



ACTS

Of All the Apostles

**You Will Be
My Witnesses:**

Running the Race

Lesson 24



Arrest and Escape

Acts 12:1-19

Supplemental Scripture

Hebrews 12:1-3

Memory Verse

And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love Him, who have been called according to His purpose.
Romans 8:28 (NIV)

Lesson Goals

Understand that James faithfully followed Jesus and died for his beliefs.

Understand that Peter faithfully followed Jesus and was allowed to live.

Understand that God is in control and that ALL things work together for good for those who faithfully follow Jesus.

NOTE: Familiarize yourself with this story. Study the supplemental Scripture and make notes on, but do NOT read from, these pages. To reinforce that these ideas are not your own, hold your Bible as you tell the story.

We talked a little last week about running the race and trusting our coach, even when he changes the way we run. How important do you think it is to completely trust the coach you have chosen? What if it is difficult? Let's see how well Peter and James followed the lead of the One they had chosen to obey.

About the same time that Saul and Barnabas were in Antioch, the king, Herod, arrested some of the believers. His plan was to make them suffer a lot. He even had John's brother, James, killed because he followed Jesus. James' death made the Jewish leaders very happy and King Herod took note. Because James' death made them happy, he had Peter arrested, too. Remember, Peter had spent time in Caesarea with Cornelius, where non-Jews had received the Holy Spirit. Then, he had returned to Jerusalem.

At the time that Peter was arrested, it was a special festival time of the Jews that happened right before the Passover. So Peter was held in prison. He was placed under guard and "watched by four groups of four soldiers each." (Acts 12:4 NIV) Herod's plan was to put Peter on trial after the Passover, "but the church prayed hard to God for him."

Even though it was the night before King Herod had appointed Peter's trial and Peter was in prison, chained between two soldiers, he was able to sleep. Herod had even stationed guards at the entrance to the prison to make sure Peter couldn't get away!

All of a sudden an angel of the Lord appeared and a light shone in Peter's cell! The angel hit Peter on the side to wake him up. "Quick!" the angel said. "Get up!" And so that he could get up, the chains just fell off of Peter's wrists. Because Peter wasn't sure if any of this was really happening, the angel told Peter to put on his clothes, shoes, and coat and to follow him out of the prison! "They passed the first and second guards. Then they came to the iron gate leading to the city. It opened for them by itself!" (Acts

Application

Do you remember when we talked about Stephen a couple of weeks ago? Do you remember our memory verse? “Be faithful, even if it means you must die. Then I will give you a crown. The crown is life itself.” (Revelation 2:10 NIV) In our lesson, John’s brother James was faithful and it meant death for him. Peter was also faithful, even if it meant he must die, but God let him live. Was Peter more faithful than James? Not that we are aware of. Then why did James die? We don’t completely understand it, but we “can be sure that every detail in our lives of love for God is worked into something good.” (Romans 8:28 MSG)

Will you trust God with your life? Maybe that means coming to Him for salvation. It may mean letting Him be in control, trusting Him to do what is best for you. Will you do that today?

9:10 NIV) Peter and the angel went through the gate and down a street. Then the angel disappeared. It was then that Peter realized this was no dream. “He said, ‘Now I know for sure that the Lord sent His angel. He set me free from Herod’s power. He saved me from everything the Jewish people were hoping for.’” (Acts 9:11 NIV)

Peter went right to Mary’s house. Mary was John Mark’s mom. John Mark is the one who wrote the Gospel of Mark that comes after the Gospel of Matthew in the Bible. There were a lot of people at Mary’s house and they were praying. When Peter knocked at Mary’s door, her servant Rhoda “came to answer the door. She recognized Peter’s voice. She was so excited that she ran back without opening the door.” (Acts 12:13-14 NIV) She told everyone, “Peter is here!” but they didn’t believe her.

Thankfully, Peter kept knocking. Someone finally opened the door and they were all amazed. Peter was no longer in prison—he was standing right in front of them! They were so excited that they were making quite a bit of noise. Peter motioned for them to be quiet and told them everything that had happened. Then he left to go somewhere else.

Can you imagine what things were like in the prison the next morning? The soldiers were confused. “They couldn’t figure out what happened to Peter.” (Acts 12:18 NIV) They looked everywhere, but no Peter! And Herod was so furious he questioned the guards and then ordered them to be killed.

Review

1. What happened to James? (Herod had him killed.)
2. What did Herod have planned for Peter? (death)
3. What happened to Peter? (An angel helped him escape from prison.)

Next Week
First Missionary Journey
Acts 12:24-13:43

Preschool Lesson

About the same time that Saul and Barnabas were in Antioch, King Herod arrested some of the believers. His plan was to make them suffer a lot. When this made the Jewish leaders very happy, King Herod had Peter arrested, too.

At the time that Peter was arrested, it was a special festival time of the Jews. Because of that, Peter was held in prison. He was placed under guard and “watched by four groups of four soldiers each.” (Acts 12:4 NIV) Herod’s plan was to put Peter on trial after the festival. But the church prayed hard to God for Peter.

Even though Peter was in prison, chained between two soldiers the night before his trial, he was able to sleep. There were even guards at the entrance to the prison to make sure Peter couldn’t get away!

All of a sudden an angel of the Lord appeared and a light shone in Peter’s cell! The angel hit Peter on the side to wake him up. “‘Quick!’ the angel said. ‘Get up!’” The chains just fell off of Peter’s wrists. Peter wasn’t sure if any of this was really happening, but he followed the angel out of the prison! “They passed the first and second guards. Then they came to the iron gate leading to the city. It opened for them by itself!” (Acts 12:7-10 NIV) Peter and the angel went through the gate and down a street. Then the angel disappeared. It was then that Peter realized this was no dream.

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Thankfully, Peter kept knocking. Someone finally opened the door and they were all amazed. Peter was no longer in prison—he was standing right in front of them! They were so excited that they were making quite a bit of noise. Peter motioned for them to be quiet and told them everything that had happened. Can you imagine what things were like in the prison the next morning? The soldiers were confused. “They couldn’t figure out what happened to Peter.” (Acts 12:18 NIV)

Activities

Memory Verse Activity - Write each word of the memory verse on paper strips approximately 1"x9". Form a loop with the first, then join the first to the second as another loop is formed. Make a paper chain, using all of the memory verse strips. Practice the verse as each loop is added.

Discuss the memory verse. What does it mean to love God? Is it a mushy, happy feeling? Look up John 14:15. If we love Him, we will obey Him! Discuss practical ways to show God that we love Him.

Sing the children's song "Angels Watching Over Me," and Amy Grant's "Angels."

Encourage your students to illustrate a story book to retell the lesson. After class, visit those who didn't come. Share the lesson with them by using the story books.

Reenact today's lesson.

Compare Romans 8:28 from the Message (*That's why we can be so sure that every detail in our lives of love for God is worked into something good.*) with that of the Amplified Bible (*We are assured and know that [God being a partner in their labor] all things work together and are [fitting into a plan] for good to and for those who love God and are called according to [His] design and purpose.*).

As you continue memorizing Hebrews 12:1-3, focus again on the end of Hebrews 11. Not all who choose to follow God live comfortable, easy lives. Discuss 2 Timothy 3:12 that we have looked at earlier, "In fact, everyone who wants to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be treated badly." Discuss way to be prepared for whatever God allows to come into our lives.



And we know that in all things
God works for the good
of those who love Him,
who have been called
according to His purpose.

Romans 8:28

Racing Riddles

How important do you think it is to completely trust the coach you have chosen? Use the key below to fill in the blanks. When you know what this verse says, it will help you trust the One true Coach for Life, Jesus Christ.

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 Z M W D V P M L D G S Z G R M Z O O G S R M T H

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 T L W D L I P H U L I G S V T L L W

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 L U G S L H V D S L O L E V S R N

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 D S L S Z E V Y V V M X Z O O V W

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 Z X X L I W R M T G L S R H K F I K L H V

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 I L N Z M H

KEY

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z
Z	Y	X	W	V	U	T	S	R	Q	P	O	N	M	L	K	J	I	H	G	F	E	D	C	B	A

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G O D W O R K S F O R T H E G O O D

T L W D L I P H U L I G S V T L L W

O F T H O S E W H O L O V E H I M ,

L U G S L H V D S L O L E V S R N

W H O H A V E B E E N C A L L E D

D S L S Z E V Y V V M X Z O O V W

A C C O R D I N G T O H I S P U R P O S E .

Z X X L I W R M T G L S R H K F I K L H V

R O M A N S 8 : 2 8

I L N Z M H

KEY

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z
Z	Y	X	W	V	U	T	S	R	Q	P	O	N	M	L	K	J	I	H	G	F	E	D	C	B	A

Word Search

e b e g e e k i n g h e a g s
x b s r a e e e r o a t d m i
c s u e r a p u f o a p e s m
d r o l e h t f o l e g n a o
t e h m a r k e p t k i e k n
s i s o h a n a i i a t p s e
i d y n d r o a s h v s o p a
m l r p o a c t c o e e e u r
o o a t i l k t c n i r t o r
n s m l t a i i p d l r a r e
p n e l n v n u t e e a g g s
d e f o u r g r r o t r n r t
o r t n e m e t i c x e o u e
h y t s e d k i n g h e r o d
r c s y l c h a i c t i i f o

Peter

King Herod

arrested

soldiers

four groups

chains

angel of the Lord

iron gate opened

Mary's house

Rhoda

kept knocking

excitement

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x b s r a e e e r o a t d m i
c s u e r a p u f o a p e s m
d r o l e h t f o l e g n a o
t e h m a r k e p t k i e k n
s i s o h a n a i i a t p s e
i d y n d r o a s h v s o p a
m l r p o a c t c o e e e u r
o o a t i l k t c n i r t o r
n s m l t a i i p d l r a r e
p n e l n v n u t e e a g g s
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