
- **SCRIPTURE** | Galatians 5:1
- **ACTIVITY** | Amazing God Mural
- **MEMORY VERSES** | Psalm 119:105; Galatians 5:22



WEEK 3

ELEMENTARY LESSON GUIDE

TRUE STORY

BIG IDEA

Jesus gives us freedom.

THE BIBLE

Peter is Rescued from Jail: Acts 12:1-17
(Matthew 1:21; Galatians 5:1)

LARGE GROUP TIME

WHAT? *What are we talking about today?*

ACTIVITY | Cross the Lava

- Welcome to the third week of our True Story series! We're having fun learning about the true stories of the Bible! We'll begin our adventure today with a problem to solve. You and your fellow adventurers are trapped by a river flowing with lava.
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Tape two parallel lines on the floor to represent two sides of the river about eight feet apart. Give the kids four large pieces of paper. Tell them these are their rocks to use to get across the river. When the rock is placed in the river, someone must be touching it at all times or it will float away. Their job is to get everyone across the river of lava. The only thing they can step on is one of the four rocks.*
- **FOR KIDS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS:** *This game may be difficult for them. Provide four pieces of paper and let them make their own lava river to jump over.*
- Sometimes adventurers come across some pretty big challenges. In today's True Story, one adventurer and follower of God was in big need of a rescue!

ACTIVITY | Jail Ball

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Put four hula hoops on each side of the room. Divide the class into two teams. Four members of each team will stand in the hula hoops. You can adjust numbers to accommodate your group size. These four people are in jail and can't move out of the hula hoops. The rest of the team will line up on the other side of the room facing the opposing team's set of hula hoops, facing the opposing team. Give the players three to four balls (you can use foam balls or bean bags). The*

teams will try to throw balls to their teammates in the hula hoops. If their teammate catches the ball, they are free and join those who are throwing. The kids who are not in hula hoops are throwing the balls to their jailed teammates and also trying to block balls from getting to the hula hoops behind them. The team who frees all of their jailed members first wins.

- **FOR PRETEENS:** Play a variation of jail ball that will get your preteens moving and strategizing. You only need a large space and two balls. See your weekly instructions for details.
- You all worked hard freeing your teammates from jail. In today's True Story, we will learn about someone else who was rescued from jail, too, but in a surprising way!

QUESTION | Rescue Stories

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Ask kids to share a story of when they were rescued from being stuck or lost or hurt. Ask them to share other rescue stories they've heard of.
- **What makes rescue stories so exciting?** The best rescue stories usually involve something amazing and miraculous. God's word is full of true stories of God rescuing His people. Today's story is one of those!

SO WHAT? Why does it matter to God and to us?

OBJECT LESSON | Elephant Toothpaste

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Mix two tablespoons of warm water with one teaspoon of dry yeast. Stir together. Using an empty bottle and funnel, add a ½ cup of hydrogen peroxide. Then add a squirt of dish soap to the water bottle. Add streaks of food coloring into the water bottle. Place the bottle into a clear bucket or over a tarp. Using the funnel, pour the yeast mixture into the bottle and watch it explode!
- **FOR PRETEENS:** Split preteens into pairs and give them the supplies to do this experiment on their own.
- That was unbelievable! **Wasn't it cool to see how that started to run out everywhere?** It went from being inside the bottle to breaking free and coming out. God can do amazing things, and He did something amazing in our True Story today. Peter was stuck, and we're going to find out how God got him out!

BIBLE STORY | Acts 12:1-17

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Look up the story in your Bible and encourage kids to do the same. Read it!
- **FOR KIDS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS:** Put some sensory items in a box to help you tell the Bible story. See your weekly instructions for details.
- What an amazing rescue! This is the same person we learned about last week who learned God loves and accepts everyone. After that, Peter went around telling everyone about Jesus. Then, something bad happened.
- **What did Herod do to Peter in the beginning of the story?** Herod put him in jail.
- **Do you think Peter felt defeated and discouraged when he was in jail?**
- You might not have been thrown in jail, but you might have had a time in your life when you've gone through something hard or felt discouraged. Maybe someone has treated you badly or maybe you got in trouble when you didn't deserve it. Peter didn't deserve to be in jail. But Peter didn't stay in jail. Something amazing happened.

- **Who appeared inside of the prison?** An angel appeared! And the angel led Peter right out of the jail cell, right between two guards, broke his chains, and set him free!
- Whenever you face hard times, temptation, or feel afraid, it can weigh you down like the chains on Peter.
- **Do you know what God did to those chains on Peter?** God broke those chains and gave Peter freedom! God can give you freedom, too! He can help you face whatever is weighing you down, and He can help you overcome anything you're tempted by or afraid of. God is powerful. He can help you overcome anything!
- This story tells us our Big Idea for today, which is ...

THE BIG IDEA | Jesus gives us freedom.

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Each week, do a big reveal (and make it fun) when you announce the Big Idea, like:*
 - Ask the kids to give you a drumroll by stomping their feet or patting their laps.
 - Shout the Big Idea, then point to the kids and have them shout it back. (Change it up by using funny voices, different volumes, or inflections).
 - Have a character (either recurring or rotating) come out every week to reveal the Big Idea.
 - Write it on a piece of paper and hide it somewhere in the room. Have the kids go on a "hunt" for it. When it's found, ask someone to come up and read it.
- This week's Big Idea: **Jesus gives us freedom.**

ACTIVITY | Steal the Bacon

- In the story we read in the Bible, an angel helped Peter escape from the prison guards and the jail cell. We're going to play a game where you have to be like the angel and help get this doll, we're calling him Peter, to your side before the other team (the prison guards) get him.
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Split the kids into two teams and line them up on either side of the room, facing each other. Number each kid and tell them to remember their number. Each team should have the same numbers. Place the Peter doll in the middle of the room. Then you will call out a number, and both kids with that number (one from each team) will run out as soon as they hear their number, and try to steal the doll and run back to their side with it. If the other team tags them, they lose that round. If you have a lot of kids, you can make a square and have four of every number playing at once. To make it really hard, call multiple numbers at once.*
- **FOR KIDS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS:** *If you have a child who isn't able to run, you could have another kid run for them, or you could let them play a version where they sit around a circle and set the doll within arm's reach, and try to be the first to grab it.*

ACTIVITY | True Story Comic Book

- **Have you ever seen a comic book before? What is a comic book like?**
- A comic book tells a story using lots of pictures and fewer words. Many of the superhero movies you've probably watched started as stories in comic books.
- We are going to take the True Story we have heard today and put it in comic book format. Each group will get to illustrate one scene. Then we will put the scenes together to create our giant, True Story comic book.

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Divide the kids into five groups and give each group a piece of poster board and markers. Assign each group a scene from the story. They will read that passage in the Bible and then illustrate their part of the story comic book style. You can have them illustrate these scenes: Peter in jail (Acts 12:1-6); an angel wakes Peter up (Acts 12:7-9); an angel takes Peter out of the jail (Acts 12:10-11); Peter knocks on the door (Acts 12:12-14); the friends realize it is really Peter (Acts 12:15-16).

NOW WHAT? What does God want us to do about it?

VIDEO | Rescue Videos

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Show [this](#) video.
- **Why do we like to watch rescue videos?** It's amazing to see people who were trapped or who were in a bad situation be saved and set free.
- God set Peter free from jail. You're not in jail, but you might have things that are holding you down or hurting you.
- Some things that might keep us prisoner are our bad choices, bad feelings or attitudes, or bad things that are happening to us.
- **What do you need God to set you free from?**

SCRIPTURE | Matthew 1:21

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Look up the verse and read it!
- This is a verse we normally read during the holiday season because it's about Jesus' birth, but we're going to read it today too.
- In this verse, the angel is telling Joseph that Mary is going to have a baby and they should name Him Jesus. The name Jesus means "to rescue or deliver."
- **What did the angel say Jesus would save, or rescue, people from?** He came to rescue people from sin and from the consequences of sin: separation from God. This is the biggest thing we need God to rescue and set us free from!

OBJECT LESSON | Toilet Paper Chains

- **How many of you think you could easily break free from chains if you were tied up with toilet paper?** It seems pretty easy to break free from! See how easy it is to tear a piece of toilet paper? Let's try it on someone!
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Call one kid up to the front and have them put their hands out like they are going to be handcuffed. Wrap some toilet paper around their hands just once. Ask them to break free from the toilet paper chain. Then wrap the toilet paper around their hands a lot of times (the number of times will depend on the quality of your toilet paper; we recommend doing a test before class to see how many times it takes to make it sturdy). When you're done, ask the child to try and break free.
- **FOR PRETEENS:** Split your preteens into two teams and let them have fun with the toilet paper by putting a roll of toilet paper through a wooden rod for each team. Choose one person to get wrapped, then have a race to see who can run around and wrap their person with the whole roll of toilet paper first.
- **If I only wrap it once, is it easy or hard to get out of?** It's easy! How about if I wrap it a lot more? You can't get out of it now. **Did you ever think toilet paper could be so strong?**

- Sometimes, we get caught up in sins or problems that start out small and don't seem like a big deal. But they can turn into big things that hold us down and keep us from God.
- We can ask God to give us freedom from our sins and our problems before they become so big they keep us down and keep us from Him.

PRAYER | Prayer Chain

- Most kids your age aren't thrown into jail, but **what are some other things that people might need to be rescued from?**
- Think of something you or someone you know needs God to rescue you from. We're going to write those things down on paper and make a chain out of them.
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Ask the kids to brainstorm things that people might need God to rescue them from. Have the kids cut their paper into strips (or do this ahead of time). Ask each kid to talk about one thing and write it on a strip of paper. As kids share, staple the strips of paper together to form a chain. If possible, help each kid create their own chain to take home.
- **FOR KIDS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS:** A child with special needs may have trouble verbalizing what they need prayer for. You can ask their parents ahead of time to share some specific prayer requests, or send the slips of paper home for the parents to write on.
- When you see this chain this week, take a quiet minute and ask for God's help. Hang your chain somewhere at home where it will serve as a reminder to trust God to give you freedom.

MEMORY VERSES | Psalm 119:105; Galatians 5:22

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Give every kid memory verse magnets or stickers. Then work on the memory verse together. For ideas on how to do this well, check out the Memory Verse Guide in your Programming folder and give them to your small group leaders, if you'd like.

SMALL GROUP TIME

DISCUSSION

- **What amazing thing did God do for Peter?** (Set him free from jail.)
- **What were Peter's friends doing when he was in jail?** (Praying for him.)
- **How do you think Peter's friends felt when they saw him at the door?**
- **What is the biggest thing God can set us free from?** (From sin and the consequences of sin.)
- **What do you need God to help you with or rescue you from?**

SCRIPTURE | Galatians 5:1

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Look up the verse in your Bible and encourage kids to do the same. Read it!
- **What does this verse say God does for us?**
- **What kinds of things can we be slaves to or need to be set free from?**
- **How can God help you find freedom this week?**

ACTIVITY | Amazing God Mural

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Ask the kids to think of all the amazing things – both ordinary and extraordinary – God has done in their lives or in the lives of others. Use a large roll of paper or a poster board and ask the kids to draw a mural of all the amazing things they can think of that God has done.
- **What amazing thing did God do in the Bible story today?**
- **What is something great God has done in your life?**

MEMORY VERSES | Psalm 119:105; Galatians 5:22

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