

Week 5: Paul and Silas in jail

Theme: God ALWAYS takes care of us and will help us to be strong.

Arrival activity : There is a code cracking activity in the resources and this week's stamp can be added to the passport started last week.

4Directional Prayer: Repeat the 4-part prayer you have been learning over the last few weeks.

Introduction : Hide the letter somewhere in the room and send children off to find it – Read the letter , it sets the scene for the story. *See resources.*

Games:

Jail break – Children line up along one wall. This is the jail. Opposite them, about 10 feet in front, are the jailers (choose 1 – 3 jailers according to the size of the group.) On the command, “Jailbreak”, the jailed children attempt to make their escape to the other side without being tagged by the jailer. If tagged, they return to the jail to make another daring attempt to escape! After 30 seconds, blow a whistle and swap jailers.

Ha, ha, ha - Divide the children into two or more teams. The first person from each team lies on the floor, the next does the same but with his head on the first person's stomach. You end up forming a zigzag of people. All the others in the team follow suit. When the teams are settled, the first person in each team has to shout, “Ha!”. Number 2 follows with, “Ha, Ha!”, Number 3 follows with, “Ha, Ha, Ha!” and so on. This is a serious business! No smiling or laughing is allowed. If an upturned mouth or giggle is detected, it's back to the start! The team to complete the process three times without laughing is the winner.

Story: Acts 16: 19- 34. *Paul and Silas get out of jail- free!* There is a playscript in the resources.

Song: Another one you may not be familiar with, so why not give it a go! **So Glad**, Track 13, from the CD, *Great Big God 4*.

Application – Paul and Silas were not angry or upset that they were in jail. Instead they sang songs to God and trusted Him. Sure enough, God took care of them AND as a result the jailer wanted to follow Christ too. In many parts of the world, it is against the law to talk about Jesus. They are not allowed to meet for prayer or worship. Some people are not even allowed to have a Bible. In these countries there are many people in jail now because they are Christians. It can be hard for us to be Christians too because people may make fun of us but God ALWAYS takes care of us and will help us to be strong.

Prayer: Use a world map to highlight places where people are imprisoned or even put to death because of their Christian faith. You could ask children to find the places on the map or globe. Pray for people who are persecuted because they believe in Jesus. Pray that they may have strength and joy in their hearts. Pray for their release.

Memory verse: *“Happy are you when people insult you and persecute you and tell all kinds of evil lies against you because you are my followers.” Matthew 5 v 11* . Prepare strips with the words of the verse on each. The children link these together to make a paper chain with the complete verse in order as a reminder that Paul and Silas remained joyful while imprisoned.

Resources: *There is an arrival code breaker, introduction, funsheet and story in the resources.*

Dear Friends,

After we had met Lydia and spent time in her home, we heard that there was some unrest in Philippi. Some people there were angry because we were telling them about Jesus. They thought we were troublemakers.

They dragged Silas and I to court, saying, “These Jews are upsetting our city!” Before we knew what was happening, we’d been whipped and locked in the stocks in jail. We should have been worried but instead, we had joy in hearts and wanted to praise God even more.

Your friend,

Paul

Paul and Silas get out of jail free!

Acts 16 verse 19-34

Cast: Narrator, Jailer, Paul, Silas

Enter Jailer, Paul and Silas.

Jailer: Come on you two, get in here! The Romans don't like your customs and I've been told to lock you in the inner cell so you can't escape. And you'd better not escape – or I will be punished ! I know you've been beaten but that's no concern of mine! I'm off to sleep now so don't disturb me or else!

Paul: No problem, Sir! We'll just carry on praising God and singing because "Our God is a great big God"! *(Paul and Silas sing)*

Narrator: At midnight, Paul and Silas were still praising God! They didn't feel sorry for themselves or complain because they'd been treated unfairly. Suddenly, there was a huge earthquake: their chains fell off and the prison doors flung open!

Jailer: What was that? Oh no, the prisoners must have escaped! My masters will be furious! I'm going to kill myself rather than face the anger of the Romans! *(draws sword)*

Paul: Don't harm yourself, Sir! We're here!

Jailer: You had the chance to run away but you stayed! Tell me, what must I do to be saved?

Paul: Believe in the Lord Jesus and you will be saved – you and your family!

Jailer: Please come to my house: I'll wash your wounds, give you some food and you can tell my wife and children about Jesus Christ.

Narrator: So that's what Paul and Silas did. They went to the jailer's house and baptised him, his wife and their children. They were all filled with great joy because they now believed in God and have been praising Him ever since!