

Calvary Chapel  Philadelphia



# CHILDREN'S MINISTRY TEACHER'S PACKET

2nd Grade

## Sunday Morning

Study 14

*Joy and Peace*

# Joy and Peace

The Objective is the key concept for this weeks lesson. It should be the main focus of the study

These are the key verses that you will find helpful in teaching your study this week. The “Main passage” is the basis of the study, where the other verse support the objective of the lesson.

These are the books of the Bible we will be memorizing. New books for this month are in bold. If a student can memorize all the books up to this month’s books, you may give them a prize from the “reward box” found on your cart.

An introductory activity or question that will settle the class, draw their attention to the study and prepare their hearts for God’s Word.

**Objective** This lesson will show the students that the Spirit gives believers joy and peace in both good and bad circumstances.

## Key Verses

Acts 12:1-17—Main Teaching Passage

Galatians 5:22

Acts 5:41

## Books to Memorize

Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy, Joshua, Judges, Ruth, 1&2 Samuel, 1&2 Kings, 1&2 Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther, Job, **Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Solomon, Isaiah**

## Hook

Write on the board, “When you get home \_\_\_.” and then fill in that blank with different scenarios, some good (“you will get to eat ice cream”) and some bad (“you will be in big trouble”). Ask the class how they would feel if each of these were true. Then ask, “What if you could be happy and not worried no matter what happened?”

In life, our joy and peace are usually dictated by circumstances around us. When things are good, we are happy, but if things are bad, we are miserable. But today we are going learn how the Holy Spirit gives us joy and peace in all circumstances.

What does the Bible say? This is where we will read a passage or series of passages that teach on the subject of the day.

## BOOK

The second and third Fruits of the Spirit are joy and peace. These two are related in that they show the attitude and outlook of the Christian life, even when we go through suffering. Joy is a gladness of heart that makes us want to praise God. Peace is a trust in God that takes away all fear and worry. As believers, when we are filled with the Holy Spirit, we can have joy and peace whether our circumstances are good or bad because of all Christ has done for us and because our hope and future is secure in Him. This joy and peace is displayed in today's story.

Acts 12 begins with the death of James, the first apostle to die for his faith. King Herod had James killed, and this delighted the Jews so much that he arrested Peter and threw him in jail, hoping to do the same to him. Yet on the night that appeared to be his last, Peter was not sad, worried, or afraid. In fact, he slept soundly with all his faith and hope in the Lord. As he slept, an angel woke him up and released his chains. Peter thought this was only a vision and not really an angel, but he followed the angel past the guards, through the gates, and out of the prison. None of the guards saw him, and the gate even opened all on its own. Once he got out, Peter went to the house where he knew that other Christians were praying for him. Though they didn't believe it at first, when they discovered Peter had escaped, they rejoiced that the Lord had saved him.

## LOOK

Everyone wants to have joy and peace, and Christians are not the only people to experience these things. Almost any non-believer could tell you about a time when they felt joy or peace. However, for non-Christians, these are almost always tied to their circumstances. When times are good, they are happy, but when things go wrong, they get sad, afraid, and worried. What makes Christians different from the rest of the world is that our joy and peace comes from the Lord, not our circumstances.

If Peter let his circumstances dictate how he felt in today's story, he might have been sad, angry, and afraid. But we don't see any of that here. He is at total peace and was even able to sleep the night before he was supposed to be killed. Another time when he was thrown in jail, it says Peter and the other apostles rejoiced that they were worthy to suffer for Christ (Acts 5:41). Peter had joy and peace even when everything around him was bad.

So if circumstances don't determine if a Christian has joy or peace, what does? If Peter knew that the angel was going to rescue him, that

The interpretation/exegesis of the passage. What does this passage mean? How does this passage apply to my life?

## LOOK (Continued)

would have explained his peace here, but he didn't know. His peace wasn't in the hope of rescue. James was never rescued, and Peter was surprised when the angel came. No, his joy and peace came from Christ. Peter remembered the good things Jesus had done for him in the past, not only in saving him, but in all His other blessings. He knew that the Spirit was with him in the present, even while he was in jail. And he believed that, whether or not God delivered him from prison, his future was secure with Christ in heaven forever.

As believers who have the same Holy Spirit in us that was in Peter, we can have this same joy and peace, even when things are difficult. In life we may face many hardships. As a second grader, that could be difficulty at school, trouble at home, a sickness or injury, friendship issues, or the sickness or death of a loved one, to name a few. Having joy and peace doesn't mean we are happy that those things happen or look forward to them, nor does it mean that when these problems arise things will always get better. The peace and joy that comes from the Holy Spirit is joy that praises God for His goodness despite our trials and has peace in our security in Christ no matter what might happen.

What is my response to this passage of Scripture? How should my life change according to what this passage teaches me? What are the practical things I can do throughout the week to make this true in my life?

## TOOK

As a class, review the books of the Bible Genesis-Isaiah.

Review the lesson by asking the students what joy and peace is. What gave Peter joy and peace in the story? How can we experience this joy and peace.

**Pray:** Thank the Lord for giving us His joy and peace. Ask Him to help us have joy and peace even in difficult circumstances.

**Parent Question:** What gives believers our joy and peace?

# FURTHER STUDY

## Commentary on Galatians 5:22 and Acts 12:1-17 by David Guzik

5. ([Gal 5:22-23](#)) Examples of the fruit of the Spirit that walking in the Spirit produces in our lives.

**But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law.**

d. **The fruit of the Spirit is... joy:** One of the greatest marketing strategies ever employed was to position the kingdom of Satan as the place where the fun is and the kingdom of God as the place of gloom and misery. But the fruit of the Spirit is **joy**.

i. We could say that this is *joy of the Spirit*, because it is a higher joy than just the thrill of an exciting experience or a wonderful set of circumstances. It is a joy that can abide and remain, even when circumstances seem terrible. Paul knew this joy personally; he could sing when manacled in a dark prison dungeon ([Acts 16:25](#)).

ii. Barclay on *chara*, the ancient Greek word used here for **joy**: “It is not the joy that comes from earthly things, still less from triumphing over someone else in competition. It is a joy whose foundation is God.”

iii. “Believers are not dependent upon circumstances. Their joy comes not from what they have, but from what they are; not from where they are, but from whose they are; not from what they enjoy, but from that which was suffered for them by their Lord.” (Spurgeon)

e. **The fruit of the Spirit is... peace:** This **peace** is peace with God, peace with people, and it is a *positive* peace, filled with blessing and goodness – not simply the absence of fighting.

i. We could say that this **peace** is a *peace of the Spirit*, because it is a higher peace than just what comes when everything is calm and settled. This is a *peace of God, which surpasses all understanding* ([Philippians 4:7](#)).

ii. The ancient Greek word used here for **peace** is *eirene*, and it “means not just freedom from trouble but everything that makes for a man’s highest good. Here it means that tranquility of heart which derives from the all-pervading consciousness that our times are in the hands of God.” (Barclay)

iii. The early Christians really knew and loved the **joy** and the **peace** of the Spirit. Two very common Christian names in the early church were *Chara* (Cara) and *Eirene* (Irene).

### **JAMES IS MARTYRED, PETER IS SET FREE**

A. James the apostle dies as a martyr.

1. ([Act 12:1](#)) Herod harasses the church.

**Now about that time Herod the king stretched out his hand to harass some from the church.**

a. **Herod the king:** This was Herod Agrippa I, the grandson of Herod the Great, who ruled in the days of Jesus’ birth ([Matthew 2:1-16](#)). Herod Agrippa I was also the nephew of Herod Antipas, who had a role in the trial of Jesus ([Luke 23:7-12](#)).

b. **Stretched out his hand to harass some from the church:** No doubt, this was done because it was politically popular for Herod. It pleased many of his citizens who didn't like Christians. Many political figures are ready to persecute Christians if it will make them politically popular.

2. ([Act 12:2](#)) The death of the apostle James.

### **Then he killed James the brother of John with the sword.**

a. **Then he killed James the brother of John with the sword:** This was a new development in the history of the church. Of the twelve who followed Jesus, James was the first to be martyred.

i. Up to [Acts 12](#), the church had been on a streak of success, experiencing one exciting conversion after another. First there was Saul of Tarsus, then the Gentile centurion Cornelius, then the highly successful work among Gentiles (and Jews) in Antioch. But in [Acts 12](#), the ugly opposition inspired by Satan again raised its head.

ii. James was certainly not the first *Christian* to die in faithfulness to Jesus. Stephen ([Acts 7:58-60](#)) was martyred before this, and certainly others were also. But the death of James shattered the illusion that somehow, the twelve enjoyed a unique Divine protection.

b. **James the brother of John:** James, in particular, might have thought to have been protected. He was one of the special intimates of Jesus, often mentioned with his brother John and with Peter ([Matthew 17:1](#), [26:37](#), [Mark 5:37](#), [9:2](#), [14:33](#); [Luke 5:37](#), [9:2](#), and [14:33](#)).

i. But Jesus promised no special protection for even His closest followers; He warned them to be ready for persecution ([Matthew 10:16-26](#)).

ii. In [Mark 10:35-40](#), John and his brother James came to Jesus and asked to be considered His two chief lieutenants. Jesus replied to them, *You do not know what you ask. Can you drink the cup that I drink, and be baptized with the baptism I am baptized with?* James and John, not really knowing what they were saying, replied by saying they could. Jesus promised them, *You will indeed drink the cup that I drink, and with the baptism I am baptized with you will be baptized.* This martyrdom was the fulfillment of that promise for James. John fulfilled it by a lifetime of devoted service to God despite repeated attempts to martyr him.

c. **With the sword:** Normally, this means that James was beheaded. Eusebius relates a story from Clement of Alexandria, who said the soldier guarding James before the judge was so affected by his witness that he declared himself a Christian also and was also willingly executed for Jesus along side of James (Eusebius, *Church History* 2.9.2-3).

i. Significantly, there was no attempt to replace James, as there was to replace Judas ([Acts 1](#)). This was because James died as a faithful martyr, but Judas revealed his apostasy in betraying Jesus. There was no need for another man to take the office of James.

B. The release of Peter from prison.

1. ([Act 12:3-4](#)) Herod imprisons Peter.

**And because he saw that it pleased the Jews, he proceeded further to seize Peter also. Now it was during the Days of Unleavened Bread. So when he had arrested him, he put him in prison, and delivered him to four squads of soldiers to keep him, intending to bring him before the people after Passover.**

a. **Because he saw that it pleased the Jews:** Seeing his increased popularity when he killed James, Herod sought to improve his ratings even more when **he proceeded further to seize Peter also.**

i. There was a significant difference between the persecution from Saul of Tarsus ([Acts 8:1-3](#)) and from Herod. Saul, wrong as he was, persecuted out of sincere (though misguided) religious conviction; Herod persecuted out of purely political motives.

b. **Intending to bring him before the people after Passover:** Herod decided to deal with Peter at a politically opportune time, fearing an unpredictable mob reaction when Passover pilgrims filled Jerusalem.

i. Horton suggests three reasons for the delay in executing Peter: (1) Herod wanted to show how scrupulously he observed the Passover; (2) he wanted to wait until the pilgrim crowds went home, fearing a riot; (3) he wanted to wait until he had the full attention of the Jewish population.

c. **Delivered him to four squads of soldiers:** Knowing Peter (with the other apostles) had mysteriously escaped from prison before ([Acts 5:17-21](#)), Herod assigned a high-security detail to guard Peter.

i. "Normally it was considered enough for a prisoner to be handcuffed to one soldier, but as a special precaution Peter had a soldier each side of him and both his wrists were manacled" (Stott)

ii. "So there were always four soldiers guarding Peter. Extraordinary precautions were also taken by chaining him to two soldiers instead of one as usual (compare Seneca, Epistulae, 5:7). The other two soldiers kept watch outside the cell." (Hughes)

2. ([Act 12:5](#)) The church prays for Peter.

**Peter was therefore kept in prison, but constant prayer was offered to God for him by the church.**

a. **Prayer was offered to God for him by the church:** In this contest, Herod had his soldiers and his prisons; but the church had the power of prayer. The outcome would soon be seen, and easily decided.

i. **Peter was therefore kept in prison**, but the church was free to pray. When every other gate is shut and locked, the gate to heaven is wide open. We take advantage of that open gate through prayer.

b. **Constant prayer was offered to God for him:** The word **constant** also has the idea of *earnest*; literally, the word pictures someone *stretching out all they can for something*. "The verb *ektenos* is related to *ektenes*, a medical term describing the stretching of a muscle to its limits." (MacArthur)

i. Luke uses this same word *ektenos* for the agonizing prayer of Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane ([Luke 22:44](#)).

ii. Much of our prayer is powerless because it lacks earnestness. Too often we almost pray with the attitude of wanting God to care about things we really don't care too much about.

iii. *Earnest* prayer has power not because it in itself persuades a reluctant God. Instead, it demonstrates that our heart cares passionately about the things God cares about, fulfilling Jesus' promise *If you abide in Me and My words abide in you, you will ask what you desire and it shall be done for you* ([John 15:7](#)).

c. **Constant prayer was offered to God:** It is also important to see that the church prayed **to God**. It may seem obvious, but often our prayers are weak because we are not consciously coming into the presence of our great and holy God, offering our requests to Him.

3. ([Act 12:6-11](#)) God sends an angel to free Peter from prison.

**And when Herod was about to bring him out, that night Peter was sleeping, bound with two chains between two soldiers; and the guards before the door were keeping the prison. Now behold, an angel of**

the Lord stood by *him*, and a light shone in the prison; and he struck Peter on the side and raised him up, saying, "Arise quickly!" And his chains fell off *his* hands. Then the angel said to him, "Gird yourself and tie on your sandals"; and so he did. And he said to him, "Put on your garment and follow me." So he went out and followed him, and did not know that what was done by the angel was real, but thought he was seeing a vision. When they were past the first and the second guard posts, they came to the iron gate that leads to the city, which opened to them of its own accord; and they went out and went down one street, and immediately the angel departed from him. And when Peter had come to himself, he said, "Now I know for certain that the Lord has sent His angel, and has delivered me from the hand of Herod and *from all the expectation of the Jewish people.*"

- a. **That night Peter was sleeping:** Peter showed no signs of anxiety. He was able to sleep soundly on what seemed to be the last night before his execution. Remember, *He gives His beloved sleep* ([Psalm 127:2](#)).
  - b. **Bound with two chains between two soldiers...guards before the door:** The chains, the guards, the prison doors meant nothing to God and His appointed messengers; Peter was instantly set free.
  - c. **Did not know that what was done by the angel was real, but thought he was seeing a vision:** Peter obeyed without really knowing what was happening. He knew enough to sense that God was doing something and the explanation could come later.
  - d. **They came to the iron gate that leads to the city, which opened to them of its own accord:** The soldiers, the chains, the guard posts, the iron gate – were all nothing when God was with Peter and prayer was behind him.
    - i. Many of us worry about the **iron gate** before we ever get to it. A month beforehand, and we are anxious about the **iron gate**! But God will take care of it when we come to it. For Peter, it opened **of its own accord**. That phrase uses the ancient Greek word, *automate*. One could say that the gates opened automatically for Peter.
    - ii. F.F. Bruce relates the story of Sundar Singh, a Tibetan Christian who was likewise freed miraculously from a prison. For preaching of the gospel, he was thrown into a well, and a cover set over it and securely locked. He would be left in the well until he died, and he could see the bones and rotting corpses of those who had already perished in there. On the third night of his imprisonment, he heard someone unlocking the cover of the well and removing it. A voice told him to take hold of the rope that was being lowered. Sundar was grateful that the rope had a loop he could put his foot in, because he had injured his arm in the fall down into the well. He was raised up, the cover was replaced and locked, but when he looked to thank his rescuer he could find no one. When morning came, he went back to the same place he was arrested and started preaching again. News of the preaching came to the official who had him arrested, and Sundar was brought before him again. When the official said someone must have gotten the key and released him, they searched for the key – and found it on the official's own belt. God is still writing the Book of Acts!
  - e. **And has delivered me from the hand of Herod:** James was martyred ([Acts 12:1-2](#)) and Peter was rescued. The reasons why does such are often known only to Him. We do know that James, having graduated to glory, did not consider himself a loser in any way.
    - i. Simply, it wasn't time for Peter to go to his heavenly home yet. Until it was time, he was invulnerable. He couldn't be harmed. It was time for James; it was not time for Peter.
4. ([Act 12:12-17](#)) Peter presents himself to the believers that prayed for him.

**So, when he had considered *this*, he came to the house of Mary, the mother of John whose surname was Mark, where many were gathered together praying. And as Peter knocked at the door of the gate, a girl named Rhoda came to answer. When she recognized Peter's voice, because of *her* gladness she did not**



open the gate, but ran in and announced that Peter stood before the gate. But they said to her, “You are beside yourself!” Yet she kept insisting that it was so. So they said, “It is his angel.” Now Peter continued knocking; and when they opened *the door* and saw him, they were astonished. But motioning to them with his hand to keep silent, he declared to them how the Lord had brought him out of the prison. And he said, “Go, tell these things to James and to the brethren.” And he departed and went to another place.

a. **He came to the house of Mary...knocked at the door of the gate:** Peter naturally went to where he knew Christians would be gathered and praying. They would want to know that their prayers had been answered.

b. **Because of her gladness she did not open the gate, but ran in and announced that Peter stood before the gate:** Rhoda was so excited to hear from Peter that she left him out at the gate! The natural, true-to-life feel of these accounts show the reliable historical character of the Book of Acts.

c. **But they said to her, “You are beside yourself!”** We are comforted (and amused) by the little faith of these Christians. Even while they prayed for Peter, they found it hard to believe God actually answered their prayer.

i. Their prayer was earnest ([Acts 12:5](#)), but their faith was not overwhelming. Little faith can accomplish great things if it is placed in the great God.

d. **It is his angel:** The Jews believed in the idea of guardian angels, and it seems that some among them may have believed that one’s guardian angel bore some kind of resemblance to the human it was assigned to.

e. **Go, tell these things to James and the brethren:** The **James** that Peter told others to report to was not the James who was just martyred. It was probably James, the brother of Jesus, who was a prominent figure in the church at Jerusalem.

f. **And he departed and went to another place:** Except for a brief mention in [Acts 15](#), this is the last Luke speaks of Peter. We know that Peter later met Paul in Antioch ([Galatians 2:11-14](#)), and later he wrote his two letters.