

Behavior

Lesson 8

Paul and Silas in Jail

Behaviors

Begin with
Prayer

Lesson 8

Paul and Silas in Jail

Acts 16:16-40

Memory Verse

Don't quit in hard times. **Romans 12:12 (The Message)**

Lesson Goals

Learn that God wants us to persevere in hard times.
Learn that God wants us to turn to Him no matter what happens.

Behavior Focus Scripture

Don't quit in hard times. **Romans 12:12 (The Message)**

Bible Story

Read Acts 16:16-34 aloud.

*Please note: This portion of the lesson is given to help in teaching the lesson. Please read through the story and read it in the Bible before teaching it. Do **NOT** read from this piece of paper. Instead, make a note sheet and place it next to the story in the Bible.*

Welcome

Have you ever had a really hard time with a class? Have you ever worked really hard to pass a test and failed? In today's lesson, we will see how Jesus' followers had to go through a really hard time.

Paul and his companions were still in Philippi. God had given Paul a vision where a man called him to go to Macedonia and help them. Paul and his companions (Silas, Timothy and Luke) had gone to Philippi. One day while they were on their way to prayer meeting, a young slave girl who was possessed by a demon followed Paul and his companions. She cried out that Paul and his companions were "servants of the most high God," which show the way of salvation. (Acts 16:16-17)

She did this for several days and Paul had pity on her and commanded in the name of Jesus, that the evil spirit leave her. And the evil spirit came out of her but her owners were upset because she could no longer earn them money. They went to the town leaders who happened to be Jews and lied to them. They said that Paul and his companions were causing trouble and teaching things that were not lawful for them as Romans. (Acts 16:19-21)

Paul and Silas were arrested. They were beaten. Then they were thrown in jail. All this happened because they had done a good thing. They probably prayed.

It was probably dark in the prison. It probably smelled bad. They were probably in chains. They probably hurt. They were probably tired. There were many reasons for them to whine or complain.

Even though they were unjustly accused, beaten and imprisoned, they sang praises to God. Paul and Silas did not understand God's plan. They just trusted God. They loved Jesus, so they sang. Often songs can be a prayer to God. The prisoners heard them.

It was midnight when there was an earthquake. The doors of the prison were shaken and opened. The bands were loosed. They were free.

The jail guard thought they had all left. He was ready to kill himself. But Paul yelled out to him that they were all still there. The jail guard asked that light be brought to him. He fell down before Paul and asked him what he needed to do in order to be saved. (Acts 16:25-30)

Week 8

Review:
Romans 12:9-13
(The Message)

He responded, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved and thy house." (Acts 16:31) The jailer took them to his home where they spoke to all that were in the house. The jailer believed. (Acts 16:32-34) Here God's plan is fulfilled. The jailer and those in his house heard the message of Christ. The jailer and his family were baptized.

Do you know Jesus? Paul and Silas were unjustly arrested. They had been beaten. Then they were thrown in jail. That could not have been fun. But Paul and Silas are singing in the jail. Others are listening to them sing. This is **perseverance**. At midnight when the earthquake hits and they are freed, they don't leave. The jailer who is guarding them, becomes a believer. Are you a believer? Would you like to invite Jesus into your heart and life?

Pray this prayer: Dear God, thank you for sending your Son, Jesus, to die on the cross for my sins. Thank you that He has risen from the dead; and because He lives I can have a personal relationship with you. Please forgive my sins. Please come be a part of my life and help me to **persevere in hard times**. Help me to **trust** you no matter what happens.

Review:

1. *What did Paul do?* (commanded the demon to leave the slave girl)
2. *What did the slave girl's owners do?* (spread lies about Paul and Silas)
3. *What happened next?* (Paul and Silas are arrested, beaten and imprisoned)
4. *Explain that God allowed Paul and Silas to be arrested.* God's greater plan was that the jailer and his family should know Him. The jailer might never have heard the message of Christ. Perhaps he heard Paul and Silas singing. The jailer knew that Paul and Silas could tell him how to know God. Paul and Silas trusted God even though they *did not understand* God's plan.

Pray:

Pray that God will help you persevere in hard times.
Pray that God will help you trust Him no matter what happens.

Challenge:

Serving God and following Jesus is not always easy. Sometimes people laugh at us or reject us for wanting to obey God. Paul and Silas were arrested. That was hard enough but then they were beaten and thrown in jail. Most of us have never had to suffer for Jesus like that and probably never will. Pray that God will help you *persevere* through whatever hard times may come your way. The ability to *persevere* comes from knowing God. Knowing Him helps you trust Him. It may be that God wants you to help someone in your community. It may be God wants you to get up earlier to help your mom clean house or fix breakfast. Knowing that we are doing something for God makes it easier. Take time to pray, to read the Bible, to take part in Bible study. Write any changes in attitude and behavior in your prayer journal.

Application:

Is there something God wants you to do that is hard? Trust Him and do it.

Planning Ahead:

Paul in Corinth
Acts 18:1-18

End with
Prayer

Hands-on Activities
For
Macedonian Call

Review: Romans 12:9-13 (The Message). Tell the children to pretend that they are in a jail cell. Assign some children to be the guards. Have the guards say the verses. Those in the jail will repeat it.

Have the children form a line as they say each word from the verse. They will continue moving from the end of the line to the front of the line as they say the correct word.

Prayer journal: Work on your prayer journal. Write down what God has said to you about hard times? What has he said about persevering? Ask God to help you.

Retell the story. Create a dark, cave like atmosphere using dark sheets or a box. This should be large enough for two children. Have two volunteers go into the cave. Have the other children tell the story of Paul and Silas by asking questions. Where were Paul and Silas? (Philippi) What happened? (A demon possessed girl followed them.) What happened next? (Paul cast the demon out) Then what happened? (Her masters got upset) What happened after that? (Paul and Silas were beaten and thrown in jail) What did Paul and Silas do? (sang praises to God) Then what happened? (earthquake) What happened next? (The jailer wanted to kill himself. Paul stopped him) What happened after that? (The jailer took them home. He and his family believed and were baptized) Talk about how the jailer might never have met Paul and Silas if they had not been in jail.

Play Chutes and Ladders if possible. In this game you can be close to winning and have to go down the chutes. Talk about helping others learn how to play the game. Talk about knowing the rules and changing them only if everyone agrees. Talk about following the rules. Talk about how new players can make mistakes and may need help. Talk about enjoying the game even when you have to start over.

Freeze Frames: Children will have an opportunity to respond to actions of other children. They will respond to your commands. These will be freeze frames.

Group 1

Child One: (walks up and pushes Child Two)

Tell the children to freeze momentarily.

Child Two: responds by saying, "Excuse me, " politely and walking away.

Tell the children to freeze momentarily.

Child One: responds by saying, "Oh, I'm sorry."

Group 2

Child One and Child Two: Walk by Child Three whispering.

Tell the children to freeze momentarily.

Child Three: responds by saying, "Hi."

Tell the children to freeze momentarily.

Child One and Two: respond by saying, "Oh, hi."

Tell the children to freeze momentarily.

Child One: will explain, "We're planning a surprise sleep over for my little sister. Would you like to come?"

Talk about how things may have appeared at first. How the response changes everything. Tell the children we don't always know God's plan. Our response should be to wait on God, trust Him and obey Him.

Don't quit
in hard times.
Romans 12:12
(The Message)

Romans 12: 9-13 (The Message)

**Love from the center of who you are;
don't fake it.**

**Run for dear life from evil;
hold on for dear life to good.**

**Be good friends who love deeply;
practice playing second fiddle.**

**Don't burn out;
keep yourselves fueled and aflame.**

**Be alert servants of the Master,
cheerfully expectant.**

**Don't quit in hard times;
pray all the harder.**

**Help needy Christians;
be inventive in hospitality.**

Romans 12: 9-13 The Message