

September 1, 2019

Morning Overview

Lesson: *The Jailer Who Believed*

Lesson Objective:

Today we find Paul and Silas in jail bound by chains awaiting the next part in their legal process. However, an earthquake frees Paul and Silas from their chains and their witness of the Lord (prayer and songs) creates an evangelistic moment. The story has a subtle irony to it – innocent Paul and Silas are captives only to proclaim to the jailer how to be free. Paul and Silas, bound by chains, are telling the jailer, a captive to sin, how to be saved or freed from his own bondage. The miracle of the earthquake should not overshadow the miracle of conversion for the Philippian jailer!

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.
- Paul and Silas were beaten and thrown in jail. But the Holy Spirit had not left them; the Apostles were not alone.
- An earthquake hits in the middle of the night and frees Paul, Silas, and all the prisoners from their chains.
- The jailer attempts to kill himself thinking the prisoners will escape, yet no one leaves the prison.
- The jailer asks Paul and Silas what he must do to be saved. They respond with “Believe in the Lord Jesus.”
- The jailer shows incredible hospitality to Paul and Silas.
- Upon their release from jail, the arresting officers learn Paul and Silas are Roman citizens and this causes panic.
- Paul and Silas return to the house of Lydia where they fellowship with other believers.

Scripture: Acts 16:25-40

Story: Vos Child’s Story Bible, Pages 355-357

Scripture Memory for Summer: Acts 26:17b-18 (ESV)

I am sending you (*point up to God and then to yourself*)

to open their eyes (*close your eyes with hands closed beside them then open hands wide as you open your eyes*)

so that they may turn from darkness to light (*turn around and lower your head covering it with your arms and then face the front again raising arms, lifting your hands to the light*)

Craft: Jailer

Supplies: Black cardstock, cardstock door, chain, verse sticker

Instructions: 1. Glue door to blank cardstock.

2. Glue chain to inside of door.

3. Place verse sticker at bottom of cardstock.



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

Story

Transition

Boys and girls, an earthquake is when the ground moves a lot and everything rumbles and shakes! It's usually a bad thing! But in our story today an earthquake happens and it's a good thing. Let's find out in our story what happens after the earthquake happens...

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 awoke 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 had met a lady named Lydia. Lydia was a follower of Jesus. Paul and Silas baptized Lydia and her whole household.

While also in Philippi, a young girl, who had a spirit in her, was freed from the spirit by Paul and Silas. This made the young girl's owners angry. The owners had used the young girl to make lots of money. The young girl had been able to tell people their future, but this was because she had the spirit in her. Now that the spirit was gone, the young girl could no longer tell the future. This meant she could not make money for the owners.

The owners brought Paul and Silas to the marketplace and made a big ruckus. 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.

The Jailer Who Believed

About midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing songs to God. The other prisoners were listening to them. Suddenly, there was a big earthquake. It was so strong that it shook the foundation of the jail. Then all the doors of the jail broke open. All the prisoners were freed from their chains. The jailer woke up and saw that the jail doors were open. He thought that the prisoners had already escaped. This was bad news! If all the prisoners escaped the jailer would be punished. The jailer got his sword and was about to stab himself – he was trying to punish himself! **(NB: For 3's & 4's, teacher may want to tell the class the jailer was going to hurt himself).**

But before the jailer could do anything, Paul shouted, "Don't hurt yourself! We are all here!"

The jailer told someone to bring a light. Then he ran inside. Shaking with fear, he fell down before Paul and Silas. Then he brought them outside and said, "Men, what must I do to be saved?"

Paul and Silas said to him, “Believe in the Lord Jesus and you will be saved—you and all the people in your house.” So Paul and Silas told the message of the Lord to the jailer and all the people in his house. After hearing the message, the jailer took Paul and Silas and washed their wounds. Then he and all his people were baptized immediately. After this the jailer took Paul and Silas home and gave them food. He and his family were very happy because they now believed in God. The jailer took Paul and Silas back to prison after they ate.

The next morning the Roman officers sent word to the jailer to let Paul and Silas go free.

The jailer said to Paul, “The officers have sent an order to let you go free. You can leave now. Go in peace.”

But Paul said to the police, “They beat us in public without a trial, even though we are Roman citizens. And they threw us in jail. Now they want to make us go away quietly. No! Let them come themselves and bring us out!”

Paul’s words were carried back to the Roman officers. When the officers heard that Paul and Silas were Roman citizens, they were afraid. The officers were scared because Roman citizens were supposed to receive a trial before being punished. The officers did not give Paul and Silas a trial, they just had the two followers of Jesus thrown in jail!

So they came and told Paul and Silas they were sorry. They took Paul and Silas out of jail and asked them to leave the city. So when they came out of the jail they went to Lydia’s house. There they saw some of the believers and encouraged them. Then they left.

Questions for Review with Younger Children

Have children answer “yes” or “no.”

- The Church is growing – adding more and more people. (Yes)
- The Holy Spirit is growing the Church. (Yes)
- Paul cast the spirit out of the young girl. (Yes)
- The owners of the young girl were happy with Paul. (No! They were angry.)
- The owners and other people ganged up on Paul and Silas (Yes.)
- The Roman Officers gave Paul and Silas high-fives and gum. (No! They threw Paul and Silas in jail.)
- Paul and Silas sang songs and prayed to the Lord while in jail. (Yes)
- An earthquake shook the prison and the chains of all the prisoners became loose. (Yes)
- The jailer was going to hurt himself before Paul stopped him. (Yes)
- All the prisoners left the prison. (No! They stayed in the prison)
- Paul told the jailer to believe in the Lord Jesus to be saved. (Yes)
- Paul and Silas were released from prison. (Yes)
- Paul and Silas went back to Lydia’s house and encouraged believers there. (Yes)