

Track 41

The Church

Prays for Peter

One night, in Jerusalem, a group of friends stayed up way past their bedtimes.

They didn't stay awake to talk or play games or tell funny stories. Instead, they stayed up late – to PRAY!

“Oh Lord,” they prayed.

“Please rescue our friend, Peter, out of jail.”

Peter had been thrown into jail for sharing the good news about Jesus. Tomorrow the king would bring him out to be killed.

“LORD!” they cried. “Show your great power and set Peter free!”

For many days, these people of the church had been praying for Peter. Now they



SECRET MEETING

Carefully pass this note
To ALL the Church members

When: ALL NIGHT TONIGHT

WHERE: SECRET ROOM in JERUSALEM

WHY: To pray for PETER'S RESCUE

house and up
the stairs to
tell her friends.
She forgot all
about opening
the door.

"You'll never
believe this,"
said Rhoda, out

prayed harder than ever. All night
long, they kept calling out to God.

Suddenly, they heard a knock at
the gate to the house.

Who could that be? they wondered.
*Were the king's soldiers coming to
put them in jail too?*

Rhoda, a young maid, hurried to
the gate door. With a shaky voice,
she called out, "Who's there?"

"It's ME!" whispered a man's voice.

Rhoda jumped back with surprise.
She knew *that* voice. She was so
excited that she ran back into the

of breath. "Peter, Peter is standing
at the gate!"

"WHAT?" Her friends stared at
her. "Are you crazy? Peter is in
prison! He can't be *here*."

"But he IS here!" Rhoda replied. "I
heard him."

"Whoever it is, it's not Peter," said
her friends. "It must be his angel."

"No," said Rhoda, stomping her
foot. "I promise you. It's Peter!"

Knock, knock.

Whoops! They were so busy
arguing that they had left poor

Peter standing out in the street.
The soldiers could have captured him again by now!

Rhoda rushed to the gate and everyone followed behind her. When they opened the door – of course – there stood Peter!

The people's mouths dropped open wide. They were all about to start chattering at once, but Peter lowered his hand. This was the signal to be quiet. Then Peter told them what happened.

"Tonight I was sleeping in the jail between two soldiers," said Peter. "My right hand was chained to one soldier. My left hand was chained to the other soldier. Then I felt someone touching my side. I woke up and saw an angel! The chains fell off my wrists. I stood

up, and the angel led me past the guards and right out of the jail. Can you believe it?"

The people just gazed at him, stunned. No one said a word.

"The Lord has done this!" said Peter. "Tell the rest of the church how the Lord has answered your prayers and rescued me out of jail."

Peter said goodbye and went somewhere else to hide from the king. Meanwhile, what do you think the church friends did? We don't know for sure, but maybe they started to pray something like this: "Thank you, God, for answering our prayers. And next time, Lord –"

"Help us not to take so long to believe Your answer!"

Learn from the church's biography:

- God hears our prayers and answers them in the way He decides is best.
- Keep praying to God. Watch for God's answers and thank Him.



Parent Ideas

The Church Prays for Peter

Scripture: Acts 12:1-17

KEY LEARNING POINTS

- God hears our prayers and answers them in the way He decides is best.
- Keep praying to God. Watch for God's answers and thank Him.

1. Read-together activity

This activity will work if your child has not read the biography yet. Ask your child to imagine you allowed him to stay awake past his bedtime. What would he do? Would he read, play games, watch a video, etc.? Explain that a group of New Testament people stayed up late one night. Ask your child to guess what they were doing. Then start reading the biography to find out.

2. Read-together activity

Highlight all forms of the word *pray* (e.g., praying, prayed, prayers) on your copy and your child's copy of the biography. Read the biography to your child, pausing at the appropriate places to allow your child to read each one of the highlighted words. This activity will strengthen your child's ability to follow along while another person reads.

3. Discussion activity

Divide the biography into eight scenes. Take two sheets of paper and draw lines on each sheet to divide it into eight equally-sized squares. Read each scene aloud. You and your child can both draw stick-figure comic strips to go along with the scenes. Include bubbles for dialogue. Ask your child to retell the biography to you, using her comic strip. Share your comic strip with your child as well.

4. Discussion activity

Write discussion questions on slips of paper and put them into a hat or small box. Ask your child to add questions too. Take turns pulling the slips out of the hat and asking each other the questions written on the slips.

Include questions like these:

- Why did the church people stay up late?
- What would *you* have done if you heard Peter's voice at the door?
- Why didn't the people believe Rhoda?
- How would you have felt if you were waiting at the door, like Peter?
- What did the Lord do to rescue Peter?
- How do you think the people felt at the end of the biography? What do you think they did?
- If you were one of the people praying, would you have acted the same? Why or why not?

Remind your child that God always hears the prayers of His children. Sometimes He answers them differently than we expect, but He always answers. He answers them in the way He decides is best. We should always watch for God's answers and thank Him (Colossians 4:2).

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5. Application activity

With your child, keep a prayer journal for at least a month. In one column, record your requests and the date you pray. In another column, record God's answers and the date you receive them. Explain to your child that we should always desire and pray for God's will. In other words, our focus should be on what He wants, not what we want! (And sometimes God's answer is related to our motives or obedience – James 4:3.)

This activity will encourage both of you to watch for God's answers. As you see God's work, your faith will be strengthened and you will want to pray more.

6. Application activity

Tell your child about the many Christians today who are imprisoned for their faith. Pray that these worldwide prisoners would have strength to be strong witnesses for the Lord. Pray the Spirit would remind them of God's Word. Pray for their protection. Pray for their rescue, if that is God's will. Contact a ministry that serves the persecuted Church to find specific prayer requests or ways you can comfort and help prisoners.