



LESSON 2 FOR LEADERS

INVITATION

We invite you to pause, listen, and shift your gaze toward the Father ...

LESSON AT A GLANCE

WONDER TRUTH: God Hears Our Prayers for Others

SCRIPTURE: [Acts 12](#)

WORD OF WONDER: [From Psalm 66:19–20](#)

Take a few moments to read [Acts 12:1–16](#).

I know it sounds strange, but this is almost my favorite passage in Scripture. Why? Because you couldn't make this stuff up if you tried.

A huddle of desperate Christians is deep in prayer for their imprisoned friend, Peter.

Peter, who they love, and who might be executed the following day.

Then, a knock at the door.

It's Peter, whose miraculous release now means he needs someplace safe to shelter. But those praying can't quite believe their prayers have been answered in this way and figure it must be an angel at the door, not Peter himself. It takes a brave servant girl to insist it really is Peter until finally they crack open the door and get him inside.

Sound familiar? Like those believers, we sometimes pray without much expectation that God will answer. We don't want to get our hopes up, don't want to risk disappointment.

But God hears our prayers, including our prayers for others. And when our prayers align with His purposes, remarkable things happen.

So pray your kids come to know and love Him. That the diagnosis is reversed, the crisis calmed, the relationship healed. Pray boldly and specifically for God to act in the lives of people you love.

Do that now—pray for a Peter in your life you'd like to see set free from some sort of captivity. If you take that risk, what might happen?

And then keep listening for a knock at the door.

—**Mikal Keefer**

Children's Ministry Volunteer

Contributor to Wonder Ink

DID YOU KNOW?

FOUNDATION BUILDING BLOCKS

WHO?

The book of Acts and the Gospel of Luke were written by the same author. While the Gospel is focused on the life and ministry of Jesus, Acts focuses on the growth of the church and spread of the good news after Jesus' ascension.

WHAT?

[Acts 12](#) is part of a longer series of stories beginning in [Acts 8](#) about the rise of persecution against the church and how God protected His people through it all. In fact, God used the persecution against the church to help spread the gospel.

WHERE?

The story takes place in Judea, where Herod Agrippa, the grandson of the Herod who tried to have Jesus killed ([Matthew 2:16](#)), reigned.

WHEN?

[Acts 12](#) places the story of Peter's imprisonment and rescue by an angel around the same time that Paul began his ministry with Barnabas in Antioch. Persecution against the church in Judea increased as the gospel began to go forth to the Gentiles.

CONNECTING TO GOD'S BIG STORY

Luke says that his Gospel is about what "Jesus began to do and to teach [emphasis added]" ([Acts 1:1, NIV](#)). Acts is about what Jesus continued to do and teach through the Holy Spirit in the apostles. Jesus continues to work in us by His Spirit today!



Curiosity

LESSON 2 **EARLY CHILDHOOD**

Spark curiosity, encourage exploration, and get kids thinking about the wonder of God.

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Play Stations

SUPPLIES: small, opaque containers with lids, such as jewelry boxes or cups (6–8); various items to fill containers, such as uncooked rice, dry beans, pom-poms, coins, etc. (enough to fill 6–8 containers); coloring utensils; rubber bands (6–8, optional); scissors (prep only, optional)

Wonder Ink RESOURCES: [Peter in Prison Coloring Sheet](#) (1 per kid)

Greet kids warmly as they arrive and briefly explain the play stations. Invite them to play at any of the play stations.

Welcome to church! While we're getting ready to start, you can play at any of these stations to help get ready for our lesson today. Do you have any ideas of what we'll be learning about today?

Play Station: What's that Sound?

Set-up: Gather small, opaque containers with lids, as well as various filler items that make noise, such as uncooked rice, dry beans, pom-poms, coins, etc. Put a small amount of one type of filler in each small container and put a rubber band around each one to keep it closed (if needed).

Play: Invite kids to shake the containers. See whether the kids can guess what's inside each box by listening to the sounds being made while shaking the container.

Play Station: Peter in Prison Coloring Sheet

Set-up: Print one copy per kid of the [Coloring Sheet](#). Set out the Coloring Sheets and coloring utensils.

Play: Let the kids color. The kids can also turn over the sheet and draw a picture of a house.



Belief

LESSON 2 EARLY CHILDHOOD

Guide kids into knowing God more deeply, exploring His big story, and marveling at His wonder.

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Prayer of Invitation

Before entering into God's big story, lead kids in a prayer of invitation. Use the prayer here or your own words: **God, we know You hear us when we pray for others, and You answer our prayers. So we come to You today, excited to learn about Your truth and to see how our prayers have power because of You. In Jesus' name, Amen.**

God's Big Story

****Note to leaders:** This story is not in any of our picture Bibles. To aid in telling the story, you can use the puppet figures included in the Belief bag for this week.

Pull out the Bible.

Ask: What is this called? *The Bible*

Ask: Why is the Bible important? *Because it is God's word. Everything in it is true. It really happened.*

TELL THE BIBLE STORY

Read Acts 12:3-16 NiRV from the text below:

³ Herod saw that the death of James pleased some Jews. So he arrested Peter also. This happened during the Feast of Unleavened Bread. ⁴ 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.

⁵ So Peter was kept in prison. But the church prayed hard to God for him.

9:00 Service

⁶ 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. ⁷ 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.

⁸ 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." ⁹ 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. ¹⁰ 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.

¹¹ 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."

¹² 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. ¹³ Peter knocked at the outer entrance. A servant named Rhoda came to answer the door. ¹⁴ She recognized Peter's voice. She was so excited that she ran back without opening the door. "Peter is at the door!" she exclaimed.

¹⁵ "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."

¹⁶ Peter kept on knocking. When they opened the door and saw him, they were amazed.

Word of Wonder

WORD OF WONDER

**But God has surely listened. He has heard
my prayer. Give praise to God.**

— Psalm 66:19–20a

Encourage the kids to do the motions and say the verse with you.

Gather kids to discuss these questions:

Who can you pray for this week?

- **How do you know God hears you?**
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Faith

LESSON 2 **EARLY CHILDHOOD**

Help kids see the wonder of God's story and how it connects to their own story.

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Craft: Mother's Day Flowers

SUPPLIES: cardstock cards, paper muffin cups, buttons, green paper strips

We're going to make cards to tell our moms how much we love them!

Allow children to assemble the flower using paper muffin cups, buttons and paper. Inside the card, children can write or draw a message to their moms or create another flower.





9:00 Service

Identity

LESSON 2 EARLY CHILDHOOD

Create space for God to remind kids they are known, loved, led, and their lives can tell of God's wonder.

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Responding in Worship: Breath Prayer

Do you remember in God's big story what Peter's friends were doing? Pause for response. **Praying!** And we can pray too. The Bible says, "The prayer of a godly person is powerful. Things happen because of it" (James 5:16)! Did you know that we can pray using not just our words, but our body and our breath too? I'm going to teach you to pray this way, and maybe you can teach someone at home!

Start by pulling your arms in like you're hugging your body. Demonstrate motion. Now push your arms straight out with your palms facing up. Demonstrate motion. Next, let's put our breath with it. I'm going to breathe in and pull my hands around myself like a hug. Demonstrate motion. And breathe out while I push my arms out and open my hands. Demonstrate motion. Practice this with me. Spend a few moments practicing breathing in and out while bringing hands in and out.

Now we can add some words to our prayer. Let's think of different people we can pray for as we breathe and pray. Repeat each pair of lines a few times before moving to the next. Try a few of these suggestions, then invite the kids to suggest other people or have them pray on their own with names. Encourage the kids to repeat the words and mimic the motions after you.

I pray for someone in my house. (*Breathe in; pull your arms in.*)

God, You hear me. (*Breathe out; push your arms out.*) **I**

pray for my friend. (*Breathe in; pull your arms in.*) **God,**

You hear me. (*Breathe out; push your arms out.*)

I pray for someone who is sick, hurt, or lonely. (*Breathe in; pull your arms in.*)

God, You hear me. (*Breathe out; push your arms out.*)

I pray for my neighbor. (*Breathe in; pull your arms in.*)

God, You hear me. (*Breathe out; push your arms out.*)

I pray for someone who cares for me. (*Breathe in; pull your arms in.*)

9:00 Service

God, You hear me. *(Breathe out; push your arms out.)*

Prayer and Blessing

After the kids finish their activity, pray with them, thanking God for hearing their prayers.

God, You love when Your kids talk to You in prayer. And You hear us, God. Thank You that we can come to You in prayer and that our prayers have power because of You. We pray for the people we know. Please remind us of Your presence and Your love. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Encourage the kids to hold their hands out in front of them, with palms up, as if their hands were open to receive something. Tell them to listen and receive the blessing as you speak it over them.

Blessing: May you go out this week with the knowledge that God made you, He knows you, and He loves you. He will hear your prayers for others!