Preschool–Grade 6

# Rhoda and Peter in Prison

Sunday School Lesson for Preschool (Ages 3–5), 20–30 minutes

**Main point:** God hears me when I pray.
**Bible passage:** Acts 12:1–17. Read it yourself before class.
**Memory verse:** "But prayer was made without ceasing of the church unto God for him." *Acts 12:5 (KJV).*
The old words mean: **without ceasing** means without stopping, and **the church** means God's people.
**You need:** a Bible, a table to knock on, crayons, and one take-home sheet for each child.
**Before class:** put a bookmark in your Bible at Acts 12.

## 1. Opening game: Knock and Listen (5 minutes)

Knock on the table: knock, knock. The kids knock on the floor the same way. Try a slow knock, a fast knock and a quiet knock. Then say, "Shh! Listen!" and everyone cups a hand by their ear. Say: "Good knocking and good listening! Today we will hear a true story about a man who knocked at a gate, and a girl who listened."

## 2. Bible story (5 minutes)

Hold up your Bible open to Acts 12. Say: "This story is true. It is in God's Word." Read each line slowly and do the motion. When you see **Say it with me**, the kids say the line back to you.

A king put Peter in prison (Acts 12:4). *(Hold your wrists together.)*
God's people prayed and prayed for him (12:5). *(Fold your hands.)*
**Say it with me: "Keep on praying!"**
Peter was asleep (12:6). *(Lay your head on your hands.)*
An angel came, and a light shined (12:7). *(Open your hands wide.)*
Peter's chains fell off (12:7)! *(Pull your wrists apart.)*
A big gate opened all by itself (12:10). *(Swing your arms open.)*
Peter knocked at a gate (12:13). *(Knock, knock!)*
A girl named Rhoda knew his voice (12:14). *(Cup your hand by your ear.)*
She was so happy, she ran to tell everyone (12:14)! *(Run in place.)*
They opened the door. It was Peter (12:16)! *(Look surprised!)*
**Say it with me: "God hears me!"**


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## 3. Questions to ask (3 minutes)

1. Where was Peter? *(In prison, Acts 12:4)*
2. What did God's people do? *(They prayed for him, 12:5)*
3. Who knew Peter's voice? *(Rhoda, 12:13–14)*

## 4. Memory verse (3 minutes)

Say: "The Bible says, 'But prayer was made without ceasing of the church unto God for him.' That means God's people prayed for Peter and did not stop." Teach the motion: fold your hands on "prayer," roll your hands around and around on "without ceasing," then point up on "unto God." Say the verse with the motions three times: in a normal voice, in a whisper, and in a happy loud voice. Then say "Acts 12:5" and clap three times.

## 5. What this means for us (3 minutes)

Say: "God loves you! Everyone has done wrong things. That is called sin (Romans 3:23). Jesus is God. He came to earth as a man (1 Timothy 3:16). Jesus died for our sins. He was buried. Then He rose again (1 Corinthians 15:3–4)! The Bible tells us what to do (Acts 2:38). We repent: we tell God we are sorry, and we stop doing wrong. We are baptized in Jesus' name, down under the water, and our sins are washed away. And God gives us the Holy Ghost. That is God's own Spirit in us. When people are filled with the Holy Ghost, they speak in other tongues, words God gives them (Acts 2:4)."
*Pray with the kids, and encourage them to talk with their parents and pastor about being baptized in Jesus' name and filled with the Holy Ghost. Never pressure a child.*

## 6. Activity: Rhoda at the Gate (5–10 minutes)

Give each child a take-home sheet. In the drawing box, help them draw Peter knocking at the gate, or Rhoda running in to tell the others. While they color, ask: "Who was knocking? How did Rhoda feel?" Kids who finish early can play Knock and Listen again.

## 7. Prayer

Say each line, and the kids say it after you:
"Dear God, thank You that You hear me when I pray.
Help me keep on praying. In Jesus' name, amen."

**Tips for little ones:** keep it simple. The lesson says only that a king put Peter in prison; it leaves out the sad parts of Acts 12 (James in 12:2 and the keepers in 12:19). Spend the most time on "God's people prayed" and "It was Peter!" Send the take-home sheet home so parents can tell the story again this week.


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