

Teachers Dig In

Dig In to the Bible

- Read: Acts 12:6-19
- In This Passage: Peter is put in prison because he loves Jesus. But God's family prays hard for Peter, and God sends an angel to help set Peter free. When he is free, he goes to the house where people are praying, and they don't realize it's really him at first! Then they realize God has answered their prayers.
- Bible Point: God's family prays together.
- Summary Verse: "Then Peter replied, 'I see very clearly that God shows no favoritism. In every nation he accepts those who fear him and do what is right' " (Acts 10:34-35).

Dig Deeper

- You'll Be Teaching: *God's family prays together.* For kids who are newer to church, prayer can seem weird. Why are you talking to someone you can't hear or see? Help kids see the effect of prayer that God's family in the Bible experienced and realize that God can help them, too.
- Think About: Think back: When have you been part of a powerful, earnest, communal prayer time?

Dig In to Prayer

- Pray for kids to recognize the importance of prayer, especially prayer with other Christians.

Quick Tip

- You probably incorporate prayer into your time with kids every week—which is great! Kids are regularly experiencing the importance of today's Bible point. Consider how you can more actively involve kids in the prayer. Make sure kids aren't simply hearing *leaders* pray; give them the opportunity to pray, too. And know that there may be awkward silence as kids gather up the courage to pray. On the other hand, it's important to let kids go at their own pace so they never feel embarrassed or self-conscious about praying. If kids don't want to pray aloud, don't force it.

This Lesson at a Glance



MUSIC VIDEO

Preschoolers sing songs of praise to God.

Supplies

- “My Hope Is in the Lord” (watch or download [here](#))
- “Thankful” (watch or download [here](#))
- “We Can Trust Him (Psalm 33:4)” (watch or download [here](#))



TALK-ABOUT VIDEO

Recommended for elementary kids.

Supplies

- “An Angel Frees Peter” teaching video (watch or download [here](#))



OPENING

Preschoolers share about a topic related to the lesson.

Supplies

- Bible*



OBJECT LESSON

Preschoolers see how turkey basters can make fun sounds.

Supplies

- turkey basters (at least 1—or as many as you can gather!)
- cups of water



CORE BIBLE DISCOVERY

Preschoolers act out the Bible story and pray together.

Supplies

- Bibles (1 per child)
- flashlight

Easy Prep

- Use classroom furniture, or whatever you have in your room, to create an area where kids can gather and pretend to be with Peter in prison and then come out of.



DEEPER BIBLE

Preschoolers look for answers to prayers.



HIGH-ENERGY GAME

Preschoolers play a game where they must follow quick commands.

Supplies

- upbeat music (optional)
- music player (optional)

Classroom: Monkeys



LOW-ENERGY GAME

Preschoolers play a version of Ring Around the Rosie.



CRAFT

Preschoolers make prayer mats.

Supplies

- “Let’s Pray” handouts (1 per preschooler) (download [here](#))
- crayons
- snack-size resealable bags (1 per preschooler)
- rice
- duct tape

Easy Prep

- For each preschooler, fill a snack-size resealable bag halfway with rice. Press the air out and seal it.
- Make a sample craft to show kids.



LIFE APPLICATION WRAP-UP

Preschoolers sing a prayer song.

**Marked supplies can be reused from Core Bible Discovery*

Let’s keep kids safe! You can help by using supplies as instructed for only ages 3+, purchasing child-safe items, and being aware of allergy concerns.



MUSIC VIDEO
My Hope Is in the Lord

[10 min]

Supplies

- “My Hope Is in the Lord” (watch or download [here](#))
- “Thankful” (watch or download [here](#))
- “We Can Trust Him (Psalm 33:4)” (watch or download [here](#))

Tip

- Don’t have internet in your classroom? That’s okay! You can choose your own worship songs from our Best Of Dig In Music DVD [here](#).

Sing Songs to God

Sing the three songs in any order.



TALK-ABOUT VIDEO An Angel Frees Peter

[10 min]

Supplies

- “An Angel Frees Peter” teaching video (watch or download [here](#))

Tip

- Don’t have internet in your classroom? That’s okay! You can download the videos before class using the “download” button at the link provided, or purchase DVDs [here](#).

Discuss and Watch “An Angel Frees Peter”

Say: **We’re learning that God’s family prays together. The church in the Bible prayed for Peter when he was in prison. Let’s see what happened when they prayed together.**

Watch “An Angel Frees Peter.”

Ask: • **If you were in this video, which person would you want to play?**

Why?

• **What’s something you’ve prayed for that would be hard to believe if God answered your prayer?**

Say: **God’s family prays together. They were praying so hard for Peter that they didn’t even realize he was at their door! When we pray together, God can do powerful things and answer our prayers.**



OPENING Welcome

[5 min]

Supplies

- Bible*

Welcome

- Thank kids for coming.
- Just for fun, have preschoolers give a high-one (high-five with just one finger) to three friends.
- Make announcements.
- Introduce new kids.
- Celebrate birthdays by having preschoolers say “happy birthday” in a deep voice.
- Collect the offering.

Introduce the Lesson

Say: **Today we’ll learn how God’s family prays together. So let’s start by talking about who we pray with.**

Share

- Share about who *you* like to pray with.
- In leader-led small groups, have preschoolers share who *they* like to pray with.
- After small groups have discussed, have adult or teen helpers share with the whole group what they talked about in their small groups.

Summarize

Open a Bible, and say: **We can talk with God when we’re alone, and we can talk with God when we’re with other people in God’s family! Today we’ll learn about a time in the Bible when people prayed together and God said yes to their prayer! We’ll see why it’s important that God’s family prays together. Let’s get started.**

Pray, praising God that his family can pray together.



OBJECT LESSON

Silly Sounds

[10 min]

Supplies

- turkey basters (at least 1—or as many as you can gather!)
- cups of water

Make Silly Sounds With a Turkey Baster

Say: **We've been learning that God's family prays together. Praying is just talking with God. And God can hear us whether we talk really loudly or quietly. He can even hear us when we pray just in our hearts!**

Let's experiment with sound to get an idea of all the different sounds God can hear.

- Squeeze the turkey baster, then dip it in water and release to fill about halfway.
- Hold the turkey baster so that the open end points straight up just under your mouth.
- Blow across the top of the hole in the turkey baster to make it play a note.
- Squeeze and release the turkey baster to make the water go up and down.
- Let kids each have a turn blowing across the turkey baster as you hold it and squeeze it. If you have more than one turkey baster, distribute them to adult or teen helpers so kids can line up for their turn in multiple lines.

Talk About It

Say: **This turkey baster made some silly sounds! But whether the note went up or down, we could hear it. Praying is like that! God can hear us no matter how we sound.**

Ask: • **How does your voice sound when you whisper? when you shout?**

Say: **God can hear our prayers no matter what we sound like. We can pray to him when we're alone or when God's family prays together. We know he'll hear us!**



CORE BIBLE DISCOVERY

People Pray for Peter to Get Out of Prison (Acts 12:6-19)

[20 min]

Supplies

- Bibles (1 per child)
- flashlight

Easy Prep

- Use classroom furniture, or whatever you have in your room, to create an area where kids can gather and pretend to be with Peter in prison and then come out of.

Gather to Pray

Say: **Today we'll find out God's family prays together.** Show the Bible. **The Bible tells about a time God's family had a friend in prison so they all got together and began to pray.**

Lead kids to gather together in one large circle. Say: **Since we're learning God's family prays together, let's say a prayer now.** Say a short prayer, asking God to show kids what he wants them to know from the Bible.

Pretend to Join Peter

Say: **In the Bible, God's family was gathered in a home praying for their friend Peter, who was in prison. Let's visit the prison to find out what happened when they prayed for him.**

Lead kids to the area you prepared ahead of time. Have kids sit down. Say: **Peter was in prison, but he hadn't done anything wrong. He was in prison only because some people didn't want him to share about Jesus' love. Prison was not a nice place for someone in God's family to be. Two guards sat next to Peter and chained him there.** Lead kids to sit on their hands to pretend to be chained.

Dim the lights if possible. Say: **It was nighttime, so even though God's family was praying together for Peter, Peter was actually asleep.** Lead kids to close their eyes, still sitting on their hands.

Say: **Then out of nowhere, there was a bright light!** Shine the flashlight on kids. **And an angel stood in front of Peter. The angel touched Peter to wake him up.** Have adult leaders gently shake each child's shoulder and say, "Wake up!"

Say: **Listen to what the angel said to Peter.** Read aloud Acts 12:8. **Lead kids to pretend to put on shoes, stand up, and pretend to put on a coat.**

Follow the Angel

Say: **The angel led Peter out of prison.** Lead kids to make a following line by having them grab the shoulders of the person in front of them as they exit the enclosed area, with you in the lead.

Say: **Peter followed the angel out of his prison cell, past the guards, through some gates, out into the city, and down the street.** Lead kids for a minute or two.

Say: **Once they were walking down the street, the angel left Peter, and Peter realized what was happening was real—it wasn't a dream!**

Remember, God's family was praying together for Peter when all this happened! God heard his family and helped Peter get safely out of prison!

Peter continued on his way to Mary's home, where everyone who was praying for him was gathered. Lead kids around the room again and to a door or wall that they'll be able to knock on.

Join Together

Say: **Peter knocked on the door.** Lead kids to knock on the door or wall.

Say: **A girl named Rhoda went to the door but didn't open it. She heard Peter's voice.** Lead kids to say, "It's me, Peter!"

Say: **Rhoda was so surprised that she ran to tell the others gathered in the home. She left Peter outside with the door closed! So Peter kept knocking.** Lead kids to knock again.

Say: **Finally, they opened the door and were amazed to see Peter. Peter told them how the angel came and helped him get out of prison. He told everyone to tell some of his other friends who weren't there, and then he went to a new place to stay safe.** Lead kids to gather in the center of the room, forming small groups with an adult or teen helper in each group.

Say: **In the morning, the guards were so confused. They had no idea where Peter was, and even though they went looking for him, they couldn't find him. God's family prayed together for Peter, and Peter got out of prison safely!** Lead kids in a cheer.

Pray Together

Say: **Since God's family prays together, let's find out what our friends here need or want prayer for.**

Share something *you* want prayer for.

Ask: • **What's something you want to pray about?** Have preschoolers share in their small groups.

After kids share, have adult or teen helpers lead kids in praying for the needs kids mentioned, allowing kids to pray if they want to.

Say: **We prayed together because God's family prays together, and we know from the Bible story that God hears us!**



DEEPER BIBLE
Found It!

[15 min]

Find Answers to Prayers

Say: **We're learning that God's family prays together. In the Bible story, they almost didn't realize that God answered their prayer! They were praying for Peter to be set free from jail, and he was knocking at their door! But they didn't even believe it was him at first and left him outside to keep knocking.**

Let's make sure we're paying attention to how God answers prayers. When we look for the good things God is doing, we call those *God Sightings*.

Let's think of all the God Sightings we can. First, let's think of things we've seen that God has made or done.

Lead kids in thinking of ways God has already answered prayers, such as helping someone get better or helping them find their parents when they were lost. Before each answer, kids can knock on a wall or the floor to remind them of Peter knocking at the door.

Lead preschoolers in thinking of additional God Sightings using their other senses: sounds they've heard, foods they've tasted, scents they've smelled, and things they've touched.

Then take preschoolers on a "God Sightings Search." Walk around your room and look for things that show God at work. You might point to kids and talk about how you've prayed for them to know God. Or you might point out a window and show how God helps take care of birds. Again, preschoolers can knock when they find something to share.

Say: **God's family prays together. And when we do, we get to see God Sightings! We can see how God answers our prayers in amazing ways!**



HIGH-ENERGY GAME

Get Up!

[10 min]

Supplies

- upbeat music (optional)
- music player (optional)

Tip

- You can purchase downloadable music and other items to enhance your DIG IN program [here](#).

Play a Command Game

Say: **God's family prays together. When God's family prayed for Peter, God sent an angel to help Peter get free. The angel gave Peter some instructions. Let's see how well you can follow those instructions.**

- **The angel told Peter to get up. When I say "Get up!" you'll squat down and then jump up quickly. Get up!** Pause.
- **The angel told Peter to get dressed. When I say "Get dressed!" pretend to zip a coat. Get dressed!** Pause.
- **The angel told Peter to put his shoes on. When I say, "Shoes on!" bend down and touch your toes. Shoes on!** Pause.
- **The angel said, "Follow me." When I say "Follow me!" copy exactly what I'm doing. Hop on one foot and say: Follow me!** Pause.
- Repeat the commands in any order, mixing them up and seeing how quickly kids can do what you say. You can use a variety of actions for the "follow me" command.
 - Get up!
 - Get dressed!
 - Shoes on!
 - Follow me!

Talk About It

Ask: • **What's an instruction your mom or dad gives you?**

Say: **God's family prays together. And sometimes God invites us to be a part of his answer to a prayer! He gave Peter instructions to get out of prison, which answered the prayer of the people praying for Peter. We can always pray to God and obey God.**



LOW-ENERGY GAME

We Can Pray Together

[10 min]

Play a Version of Ring Around the Rosie

Say: **We're learning that God's family prays together. Let's pray together with a song!**

Have kids join hands in a circle and walk around in the circle as you sing this song to the tune of "Ring Around the Rosie," jumping together at the end.

We can pray together.

Talk about whatever.

God hears.

God hears.

Our prayers go up!

After you've sung the song several times, teach kids these new verses as prayers. Repeat several times.

God, we ask and say please.

Help us and our families.

You'll hear.

You'll hear.

Our prayers go up!

God, we sing and we shout.

Come and help our church out.

You'll hear.

You'll hear.

Our prayers go up!

God, we ask for your help.

Keep us all in good health.

You'll hear.

You'll hear.

Our prayers go up!

Talk About It

Say: **We had fun holding hands and praying. We got to experience how God's family prays together!**

Ask: • **What kind of help does your family need from God?**

• **What about our church?**

• **Who do you know who needs prayer to be healthy?**

Pray for any needs kids raised.

Say: **We can always pray for what we need help with, just like God's family in the Bible prayed when Peter needed help to get out of prison. God's family prays together.**

 **CRAFT**
Let's Pray

[20 min]

Supplies

- “Let’s Pray” handouts (1 per preschooler) (download [here](#))
- crayons
- snack-size resealable bags (1 per preschooler)
- rice
- duct tape

Easy Prep

- For each preschooler, fill a snack-size resealable bag halfway with rice. Press the air out and seal it.
- Make a sample craft to show kids.



Make a Prayer Mat

Say: **God’s family prays together. Let’s make prayer mats that will help us know what to talk with God about.**

Hold up your sample craft, and read the words to kids. Then set it on the floor and toss a rice bag onto it. Lead kids in praying about the topic the bag lands on.

Follow these directions to help preschoolers make prayer mats.

- Have kids color their handout any way they’d like.
- Any adult and teen helpers can help you tear strips of duct tape, which each child will wrap around a bag of rice to totally cover it.
- When kids have completed their crafts, let them practice tossing the rice bags and praying for whatever they land on.

Classroom: Monkeys

Talk About It

Ask: • **What else can we talk to God about?**

Say: **God's family prays together. Now you have a lot of ideas of things to pray about!**

Encourage preschoolers to take their crafts home and use them with their friends and family to pray together.



LIFE APPLICATION WRAP-UP

God, We Ask...

[5 min]

Tip

- If you used the Low-Energy Game, this prayer song is a great review, and you can sing all the verses. If not, just choose one or two verses to sing.

Pray a Singing Prayer

Say: **Today we learned that God's family prays together. Let's end our time with a singing prayer.**

- Lead kids in holding hands in a circle and singing to the tune of "Ring Around the Rosie."

**God, we ask and say please.
Help us and our families.
You'll hear.
You'll hear.
Our prayers go up!**

**God, we sing and we shout.
Come and help our church out.
You'll hear.
You'll hear.
Our prayers go up!**

**God, we ask for your help.
Keep us all in good health.
You'll hear.
You'll hear.
Our prayers go up!**

- Pray: **God, thank you that your family can pray together. We know you heard our prayers today. In Jesus' name, amen.**
- Thank kids for coming to church, and tell them you hope to see them next week.