



WEEK 5

ELEMENTARY LESSON GUIDE



BIG IDEA

I can help others
when I pray.

THE BIBLE

Peter's Miraculous Escape: Acts 12:1-17;
(James 5:16; John 14:13-14; Matthew 21:22)

LARGE GROUP TIME

WHAT? *What are we talking about today?*

MUSIC | What a Mighty God We Serve

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Show "What a Mighty God We Serve" by Listener Kids.

ACTIVITY | The New Three-Legged Race

- Today, we are going to talk about some of the cool ways God can help us and all of our friends and family and neighbors, too.
- But before we do that, let's start out with a game you've probably heard of before. It's called a "Three-Legged Race."
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Pair up the kids and tie each of their inner legs together with bandanas. The twist is, have one partner facing forward and one partner facing backward before tying their legs together. The pairs will race to one end of the room and back, so both partners have the chance to run forward and backward. Reward the winning team with a prize.
 - **SPECIAL NEEDS HACK:** If you have students with limited mobility due to physical disabilities, you can promote an inclusive environment by playing a game of charades (like last week) instead of a 3-legged race. You will still be able to convey the overall point of the activity (needing each other) without making any kid feel left out.

QUESTION | How Do You Help Others?



- Did you notice that in the game, each team had to work together? One person couldn't walk one way while the other one walked the other way. One person couldn't go fast while the other went slowly. They helped each other. There are lots of ways we can help the people around us. Maybe we help them with homework. Maybe you've helped an elderly person before.
- **How have you helped someone in the last week?**

STORY | When I Couldn't Help

- Let me ask you this: has there ever been a time when a friend needed help and you weren't sure what to do? Maybe the problem was more difficult than helping them with math homework, or teaching them to ride a bike.
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Share a personal story about a time when a friend had a problem that was too big for you to help them with directly. Make sure that it is not too deep for the kids to understand or relate to – maybe something like, "My friend had a broken car, but I don't know how to fix a car! Do you know how to fix a car? Me either!"*
 - **PRETEEN HACK:** *Add an activity where kids have to figure out who the expert would be for each problem someone faces. For instance, my friend broke her leg; I can't fix it! Who can? A doctor? Do several of these- doctor, cake decorator, artist, fire fighter, ship captain, etc. Focus on needing to find the expert for each situation. Then say, "The good news is, God is the expert at absolutely anything we or people we know could face."*

THE BIG IDEA | I can help others when I pray.

- There comes a time when as much as we want to help a person with a problem, there's nothing we can do ourselves. But when the problem seems too big for us to handle, there's still Someone who can help.
- When we want to help others or go places or do anything in this world, we also need to talk to God about it in prayer!
- So, when friends and others around us have problems that are too big for you and me to handle, what do you think we should do? We can pray!
- Let's say our Big Idea together. Repeat after me:
 - **I** (*Point to self.*)
 - **Can help others** (*Point outward with both hands.*)
 - **When I pray** (*Clasp hands in a praying motion.*)

SO WHAT? Why does it matter to God and to us?

VIDEO | Go, Episode 5

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Play this week's [teaching video](#).*

SCRIPTURE | Acts 12:1-17

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Read Acts 12:1-17.*
- It says that while Peter was in prison, other believers prayed earnestly for him. **What do you think "earnestly" means?**



- Those are some good answers. Earnestly means 'seriously.' That means they didn't just pray casually before a meal. They put in a lot of energy and prayed hard for God to answer their prayers. The people knew they couldn't do anything to help Peter, so instead, they prayed earnestly.
- **What happened as a result?** God sent an angel to release Peter from jail! It was a miracle! The prayers for Peter helped him! That shows us how prayers truly help others. God hears our prayers and answers them. That's something to remember when we pray for people in our lives who have a problem. Remember our Big Idea? That's right. We can help others when we pray.

OBJECT LESSON | Cell Phone and Prayer

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Take out a cell phone and hold it up.*
- We've learned a lot about prayer so far. It kind of makes prayer seem hard or complicated because there's a lot to remember. Let's take a look at this cell phone.
- **Who is someone I can call on this phone?** Maybe a family member or a friend who isn't here in this room. I would have to call them to talk to them. If they didn't answer, though, I wouldn't be able to talk to them. I mean, I guess I could leave a message. But that's not the same.
- So, let me ask you this: **can I call Jesus on my cell phone?** No, I can't. **So, how do I talk to Jesus?**
- Well, that's what's so cool about prayer. To talk to Jesus, I don't need a phone. I don't need anything at all! I just start talking. And unlike people I have to call on the phone, I don't have to worry that Jesus will miss my call because he's busy. Jesus always answers us when we stop and pray.

VIDEO | Peter Escapes from Prison

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Show [this video](#) (from Saddleback Kids of Slapstick Theater - "Peter Escapes from Prison") to review the Bible story.

SCRIPTURE | James 5:16, John 14:13-14, Matthew 21:22

- Friends, the Bible talks about prayer a lot. Let's do a little Bible scavenger hunt and find some verse that tell us about prayer.
 - **First, let's find James 5:16. If you found it, raise your hand! Who wants to read it for us?**
- This verse tells us it's important to be honest with others, and to share with others when we've done something wrong. But it also says to pray for each other so that "you may be healed." Lastly, it says the prayer of a righteous person is powerful! When we live for God and we pray for others, our prayers are very powerful and helpful! Let's take a look at another verse on prayer.
 - **Alright, now let's search for John 14:13-14. This time, the first person to find it will get to read it!**
- At the end of a prayer, have you ever heard people say, "In Jesus' name, amen?" This verse tells us that when we pray, we ask for things in Jesus' name. The name of Jesus is powerful. But it also says something else important I want you to understand. It says that we can ask for *anything* in Jesus' name. Now, does that mean that every single



prayer will be answered when we want it, how we want it? Hmm, what do you think? For example, if you prayed for your P.E. teacher to be turned into a chocolate bunny "in Jesus' name," do you think that would happen? I don't think so. When we pray in Jesus' name, we need to pray things that will help and show the world God's goodness and power.

- **Okay, last one! Let's hunt for Matthew 21:22. Once you find it, put a finger on your nose. Okay, let's read this once all together!**
- Finally, when we pray, we need to have faith God will answer our prayer. Now, maybe God doesn't always answer it the way we want, but God definitely *always* gives us an answer. Maybe it's a yes. Maybe it's a no. Maybe it's a, "Not right now." Maybe it's an idea that can solve our problem. Maybe it's help with a conversation that we need to have. Whatever the answer is, we have to believe God hears us and will answer our prayers.

NOW WHAT? What does God want us to do about it?

ACTIVITY | Text God

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Pass out the Text God printable and something to write with. Kids can write, draw emojis, or pictures.*
- Think of someone in your life who could really use some help. This person has a problem you can't help them with. Maybe it's a person at school. Maybe it's someone in your neighborhood or here at church. Maybe it's someone in your family. Whomever it is, I want you to put that person on your card. Remember, sometimes the best thing we can do to help someone is to pray and ask God for help!
 - **SPECIAL NEEDS HACK:** *For kids with fine motor challenges, consider providing an alphabet of ink stamps for them to stamp the name of the person they'd like to pray for onto their card. Alternatively, depending on the motor skills of the kids you serve, you could provide markers or chunky crayons that are easier to grip as drawing utensils.*
 - **PRETEEN HACK:** *Challenge your preteens to create a "text history" with God! For kids who have phones, they can start a text with themselves and write a prayer daily. Otherwise, kids can make a prayer journal.*

PRAYER

- Let's pray for the person on your card now. Ask God to help them with whatever it is they are facing.
- Let's all try to be as quiet as we can so everyone has a chance to really concentrate on what they're praying for. And remember, there are no right or wrong words to use when we pray. Just tell God what you need!

MUSIC | Prayer in Song

- Now, we're going to listen to a song that will help us remember God is always listening when we pray. When we go to God in prayer, God doesn't only help us, but also the people we're praying for. So, one last time: **what is our Big Idea again?**



- And maybe while we're singing this song, you might think of something in your life you need to talk to God about. We want to help you with that. Find an adult and ask them to pray for you.
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Show the video of ("Ask, Seek, Knock" by Hillsong Kids).

MEMORY VERSE | Pass the Baton

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Divide the group into two teams and ask them to stand on opposite sides of the room. One person from the first team runs across the room and says the first word of the memory verse as they hand over the baton (this can be anything as long as it's not hazardous) to the first person on the other team. This kid runs across toward the second person on the first team and says the next word of the memory verse. This continues until the verse is complete. If you have more kids, repeat the verse and cycle through the verse until all the kids have gone at least once.

SMALL GROUP TIME

DISCUSSION

- What did the believers do when Peter was put in prison?
- How did Peter escape?
- What were the people doing when Peter arrived at the house everyone was gathered at?
- Let's think about John 14:13-14. Why do you think we have to pray in Jesus' name?
- Why do you think God wants us to pray for others?
- Has there ever been a time you prayed for someone and you saw how God answer that prayer?
- Why do you think sometimes God's answer is "No" or "Not yet?"

ACTIVITY | A-maze-ing Prayers

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Print out this week's printable and ask the kids to complete the maze. While they do this activity, ask them to think about the people they want to pray for this week.
- I know we just completed a maze, but do your prayers ever get lost ? No way! God hears all of your prayers.

MEMORY VERSE | Matthew 5:16 (NIV)

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Introduce kids to this month's memory verse, teaching them the signs (a combination of SEE and ASL) we've provided.