

PAUL SPEAKS TO A PRISON GUARD ABOUT JESUS

All Activity Sheets

KEY WORDS

LOVE SERVE WITNESS TOUGH SITUATIONS DEMON TESTIMONY JAIL

BIBLE REFERENCE

Acts 16:20-34

LESSON OBJECTIVE

To help the children learn that even in the midst of tough situations, they can talk to others about Jesus.

MEMORY VERSE

"And walk in the way of love, just as Christ loved us" (Ephesians 5:2, NIV*).

PREPARE YOURSELF TO TEACH

The Great Commission (Matthew 28:19-20) and the Great Commandment (Matthew 22:36-40) motivate us to engage the world in compassionate outreach. We strive to express the compassion of Jesus Christ to all persons along with our personal commitment to Christlike living. As Paul wrote to the Philippian Church, "Therefore if you have any encouragement from being united with Christ, if any comfort from his love, if any common sharing in the Spirit, if any tenderness and compassion, than make my joy complete by being likeminded, having the same love, being one in spirit and of one mind" (Philippians 2:1).

Paul and Silas faced adversity when they threw a demon out of a young girl who predicted the future. The Bible tells us that the Jews tried to discredit Paul's testimony and many people tried to harm him.

The young woman, who was possessed by a demon, was used by her masters to gain money. People would pay her owners so that she would predict their future.

When Paul and Silas found this young woman, the spirit within her recognized them as servants of God. She followed them through the market announcing that they were servants of the "Most High." When Paul turned to her and commanded the spirit to come out of the girl, it immediately obeyed by the power of Jesus Christ.

The owners of the young woman lost their source of their earnings and became very angry.

Paul and Silas were imprisoned but they were not discouraged. They chose to praise God. The jailer who was present listened to them sing. When God used an earthquake to deliver them, Paul and Silas did not escape or allow the soldier to kill himself. Instead, they told him about Jesus. The jailer and his family received Jesus due to the courageous testimony of Paul and Silas.

Even in the most difficult situations, Paul chose to speak about Jesus to those who needed forgiveness and salvation. As you prepare this lesson, ask that God give you strength to be a faithful witness of God's love for others.

ADAPTATION

Use this opportunity to talk about Christ to your children. Many times we take it for granted that children who attend Sunday school are already saved, and we might emphasize the development of Christlike character, attitudes and habits. But, that is not always the case. In Christianity, there is no place for assumptions.

Coming to know Jesus as their personal Savior is the best thing that can happen to the children in your class. You have the opportunity to guide them to the feet of the Savior.

INTRODUCE THE LESSON

How many chains?

You will need scissors, glue or tape and strips of cardboard (5 x 40 cms.)

Put the strips and the glue on a table. Teach children to make chains of the following form: Glue the two ends of a strip of paper to form a circle. Insert another strip in the middle and repeat. Add the strips you need according to the number of links you want in the chain.

Explain that the Bible story has to do with some chains on a very important character. When you gather the children to hear the Bible story ask them to put them in their hands while they listen to the story.

TEACH THE LESSON

Use this activity to help children have a better understanding of the Bible lesson.

Briefly review last week's Bible story so that your children do not lose the continuity of the story.

A prison guard learns about Jesus

Paul and Silas were in Philippi, preaching the Good News of Jesus. Some of those who lived there believed that the disciples were crazy. They laughed that they were still talking about the gospel.

These men accused Paul and Silas of going against the law and stirring up the people. So they took them to jail. When they arrived at the prison, the jailers put them in the deepest dungeon and chained them.

The prison was very dark that night. Paul and Silas were chained to the wall and could not move. It was a very ugly and dirty place, but they were not afraid - they sang and prayed to God. The other prisoners listened attentively to the praises of the disciples.

When it was very late, the prison suddenly began to shake violently. The chains opened and Paul and Silas were able to move. A great earthquake had made the jail doors open. The two disciples knew that God was helping them and they gave thanks.

The jailer, who was in charge of all the prisoners, was sleeping when the prison began to shake. When he felt the movement, he immediately stood up and went to see what was happening. "Oh, the doors are open!" he shouted scared. "Surely all the prisoners have escaped. I'm in big trouble."

"Do not worry, we're all here," Paul said.

The jailer saw that no one had left. "You Christians are very different; you had the opportunity to escape, but did not leave. What can I do to know Jesus?" he asked.

"Only believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and you and your whole family will be saved," Paul told him.

"I want to do it," the jailer replied excitedly. In fact, the jailer and all his family believed and were baptized. Then he took Paul and Silas to his house, where he fed them and they talked more about Jesus.

From that day on, the Philippian jailer and his family believed in Jesus and were part of the church.

CONNECT THE LESSON

Broken chains

Distribute Student Activity Sheet #86-A, #86-B and #86-C. Cut out the pictures for this lesson from Student Activity Sheet #86-C for each child. Allow time for them to trace the word of faith and write their name on Student Activity Sheet #86-A. Distribute the pictures and paste them. Follow the instructions on Student Activity Sheet #86-B to complete the activity. As they work, talk with them about the importance of talking to others about Jesus, even in times of difficulty.

Encourage the children to use their activity sheets to share the lesson with their families and friends.

PRACTICE THE MEMORY VERSE

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Form a circle with the children and tell them: As we repeat the memory verse, let's shake just like the earthquake shook the prison of Philippi. Repeat the verse together three times; then go to the center and say it without help: "And walk in the way of love, just as Christ loved us" (Ephesians 5:2).

WRAP-UP

Pray

Before you say goodbye to them, lead them in a prayer of thanksgiving for people who are accepting Jesus as their personal Savior. Also, pray that each of them will accept Jesus as his/ her personal Savior.

Encourage

Make sure the work area is clean before your children go home. Give them the work they completed and encourage them to use it to tell their parents what they learned in the Bible story.

Invite

Remind the children that the next session will be the last lesson on the Apostle Paul.