

I CAN HELP OTHERS WHEN I PRAY



Week 5 – Elementary Additional Resources for Parents

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!”

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.)

SCRIPTURE: Acts 12:1-17

INSTRUCTIONS: Read Acts 12:1-17.

Peter's Miraculous Escape From Prison

12 It was about this time that King Herod arrested some who belonged to the church, intending to persecute them. ² He had James, the brother of John, put to death with the sword. ³ When he saw that this met with approval among the Jews, he proceeded to seize Peter also. This happened during the Festival of Unleavened Bread. ⁴ After arresting him, he put him in prison, handing him over to be guarded by four squads of four soldiers each. Herod intended to bring him out for public trial after the Passover.

⁵ So Peter was kept in prison, but the church was earnestly praying to God for him.

⁶ The night before Herod was to bring him to trial, Peter was sleeping between two soldiers, bound with two chains, and sentries stood guard at the entrance. ⁷ Suddenly an angel of the Lord appeared and a light shone in the cell. He struck Peter on the side and woke him up. "Quick, get up!" he said, and the chains fell off Peter's wrists.

⁸ Then the angel said to him, "Put on your clothes and sandals." And Peter did so. "Wrap your cloak around you and follow me," the angel told him. ⁹ Peter followed him out of the prison, but he had no idea that what the angel was doing was really happening; he thought he was seeing a vision. ¹⁰ They passed the first and second guards and came to the iron gate leading to the city. It opened for them by itself, and they went through it. When they had walked the length of one street, suddenly the angel left him.

¹¹ Then Peter came to himself and said, "Now I know without a doubt that the Lord has sent his angel and rescued me from Herod's clutches and from everything the Jewish people were hoping would happen."

¹² When this had dawned on him, he went to the house of Mary the mother of John, also called Mark, where many people had gathered and were praying. ¹³ Peter knocked at the outer entrance, and a servant named Rhoda came to answer the door. ¹⁴ When she recognized Peter's voice, she was so overjoyed she ran back without opening it and exclaimed, "Peter is at the door!"

¹⁵ "You're out of your mind," they told her. When she kept insisting that it was so, they said, "It must be his angel."

¹⁶ But Peter kept on knocking, and when they opened the door and saw him, they were astonished. ¹⁷ Peter motioned with his hand for them to be quiet and described how the Lord had brought him out of prison. "Tell James and the other brothers and sisters about this," he said, and then he left for another place.

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.

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!

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!

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.**