

Morning Overview

Lesson: *The Prison Doors Open*

Lesson Objective:

The Apostles continue to be obedient to the Lord by teaching about Jesus and doing many signs and wonders by the power of the Holy Spirit. Of course, this is irritating to those who killed Jesus. The agitation grows into a plot to rid the world of the Apostles too. However, the Lord had other plans and uses the wisdom of Gamaliel to preserve the lives of the Apostles. We again see the power and the provision of the Lord at work for His people.

NB: Please look to the Acts trifold to help explain how the Holy Spirit grew the Church as well as what goes deepest to the heart goes widest to the world. Each week the lesson will contain a small part from previous week's lesson to help kids remember previous stories.

Teaching Summary:

- God's promises do not change despite circumstances, people and even our inability to believe them. God keeps His promises even when we do not trust Him or follow His commands.
- God has promised to always be with His people. He is with us through the presence of the Holy Spirit.
- The Apostles continued to do many signs and wonders by the power of the Holy Spirit.
- The Sadducees, who denied miracles, arrested and threw the Apostles in prison.
- The Apostles were freed and charged to continue to teach people.
- The high priest and religious leaders were furious and questioned the Apostles and their motives.
- A religious leader named Gamaliel reasoned with the leaders to tread lightly with punishing or opposing the Apostles.
- The Apostles were beaten and told not to teach any more.
- The Apostles were happy to be considered worthy to suffer for Jesus. The Church continued to grow.

Scripture: Acts 5:12-42

Story: Vos Children's Bible, Pages 337-339

Scripture Memory for September: Acts 2:32 ESV

This Jesus God raised up, (*hands start on the ground and then stretch above your head*)
and of that we all are witnesses. (*point to your eyes ... talk about being an "eye witness"*)

Opening Activity: *Apostle Freeze Tag*

1. Have one student be it and name them Sadducee (sad-you-see because the apostles would not stop talking about Jesus)! Maybe let the teacher be this role first to set the tone.
2. Have another student be the Angel of the Lord. Everyone else is an apostle. Maybe have a teacher do this role first.
3. Designate one table as the prison. When an apostle gets tagged, they happily go to prison and sing. Then the angel comes to set them free. As soon as they are imprisoned have them start singing "Jesus Loves Me!"
For the younger classes, just play it without the prison part. When they are tagged they freeze but sing Jesus Loves me until the angel unfreezes them.

Craft: Prison Doors Open

Supplies: Cardstock with 2 images, 4 pipe cleaner pieces, 4 dowels, glue, twine, plastic hanger

- Instructions:**
1. Fold cardstock in half so there is an image on both sides.
 2. Glue sides together capturing twine ends to create a hanger.
 3. Glue 4 pipe cleaner pieces to prison side.
 4. Glue 4 dowels to colonnade side.



If child has already done craft first hour, have them work on a coloring sheet.

Story

Transition

Boys and girls, in our story today we learn about a miracle that God does, but it gets the Apostles in lots of trouble. But the Apostles were not sad or angry they were in trouble; instead they were happy! Let's find out what miracle God does and what happens to the Apostles in our story.

The Lame Man

The Bible tells us the whole church and all the others who heard about what the Apostles were doing were amazed. People had seen mighty and powerful things happening, and God was showing everyone who he truly was. Remember that God was able to raise Jesus from the dead, God was able to help the Apostles speak to a lot of different people in their own languages, and God was able to make a crippled man walk. We have a strong and mighty God!

The Prison Doors Open

The Bible tells us the Apostles did many signs and wonders. Lots of people saw what they were doing and were filled with awe and fear. The crowds thought the Apostles were special. The Church continued to grow every day. More and more people believed that Jesus was the Savior of the world. They believed in His death and resurrection. The power of the Apostles was so great that people would lie in the streets hoping that Peter would pass by and heal them. The people from the towns around Jerusalem gathered together and brought the sick and those who had unclean spirits to be healed.

There was a crowd of people called the Sadducees who were jealous of the Apostles. The Sadducees did not believe in miracles especially the Resurrection – when Jesus rose from the grave! So anytime they saw miracles happen – sick people healed, or unclean spirit removed – it made them mad. The Sadducees had had enough of the Apostles and their miracles. The Sadducees arrested the apostles and put them in prison. But that did not matter to the Lord. He was going to do another miracle! During the night, an angel of the Lord opened the prison doors and brought them out, and said to the Apostles, “Go and stand in the temple and speak to the people all the words of this Life.” The Apostles heard this and did just that. At daybreak the Apostles entered the temple and began to teach.

That day the high priest, he's the leader of all the priests, scribes, and teachers, gathered together everyone who was important and wanted the Apostles brought before them. When the prison officers went to get the Apostles, they were not there! The officers reported to the High Priest and all the important people, “We found the prison securely locked and the guards standing at the doors, but when we opened them we found no one inside.”

The Bible tells us when the captain of the temple and the chief priests heard these words, they were greatly confused. They all wondered what happened. And someone came and told them, “Look! The men whom you put in prison are standing in the temple and teaching the people.” Then the captain with the officers went and brought them, but not by force, for they were afraid of being stoned by the crowds listening to the Apostles. The Apostles stood before the high priest and all the important people. The high priest said to the Apostles, “We strictly charged you not to teach, and yet you are teaching! The whole city of Jerusalem has heard your teaching and you intend to blame us for Jesus' death!”

Peter and the Apostles answered, “We must obey God rather than men.” Peter went on to tell the high priest and the important people that God raised Jesus from the grave. Peter told the crowd of leaders, “You killed Jesus by hanging him on a tree. God exalted him at his right hand as Savior!” Peter told the leaders that Jesus had come so God's people could turn from their evil ways and be forgiven of their sins. The Apostles were witnesses to all Jesus had done in His life. Now that Jesus was in Heaven, the Holy Spirit was sent to help the Apostles tell others about Jesus' life. Only God can give the Holy Spirit and He gives it to those who obey Him.

When the high priest and the other leaders heard this, they were angry and wanted to kill the Apostles. But one of the men in the crowd named Gamaliel, a teacher of the law held in honor by all the people, stood up and gave orders to put the men outside for a little while. Once the Apostles were outside, Gamaliel said to them, "Men of Israel, be careful what you are about to do with these men." Gamaliel told stories about other men who had lots of followers and eventually nothing happened. Those men died, and the followers went away. "So, in this case with the Apostles, I tell you to keep away from these men and leave them alone. If what they are doing is on their own power, they will fail. But if it is from God, you will fail. You might even be found opposing God!" The high priest and other leaders followed Gamaliel's advice. The high priest and leaders had the Apostles beaten and told them not to speak in the name of Jesus ever again, and then let them go. The Bible tells us the Apostles went their way rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer dishonor for the name of Jesus. And every day, in the temple and from house to house, the Apostles did not cease teaching and preaching that Jesus is the Christ, the Savior of the World!

Questions for Review

- What kind of miracles were the Apostles doing?
- Who came and put the Apostles in prison?
- How did the Apostles get out of prison?
- What did the angel of the Lord tell the Apostles to do?
- What did the high priest and leaders do to the Apostles?
- What did the Apostles do after they were beaten and let go?