

Lesson 3

Escape From Prison!

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

Summer had been such a wonderful time for Pieter and Marta. With their parents they had attended some meetings, and their whole family had become Seventh-day Adventists.

But then school started. And 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.



The Message

At church we learn that
Jesus is most important.

Memory Verse

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

(Acts 5:29).

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.

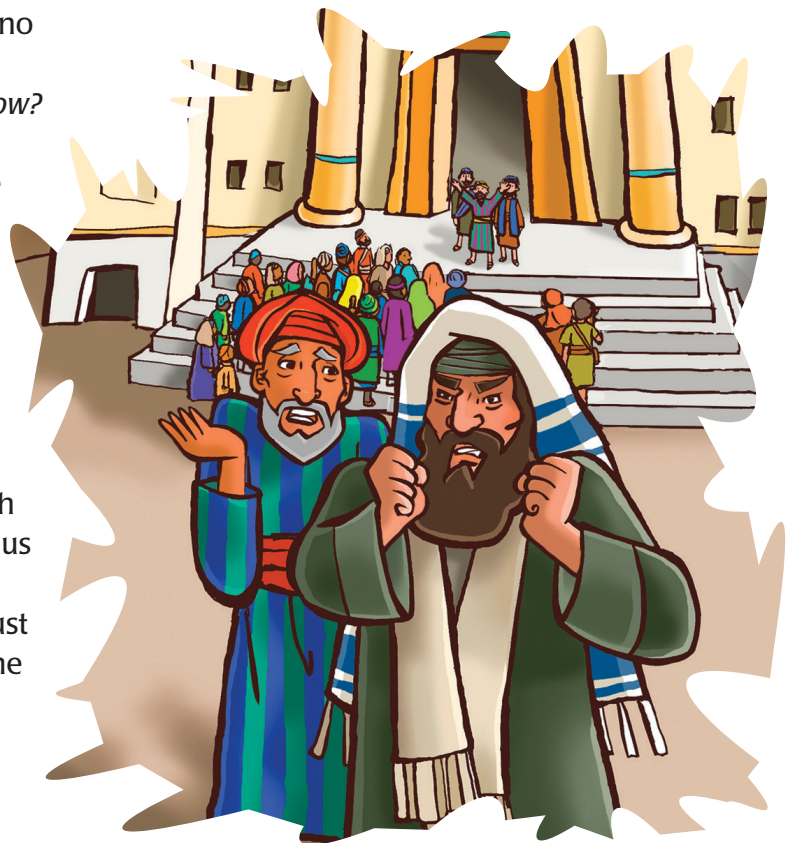
But others were busy that morning too. The high priest and the Sadducees called all the other important Jewish leaders together. They sent orders to the prison to have the apostles brought to them. In a short time the men who had been sent to the prison came back. Their eyes were wide with fear. “We 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.



S A B B A T H

SHARE 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 Read your Bible lesson story together. Read about Jesus in Acts 4:12.

S U N D A Y

READ During family worship, read Acts 5:17-26. Draw pictures about the story. Explain your pictures to your family.

DO 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 Sing "More About Jesus" (*Sing for Joy*, no. 38).

M O N D A Y

DO 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 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.

Jesus' disciples [followers] were also called "apostles." The word "apostle" means "a person sent on a mission."



T U E S D A Y

DO 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.

SING 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.

W E D N E S D A Y

SHARE 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.

DO 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

DO Hold up your "Jesus is Number 1!" cutout and say your memory verse. Ask Jesus to help you obey His will.

THURSDAY

DO 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

SHARE 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?

SHARE Call a Sabbath School friend and help that person learn the memory verse.

FRIDAY

DO For family worship, act out this week's Bible story together.

READ How do you know for sure that Jesus forgives your sins? Read Acts 5:30, 31.

SHARE Next time your friends do something wrong, what could you say about Jesus to encourage them to do right?

SING Sing a song about God's love; then thank Him for it.

Escape!

PUZZLE

Directions: Shade in the spaces with a dot to find out how the prison doors were opened.

