

Escape From Prison!

Monthly Theme

We learn about God together.

The Bible Lesson at a Glance

Because the apostles are filled with the Holy Spirit and so many people are being healed by the Spirit's power, the Temple leaders are jealous and put the apostles in prison. During the night an angel frees them and tells them to go to the Temple and preach the message of Jesus. They do so. The next day the Temple leaders send someone to the jail to get the apostles, but they are already preaching in the Temple courts. When brought back before the leaders and told to stop preaching, the apostles say that they must obey God first.

This is a lesson about community.

Oh, the power in a community of believers whose members are totally committed to Jesus! As believers today learn about Jesus in church and share this knowledge and saving grace with the world, what victories will be won in His name! When Jesus is most important in the lives of all church members, there is no limit to their usefulness for God's cause.

Teacher Enrichment

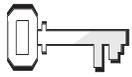
"It is clear beyond question that the disciples, in working miracles, did not use Christ's name with any idea that magical power resided in the utterance of it. In the OT the Hebrew word *shem*, 'name,' is sometimes used in the sense of 'character' (see Jer. 14:7, 21), and may be almost synonymous with the person himself. . . .

"In NT times . . . the Greek word for 'name' (*onoma*) might mean 'person.' . . .

"All this indicates that in using the name of Jesus in working miracles and in proclaiming salvation, the apostles were declaring that healing and saving power were exercised in vital connection with the person and character of Jesus Christ. Peter's declaration . . . was an assertion that it was Christ Himself who had wrought the miracle, not a magical incantation working mechanically upon the lame man" (*The SDA Bible Commentary*, vol. 6, p. 157).

Room Decorations

See Lesson 1.



References

Acts 5:17-32; *The Acts of the Apostles*, pp. 77-86



Memory Verse

"Peter and the other apostles replied: 'We must obey God rather than human beings!' " Acts 5:29.



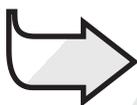
Objectives

The children will:

Know that we study about Jesus together at church.

Feel a desire to learn more about Jesus.

Respond by learning all they can about Jesus and accepting Him as their personal Savior and Lord.



The Message

At church we learn that Jesus is most important.

Program Overview

Lesson Section	Minutes	Activities	Materials Needed
Welcome	ongoing	Greet students at door; hear pleased/troubled	none
1 Readiness Options	up to 10	A. <i>Soak It Up</i> B. <i>The Most Famous</i>	clear plastic cup of water for each child; food coloring; variety of paper products, such as paper towels, napkins, tissues, toilet paper, writing paper; Bible pictures of famous people, Jesus
Any Time Prayer and Praise*	up to 10	Fellowship Songbook Mission Offering Prayer	none <i>Sing for Joy</i> <i>Children's Mission</i> offering container with picture of Jesus attached, list of names for Jesus none
2 Bible Lesson	up to 20	Experiencing the Story Memory Verse Bible Study	Bible-times costumes, chains for "jail," "jail" Bible Bibles
3 Applying the Lesson	up to 15	<i>Forever Friend</i>	Bible
4 Sharing the Lesson	up to 15	A. <i>What I Know About Jesus</i> B. <i>Soak Up Jesus</i>	tape, old magazines, glue, newsprint or butcher paper, writing instruments for each child: small sponge, ribbon, and piece of paper on which is written "Soak Up Jesus"

***Prayer and Praise may be used at any time during the program.**

TEACHING THE LESSON

Welcome

Welcome students at the door. Ask how their week has been—what they are pleased/troubled about. Give directions for the Readiness Activity of your choice.

1

Readiness Activities

Select the activity that is most appropriate for your situation.

You Need:

- clear plastic cup of water for each child
- food coloring
- paper products
- Bible

A. Soak It Up

Give each child a clear plastic cup of water. Drop a few drops of food coloring into the water. Give each child a paper towel to dip into the water. Watch the paper towel soak up the water. Experiment with different materials (paper napkins, tissues, writing paper, cotton, cloth, wool, etc.) to see which is the most absorbent.

Debriefing

Ask: **What happens after you hear a song one or two times? You usually remember it! That is an example of something being soaked up. What do you have that can soak things up?** Hint: It is usually not seen. (our brains) **What does your brain soak up?** (information, knowledge, memories) **How is the paper towel soaking up the water like our brains?** (Our brains soak up information.) **With what do we want to fill our brains?** (good things, etc.) **Read aloud Acts 4:12. What is most important for us to know?** (that Jesus is our Savior) **What do we learn at church?** Allow response time. **That brings us to our message for today:**



AT CHURCH WE LEARN THAT JESUS IS MOST IMPORTANT.

Say that with me.

You Need:

- pictures of famous people
- picture of Jesus

B. The Most Famous

Show the children pictures of different famous people, such as sports heroes, leaders of your country, etc.

Ask the children to choose the person(s) portrayed in the pictures who is (are) important to them. Who is most important? Go through the pictures and ask them what they like or don't like about each person.

Debriefing

Ask the children: **Why did you choose that person as the most important person to you? Who should be the most important Person in your life?** (Jesus) Show the children the picture of Jesus. **What will you do to make Him the most important Person in your life?** (Pray to Him every day, listen to Bible stories, sing or listen to songs about Him, share Him with others, go to church, etc.) Say: **That brings me to our message for today:**



AT CHURCH WE LEARN THAT JESUS IS MOST IMPORTANT.

Say that with me.

Prayer and Praise

Any
Time



Fellowship

Report the students' joys and sorrows (pleased and troubled) as reported to you at the door (as appropriate). Allow time for sharing experiences from last week's lesson study and review the memory verse. Acknowledge any birthdays, special events, or achievements. Give a special warm greeting to all visitors.



Suggested Songs

- "We Are the Church" (*Sing for Joy*, no. 141)
- "The Family of God" (*Sing for Joy*, no. 139)
- "Jesus Bids Us Shine" (*Sing for Joy*, no. 133)
- "Anywhere With Jesus" (*Sing for Joy*, no. 45)
- "More About Jesus" (*Sing for Joy*, no. 38)



Mission

Share a story from *Children's Mission*. Help the children identify how one of Jesus' names could apply to the story.



Offering

Post a list of different names for Jesus. Say: **Our offering goes to help others learn about Jesus, too, and all His different names.** As the children put their money into the offering container, ask them to say one name for Jesus.

You Need:

- offering container with picture of Jesus attached
- list of names for Jesus



Prayer

Ask if anyone knows what their name means. During prayer, thank God for each child by name, and also for sending Jesus, the name by which we are saved.

2

Bible Lesson

You Need:

- Bible-times costumes
- chains for "jail"
- "jail"

Experiencing the Story

Involve the children in an interactive story that will help them understand why it is so important to know about Jesus. Have some children dress up to act out parts of the story. Divide the rest into three groups. Each group does one of the interactive elements. (Small church: everyone does all.)

Characters: Peter, John, two other apostles, high priest, two Sadducees, angel, two guards

When you say Jesus

They Point up.

Read or tell the story.

The apostles are still witnessing boldly about **Jesus** [point up]. Now even larger crowds of people come out to hear them. [Two children "heal" and "preach" to a group of children.]

This is too much for the Sanhedrin, the Temple leaders. Had they not ordered Peter and the other apostles to quit teaching about **Jesus**? [Point up.] Now the apostles are not only teaching, but are also healing!

The high priest and the Sadducees arrest the apostles and put them in prison. [Two guards "arrest" the "preachers" and put them in the "jail." The "high priest" and a couple of Sadducees follow the guards to the "jail."] "This will teach them not to talk about **Jesus**" [point up], they say.

During the night God sends an angel to let the apostles out of prison. [The "angel" lets the apostles out of prison.] "Go back to the Temple," the angel tells them.

"Tell the people all about how **Jesus** [point up] died to forgive sins." And that is just what the apostles do. [The "apostles" go to another part of the room and "preach" to a group of children.]

In the meantime the high priest and the Sadducees send guards to the prison with orders to bring the apostles to them for questioning. [The "guards" go to the "jail."] But the guards quickly return.

"We found the prison locked up tight," they report. "The guards were all at their posts. But there were no prisoners inside!"

The leaders look at each other in frustration and fury. "What will we do now?" they growl. Then word comes in from the street. "You know those men you put in prison? They are in the Temple preaching!"

Now the leaders are really frustrated and furious. "Go get the apostles. Bring them here!" they growl furiously.

[Guards bring "apostles."] When the apostles come to the Sanhedrin, the high priest begins to scold them.

"Didn't we give you strict orders not to teach in the name of **Jesus** [point up]. But look! You spread your teaching all over Jerusalem. And you're blaming us for the death of **Jesus** [point up]."

The apostles answer plainly. "We must obey God, rather than men!" Then they explain: "God raised up **Jesus** [point up] from the dead—the one whom you crucified. But **Jesus** [point up] died so that any person who believes on Him can have forgiveness of sins. This is what we preach."

The leaders were now even more frustrated and furious. They want to kill the apostles. But the apostles stay calm. For them, knowing **Jesus** [point up] is the

most important thing. And that is what we learn at church—that Jesus is most important in our lives.

Debriefing

Say: **Why do you think the apostles were not afraid to return to the Temple and preach?** (Preaching about Jesus was more important than what the Sanhedrin could do to them.)

Ask: **In today's words, how would we say "We must obey God, rather than men"?** (God is more important; we will listen to Him.) **Is knowing Jesus the most important thing in your life?** (yes, maybe, no) **Why is knowing Jesus so important?** (Jesus is our friend, and He is God. He is the most powerful person and He loves us, cares for us, and died so that we can have eternal life.)

What would happen if church members decided to pray together for the Holy Spirit? (God would send the Spirit to give us courage to be true to Jesus, to give us power to live for Him.)

Memory Verse

Read the memory verse aloud from Acts 5:29. Divide your class into three groups, or if you have a large class and your class is already divided into groups, then divide each group into three sections. Have one group or section represent the Temple leaders. The other group should represent Peter and the other apostles. The third group should be the narrator. Have the children stand up. The narrator group stands to the side while the "Temple leaders" walk over to the apostles shaking their fingers at them and then stop in front of them with their arms folded across their chests. The "apostles" look calmly at them while the narrator group says loudly, "Peter and the other apostles replied." At that point the "apostles" respond, "We must obey God rather than men!" Rotate the groups so that each group has a turn being one of the characters. When all the groups are finished, have the entire class repeat the memory verse together.

You Need:

- Bible

You Need:
• Bibles

Bible Study

Divide the children into groups of two or three. Put readers with nonreaders.

Help the children find and read the following texts to discover names for Jesus.

John 6:35 (Bread of Life)
John 4:10 (Living Water)
John 11:25 (Resurrection and Life)
John 15:1 (Vine)
Psalm 18:2 (Rock)
Psalm 18:2 (Fortress)
Isaiah 9:6 (Wonderful Counselor)
Isaiah 9:6 (Prince of Peace)
John 1:36 (Lamb of God)

Psalm 46:1 (Refuge)
Psalm 46:1 (Strength)
Psalm 23:1 (Shepherd)

Debriefing

Ask: **How many names are there for Jesus?** (a lot) **Why do you think there are so many?** (Accept reasonable responses. Jesus wants to be sure there's a name that everyone will understand. Each name reveals a different part of Jesus' character.) Read aloud Acts 4:12. **Which name for Jesus do you like the best? Why?** (Accept all responses.)

3

Applying the Lesson

You Need:
• Bible

Forever Friend

Say: **You and many of your friends are all excited about your forever friendship with Jesus. One day, while some of you are at a friend's house, he turns on the TV, and soon you all are watching a movie. You see violence. You think this is not a movie that your Forever Friend would be comfortable with. It looks as if it were made by the evil one. A little voice is telling you to do something.**

Debriefing

What can you do to obey that voice and to stand up for your Forever Friend? (Remind your friends that Jesus is their friend and what you are seeing is not His way; excuse yourself and leave

the room; suggest a game that the group could play outdoors.)

Read the memory verse again. **If you watch a bad movie, what could that tell Jesus?** (He is not the most important one in your life.)

Tell the children to ask themselves what kinds of ideas are put in their head while watching TV. If they feel comfortable sharing with the class, let them do so.

Ask: **Who has ideas on how to put information about Jesus in their head?** (read the Bible, sing about Jesus, go to church, study the Sabbath School lesson, etc.) **Being faithful in coming to church is one big way to put information about Jesus in our head, because . . .**



AT CHURCH WE LEARN THAT JESUS IS MOST IMPORTANT.

Sharing the Lesson

A. What I Know About Jesus

You Need:

- newsprint or butcher paper
- tape
- writing instruments (markers, crayons, etc.)
- old magazines
- glue

Tape a large portion of the newsprint or butcher paper to the classroom wall. Ahead of time, write the letters of the alphabet, spread out over the paper.

Explain that together the children will work in groups to create a "What I Know About Jesus" ABC poster. Each letter of

the alphabet will begin a word or phrase that describes something about Jesus. Beside each letter the children can write words, illustrate by drawing pictures, or paste pictures cut from magazines. For example, beside "L" the children can write *love* or show a picture of people sharing a hug.

Adults work with the children to illustrate the letters. If they do not complete the poster, they can finish it next week. Place the completed poster on a bulletin board outside the Sabbath School room in the church where others will see it. Or, if possible, hang it in a public place.

Debriefing

Say: **Today we have learned at church that Jesus is most important. We have worked together at our church to share this message with someone else. How did doing this project make you feel?** (happy that we

can share Jesus with others, etc.) **Where should we hang our big poster?** (Children give suggestions.) **Let's say our message together again:**



AT CHURCH WE LEARN THAT JESUS IS MOST IMPORTANT.

B. Soak Up Jesus (Optional)

Bring a small sponge for each child. To the sponge, glue or attach with a ribbon a piece of paper on which is written "Soak Up Jesus." The children can give this to someone special.

Debriefing

Say: **What does it mean to "soak up Jesus"?** (To use our eyes, ears, and brain to learn as much about Him as we can.)

What have we "soaked up" about Jesus in Sabbath School today? (Let the children share.) **How do you feel when you have "soaked up Jesus"?** (closer to Him, happy because of His love and grace, etc.)

To whom will you give your "Soak Up Jesus" sponge? (Allow time.) **Aren't you glad you came to church today? And that brings us to our message for today. Let's say it again together:**



AT CHURCH WE LEARN THAT JESUS IS MOST IMPORTANT.

Closing

Sing together "He Is Lord" (*Sing for Joy*, no. 87). Ask a child to pray and thank God for what we learned in Sabbath School today. Encourage the children to listen during the church service to learn more about how important Jesus is.

You Need:

- for each child:
- small sponge
 - small piece of ribbon
 - small pieces of paper on which is written "Soak Up Jesus"

Escape From Prison!

References

Acts 5:17-32; *The Acts of the Apostles*, pp. 77-86

Memory Verse

“Peter and the other apostles replied: ‘We must obey God rather than human beings!’”
Acts 5:29

The Message

At church we learn that Jesus is most important.

Pieter and Marta had attended some meetings with their parents in the summer, and their whole family had become Seventh-day Adventists.

However, when school started Pieter and Marta had a big, big problem. In their country the government said that all children had to be in school on Saturday. But they had learned that Saturday is the Sabbath—a time to worship God with others at church. What could they do? Whom should they obey? God or the government?

A long time ago Jesus’ apostles had to decide too. Should they obey God or the government? What do you think they did?

It was too much! The leaders of the Jews could not *believe* what was happening. “Didn’t we order Peter and the other apostles to quit teaching about Jesus?” they asked each other. “But they are still teaching! And now they are doing miracles! Crowds of sick people stream into the city every day and *everyone* is being healed!”



The Jewish leaders were angry! The high priest and the Sadducees believed they had to stop the apostles. So they arrested them and sent them to prison. They thought that would give the apostles some time to think. Maybe then they would stop all this talk about Jesus. They *had* to stop telling people that Jesus rose from the dead! The Sadducees did not believe that anyone could come back to life. They did not believe in angels, either.

God must have smiled about that. That night He sent an angel to let the apostles out of prison. “Go back to the Temple and tell the people all about this new life in Jesus,” the angel said. Of course the apostles happily obeyed. And very early in the morning they went to the Temple and started teaching again.

But others were busy that morning too. The high priest and the Sadducees called all the other important Jewish leaders together. They sent orders to the prison to have the apostles brought to them. In a short time the men who had been sent to the prison came back. Their eyes were wide with fear. “We found the jail securely locked,” they reported. “And guards were standing at the doors. But we found no prisoners inside!”

The leaders shook their heads. *What now?* Then word came in from the street. “Look! The men you put in prison are back in the Temple courts. And they are teaching the people again!”

Grinding their teeth, the leaders sent more men to the Temple. When the apostles finally stood before the leaders, the high priest glared at them. “We gave you strict orders not to teach in this name!” he shouted. “Yet you have filled Jerusalem with your teaching. And you are trying to make us guilty of this man’s blood. You must stop!”

The apostles answered plainly. “We must obey God, rather than men!” they said. “The God of our fathers raised Jesus from the dead. The same Jesus you had

killed by hanging Him on a cross! God has made Him a Prince and Savior. He will give repentance and forgiveness of sins to Israel.”

The leaders shook with anger. They really wanted

to have the apostles put to death. But they could not. Too many people believed that these were God’s men. And through it all, the apostles stood firm. Jesus was more important to them than their own lives.

Daily Activities

Sabbath

- With your family, take a walk today. Try to gather things such as flowers, leaves, and rocks in a sack. Then sit together and tell how each thing teaches you about Jesus. For example, Jesus is like a rock. You can build your life on Him. Thank God that He shows Himself to us in many ways.
- Read your Bible lesson story together. Read about Jesus in Acts 4:12.

Sunday

- During family worship, read Acts 5:17-26. Draw pictures about the story. Explain your pictures to your family.
- With your family, add the following numbers: $6 + 1 + 2$. Write the answer here _____. How many right answers are there? How many right answers are there to being saved? Read Acts 4:12 again. Tell your family what it means.
- Sing “More About Jesus” (*Sing for Joy*, no. 38).

Monday

- Sit in a circle with your family. Blindfold one person. Have the others tell that person how to get out of the circle. No touching! What happens? This is like our friendship with Jesus. We need to talk to Him every day so we will know where He wants us to be.
- Read Acts 5:18-21. What does the Bible say about the apostles’ friendship with Jesus? Say your memory verse. Thank Jesus for being your friend.

Tuesday

- Make a cutout in the shape of a big number 1. On it, write the following: “Jesus is Number 1!” Add your memory verse and decorate the cutout.
- Hold up your “Jesus is Number 1!” memory verse cutout and sing “Seek Ye First” (*Sing for Joy*, no. 67).

Say your memory verse; then say it in your own words. Ask Jesus to be “Number 1” in your life today.

Wednesday

- Read Acts 5:29. Share with your family a time you had to choose between obeying Jesus and someone else. Ask them to share too.
- If Jesus is number 1, you will listen to Him. And if you are listening, will you (circle your answer):
forget what He wants you to do? Yes No
share your love for Jesus? Yes No
- Hold up your “Jesus is Number 1!” cutout and say your memory verse. Ask Jesus to help you obey His will.

Thursday

- A community of believers studies about Jesus together. Believers help each other. Circle those communities of believers to which you belong: family, church, Sabbath School, church school, Adventurer Club
- How can you help others in your community know more about Jesus? Read Colossians 3:15-17 and Ephesians 4:32. Talk to your family about these verses. What do they mean?
- Call a Sabbath School friend and help that person learn the memory verse.

Friday

- For family worship, act out this week’s Bible story together.
- How do you know for sure that Jesus forgives your sins? Read Acts 5:30, 31.
- Next time your friends do something wrong, what could you say about Jesus to encourage them to do right?
- Sing a song about God’s love; then thank Him for it.