

Morning Overview

Lesson: *The Fortune Teller*

Lesson Objective:

In our story today, we continue to learn about the travels of Paul and his visitation to different churches and Christians. We see his interaction with Lydia the seller of purple cloth, but also his, and Silas', interaction with the possessed girl. This story touches on the impact of redemption and freedom in Christ. Only Christ could set the possessed girl free, but the consequences that came forth from it Paul and Silas had to bear. It's a story for Christians to remember. As the captive is made free, those enslaved freed, it does not mean there will not be consequences for the Christian who is doing the Lord's work.

Teaching Summary:

- God's promises do not change despite circumstances, people and even our inability to believe them. God keeps His promises even when we do not trust Him or follow His commands.
- God has promised to always be with His people. He is with us through the presence of the Holy Spirit.
- The Church is growing, but also experiencing persecution. Because of the persecution, followers of Jesus scatter.
- The scattered Church takes the Good News and tells others about Jesus.
- Paul continued to travel to different places visiting Christians along the way. The next place was Philippi.
- In Philippi, Paul and Silas met Lydia, a seller of purple, who had her whole household baptized.
- The next person Paul and Silas met was a little girl possessed by a spirit that was enslaved to make money for her owners.
- The spirit in the girl recognized the power of God in the Apostles and followed them around.
- Eventually Paul cast the spirit out of the girl. This caused her owners to be angry – they had lost their revenue stream.
- Paul and Silas were beaten and thrown in jail. But the Holy Spirit had not left them; the Apostles were not alone.

Scripture: Acts 16:12-24

Story: Vos Child's Story Bible, Pages 354-355

Scripture Memory for January:

The Lord has commanded us, saying, "I have made you a light for the Gentiles, that you may bring salvation to the ends of the earth." *Acts 13:47* (ESV)

Activity of the Day:

Engage the children with the following to help them bring the lesson to life. Role play with them so they understand the main concept of the teaching.

5's – Dress up

4's – Little People figures

3's – Finger puppets

Craft: Fortune Teller

Supplies: Cardstock with fortune teller, "no" symbol, verse sticker, magnet

Instructions: 1. Color fortune teller.

2. Glue "no" symbol on top of fortune teller.

3. Place verse sticker at top of paper

4. Place magnet on back.

If child has already done craft first hour, have them work on a coloring sheet



Story

Transition

Boys and girls, in our story today we learn about a very big fight! Not with fists, no kicking, and no weapons, but this was a dangerous fight. The fight was over what it meant to be a follower of Jesus and to have the Holy Spirit inside us. Let's find out more in our story...

The Church Is Growing

The Church was growing. The Bible tells us every day more and more people believed the Good News! They believed that God sent His Son, Jesus Christ, to rescue us from our sins and He rose from the dead! This was called the Good News. More and more people believed in Jesus and the Church was growing!

Followers of Jesus went to tell others about the Good News. The Good News was spreading far and wide. Some people, however, did not teach the right things. But the Apostles taught that good works were a result of believing the Good News.

Paul left Galatia and continued to travel. As he was in the city of Troas, Paul had a dream. In the dream a man from Macedonia appeared and said, "Come help us!" The Bible tells us Paul immediately woke up and traveled to Philippi.

The Fortune Teller

Philippi was one of the leading cities in Macedonia. It was also a Roman colony. Paul and Silas stayed in Philippi for several days.

On the Sabbath day Paul and Silas went outside the city gate to the river. They were looking for a special place to pray. Some women had gathered near the river and Paul and Silas sat down and talked with them. There near the river was a woman named Lydia from the city of Thyatira. Her job was selling purple cloth. She worshiped the true God. The Lord opened her mind to pay attention to what Paul was saying. She listened to Paul carefully. Soon Lydia approached Paul and asked to be baptized. Not only was Lydia baptized, but everyone in her whole house. After baptizing Lydia's whole house, she invited Paul and Silas to her home. She said to them, "If you think I am truly a believer in the Lord, then come stay in my house." So Paul and Silas stayed in Lydia's home.

Paul and Silas would often go to the place by the river to pray. Once while they were going, a servant girl came up to Paul and Silas. She had a special spirit in her. This spirit was not from the Lord. The girl earned a lot of money for her owners by telling people their future (**NB: For younger children explain this concept as telling people what was going to happen next**) Only the Lord is in control of the future, and only the Lord truly knows what will happen. The spirit in the girl was not from the Lord; this spirit was trying to be like God. This girl followed Paul and Silas around. She knew that Paul and Silas were servants of the Lord. She said loudly, "These men are servants of the Most High God! They are telling you how you can be saved!"

She kept this up for many days. Paul was soon bothered by this, so he turned and said to the spirit, "By the power of Jesus Christ, I command you to come out of her!" Immediately, the spirit came out.

The owners of the servant girl saw this. These men knew they could no longer use her to make money. The spirit was the one who helped the girl tell people's future. Now that the spirit was gone, the girl could no longer make these evil men money. These evil men grabbed Paul and Silas and dragged them before the city rulers in the marketplace. The evil men put Paul and Silas before the Roman rulers and said, "These men are Jews and are making trouble in our city. They are teaching things that are not right for us as Romans to do." The evil men were making up their accusations. They were really mad at Paul and Silas for freeing the girl.

The crowd in the marketplace joined the attack against them. The Roman officers decided to punish Paul and Silas. The Roman soldiers tore the clothes of Paul and Silas and had them beaten with rods again and again. After being severely beaten, Paul and Silas were thrown into jail. The jailer was ordered to guard them carefully. When he heard this order, he put them far inside the jail. He pinned down their feet between large blocks of wood. Paul and Silas were hurt and alone. But the Holy Spirit was with them; God had never left or forgotten Paul and Silas.

For older kids, you can read the following passage from 2 Corinthians 4:8-18. It's possible that Paul wrote 2 Corinthians while in Macedonia – perhaps close to what he experienced in Philippi.

We have troubles all around us, but we are not defeated. We do not know what to do, but we do not give up. We are persecuted, but God does not leave us. We are hurt sometimes, but we are not destroyed. We carry the death of Jesus in our own bodies, so that the life of Jesus can also be seen in us. So we do not give up. Our physical body is becoming older and weaker, but our spirit inside us is made new every day. We have small troubles for a while now, but they are helping us gain an eternal glory. That glory is much greater than the troubles. So we set our eyes not on what we see but on what we cannot see. What we see will last only a short time. But what we cannot see will last forever.

Questions for Review with Younger Children

Have children answer “yes” or “no.”

- Is the Church growing – adding more and more people? (Yes)
- Is the Holy Spirit growing the Church? (Yes)
- Did Paul see in a dream that a man from Macedonia cried for help? (Yes)
- Did Paul and Silas look for a special place to pray in the mountains? (No, down by the river)
- Did Paul and Silas meet a lady named Jane? (No, Lydia)
- Did Lydia sell purple cloth? (Yes)
- Was Lydia and her whole house baptized by Paul and Silas? (Yes)
- Did Paul and Silas meet a girl that had a spirit in her? (Yes)
- Was the girl able to tell people's future? (Yes)
- Did Paul and Silas tell the spirit to stay in the girl? (No! Paul cast the spirit out!)
- Were the evil men who owned the girl happy once the spirit left? (No, they were mad!)
- Were Paul and Silas beaten and thrown in jail? (Yes)

Questions for Review with Older Children

- Name some of the people in our story today.
- I wonder what it was like to be beaten and thrown in jail for doing something good – casting out the spirit from the girl. What do you think Paul and Silas were thinking once the beating was over and they were in jail?
- What is the Good News?