



## Roped or Free

*Acts 22*

### Suggested Illustration:

*Use a roping dummy and a lariat. While you are speaking, use the rope at various times as is appropriate to the lesson. Before class let some of the students throw rope and you can instruct others on how to hold/throw a lariat. Perhaps, have someone else come in before class and do a few illustrations during the introduction; then let them step out once you start the points.*



### Introduction

*[Since this lesson/message is most often taught at a Wrangler Kids church there are children present that have roping skills. Even if taught in a traditional church setting this can be easily adapted.]*

Many here can use a lariat well. Some are better than others and some are a lot better than I am. Roping a Jake steer takes a certain amount of knowledge and skill.

Roping a calf in a dead run takes MORE skill.

I enjoy team roping and calf roping at the rodeo, in cowboy church events, and out on a ranch. We admire the skill and speed of the cowboy, but **think about the calf for a while!**

**It does not take any knowledge or skill to be roped.** The calf just takes off running and then gets roped.

The calf never gets any prize for being roped: Just a sore neck.

The calf can be roped in several different ways. The Bible talks about several ways that people can be bound or roped, as well.

### Had Paul really been roped?

*Acts 22:25 And as they bound him with thongs, Paul said unto the centurion that stood by, Is it lawful for you to scourge a man that is a Roman, and uncondemned?*

Had Paul really been roped? Paul was bound because he had been preaching about Jesus: The Pharisees did not like it so they ordered Paul to be bound. Before this incident was over however, some of the Pharisees were shouting for him to be set free.

A big argument broke out between the Pharisees and the Sadducees about what was the truth.

These Pharisees and Sadducees were religious groups of people that had their Bible doctrines all messed up. One group believed that there would be no resurrection of the dead [ other words, you live here, you die here, no Heaven] and the other believed you had to keep ALL of the Law to go to Heaven [ other words you have to be perfect to get to Heaven they thought.]

**They all thought that Paul, the guy with the rope on his hands, was the one bound, but really they were the ones bound. Their minds were trapped and bound so that they would not listen to the truth.**

In fact, 40 men were so trapped in their way of thinking that they bound or swore themselves to an oath to not eat nor drink until Paul was dead.

*Acts 23:12 And when it was day, certain of the Jews banded together, and bound themselves under a curse, saying that they would neither eat nor drink till they had killed Paul.*

Paul was released from his bonds and lived on for many years.

**When you tell others about Jesus, sometimes you get teased or it looks like you get roped. However, you are actually the one free while the ones making fun of you are the ones bound in their minds.**

### **Lazarus: Roped by Death, but Freed by Jesus!**

*John 11:44 And he that was dead came forth, bound hand and foot with grave-clothes...*

Lazarus had been bound by death; but he was a friend of Jesus.

He had been buried for 4 days! Everyone had given up on seeing Lazarus again, but Jesus arrived on the scene and called for Lazarus to come out of the tomb. Out hops Lazarus completely bound head to toe in grave rags/clothes. Jesus commands that he should be freed from the grave clothes, because He has already freed him from the bonds of sin.

**If you are a friend of Jesus [that is, born-again] then you are free from the bonds of sin and the bonds of eternal death as well. You will not have to fear eternal death because Jesus has power over death. His death and resurrection gives us eternal life if we repent and ask Him to save us.**

### **Jesus gave Peter a rope!**

Peter was given the power to rope not only on earth but also in Heaven! The Lord spoke to Peter and told him that as a Christian the Lord gives him power to share God's Word here on earth and the Holy Spirit will convict and convince people.

We do not save anyone, but the Holy Spirit is the one that take these words we speak and uses them to change hearts and minds.

When we share God's Word it results in some people getting saved. This work will result in the population of Heaven increasing.

*Matthew 16:18-19*

*And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.*

## **Jesus Ropes Satan one last time!**

*Revelation 20:2 And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years,*

Jesus roped Satan at the Cross but will rope him again, one last time! When Jesus came and lived a sinless life, then gave His life on the cross, He roped the Devil and defeated Satan's plans.

However, after the Lord's return the Devil will get roped again and cast into a bottomless pit.

Don't be bound by the lies of the Devil and end up roped with him.

Jesus makes it so easy to be FREE.

*Present Salvation here.*