

God is praised in a Philippian Jail- Acts 16

THE POINT

Focus:

God accomplishes his work even in difficult or unlikely circumstances.
God protects his people in many ways.

Application:

We can praise God in any circumstance because God is trustworthy and good.
We ask God to work in the middle of our difficult times, not just by removing our difficulties.

Last Week:

2 Weeks Ago:

HEART CONNECTION (5-6 MINUTES)

MATERIALS:

- None

Content:

Use this time to play 2-3 rounds of “telephone” to remember that the job of the missionaries in Paul’s day was to spread the Good News of Jesus with the whole world!

Try using these phrases:

- 1) “Go therefore into all the world” (Jesus words in the Great Commission)
- 2) “Rejoice in the Lord, Always!” (from the letter to the Philippian church)
- 3) “Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ!” (from our story today!)

STORY CONNECTION (7-10 MINUTES)

MATERIALS:

- large background felt piece
- smaller rectangles for cells
- felt strips the length of one side of the rectangles for doors
- at least 7 wooden peg dolls (Paul, Silas, Jailer, 2 prisoners, 2 family members)
- small clock print-out or watch (to signal "midnight")
- small LED lights or yellow flame cut-outs to signal the light the jailer calls for
- heart cut-outs in gray and red

Optional: Sometimes it's easiest to have one person serves as the reader/narrator and the other place the materials. Other people find it easier to read/tell the story while they move the materials.

INSTRUCTIONS:

- Have all the children sit in a circle so they can see. Remind them that there will be a time when they can use the materials to do the work of telling the story, but right now is the time to watch and listen.
- As you begin the story, place the gray and red heart cut-outs back-to-back on the ground around the story area so that the red heart is hidden by the gray heart. At the end of the story, when it said they had become believers in God, you will flip the hearts to red "alive" hearts. We've been consistently using this visual to demonstrate a heart transformed by Christ.
- Tell the story in a slow but engaging manner. Use tone in your voice! Keep your focus on the story. There will be a time for asking questions later, but it's easier to keep the children engaged in the story when you demonstrate interest in the story yourself.
- At the end, allow the children to choose the option of "retelling the story" with these materials. Remind them that retelling the story means being gentle/respectful* with our materials.

*if children are throwing/dropping/smashing etc. the materials or using them for their own story-telling (i.e. Paul has become a robot or alien and they're telling the story of a space adventure), please explain that this isn't what the materials are for, and redirect them to a different activity.

Have the children sit in a circle for the story This helps include children who might feel shy, and it helps each child feel equally engaged. It reassures children that they are seen and welcome in the community.

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See instructions above!

Acts 16:23-34

Then they were thrown into prison. The **jailer** was commanded to guard them carefully. 24 When he received these orders, he put **Paul** and **Silas** deep inside the **prison**. He fastened their feet so they couldn't get away.

25 About **midnight** Paul and Silas were praying. They were also singing hymns to God. The other **prisoners** were listening to them. 26 Suddenly there was a powerful earthquake. **[have the children make an earthquake by stomping the ground with their feet or hands]** It shook the prison from top to bottom. All at once the prison **doors flew open**. Everyone's chains came loose. 27 The **jailer** woke up. He saw that the prison doors were open. He pulled out his sword and was going to kill himself. He thought the prisoners had escaped. 28 "Don't harm yourself!" Paul shouted. "We are all here!"

29 The jailer called out for some **lights**. He rushed in, shaking with fear. He fell down in front of Paul and Silas. 30 Then he brought them out. He asked, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?"

31 They replied, "Believe in the Lord Jesus. Then you and everyone living in your house will be saved."
32 They spoke the word of the Lord to him. They also spoke to all the others in his house. 33 At that hour of the night, the jailer took Paul and Silas and washed their wounds. Right away he and everyone who lived with him were baptized. 34 The jailer brought them into his house. He set a meal in front of them. He and everyone who lived with him were filled with joy. **They had become believers in God***.

***as you read this sentence, flip the gray hearts over to reveal red hearts.**

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WONDER CONNECTION (3-5 MINUTES)

MATERIALS: None.

I wonder how it felt to be Paul or Silas in that jail cell that night with chains around their feet.

I wonder what songs they sang to glorify God.

I wonder how the jailer felt when he heard they were all still there.

What do you wonder?

SPIRIT CONNECTION (7-10 MINUTES)

MATERIALS: Coloring supplies: paper, crayons, pencils, hard drawing surfaces (floor, clipboard, or a table).

Take a few minutes to talk quietly with the Lord while you draw, write, or just think inside your heard. Talk with God about the story today. This is a quiet time for you to spend with the Lord, not with your neighbor or anyone else.