

LESSON



Prison Praises

SERVICE

We serve by giving to others.

References

Acts 16:16–34; *The Acts of the Apostles*, pp. 211–220.

Memory Verse

"Do what is right . . . in the eyes of the Lord" (2 Corinthians 8:21, NIV).

Objectives

The children will:

Know that God will help us do the right things.

Feel thankful that we can serve God in all we do.

Respond by sharing Jesus with others by treating them honestly and fairly.

The Message



We share Jesus by doing what is right.

Getting Ready to Teach

The Bible Lesson at a Glance

Paul and Silas have been beaten and put in prison because they are teaching about Jesus. They joyfully sing praises to God instead of complaining. God sends an earthquake that opens the door of the prison, but Paul and Silas do not run away. The prison guard is impressed with their honesty and fairness and joy, and asks what he must do to be saved. Paul teaches him and his family about

Jesus. They are baptized. The guard feeds Paul and Silas and takes care of their wounds.

This is a lesson about service.

When we live honorably and joyfully, we are sharing Jesus with others. We can share Jesus with others just by how we live. People notice how we act and are impressed to know more about us and why we do what is right at all costs.

EIGHT

Program Outline			
LESSON SECTION	MINUTES	ACTIVITIES	MATERIALS NEEDED
Welcome	ongoing	Greet students at door; hear pleased/troubled	none
1 Readiness Activities	up to 10	A. <i>Build a Tower</i> B. <i>Three-legged Walk</i> C. <i>Baptistry Tour</i>	building blocks or cardboard boxes wide strips of cloth, chain none
* Prayer and Praise*	up to 10	See page 83. *Prayer and Praise may be used at any time during the program.	
2 Bible Lesson	up to 20	Experiencing the Story	large box(es), two adult Bible-times costumes, two adult male actors, <i>Little Voices Praise Him</i> songbook
		Bible Study	Bible
		Memory Verse	Bible
3 Applying the Lesson	up to 15	A. <i>What Could You Do?</i> B. <i>Missionaries Today</i>	rock, cookie, toy stuffed cat, adhesive bandage, jump rope, bag, <i>Little Voices Praise Him</i> songbook information about a missionary or invite a guest missionary
4 Sharing the Lesson	up to 15	<i>Memory Verse Chain</i>	Memory Verse Chain pattern (see p. 146), paper, scissors, tape or stapler

Teacher Enrichment

"It was this joy that filled the hearts of Paul and Silas when they prayed and sang praises to God at midnight in the Philippian dungeon. Christ was beside them there, and the light of His presence irradiated the gloom with the glory of the courts above. From Rome, Paul wrote, unmindful of his fetters as he saw the spread of the gospel, 'I therein do rejoice, yea, and will rejoice.' Philippians 1:18" (*Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing*, p. 35).

"The apostles did not regard as vain their labors in Philippi. They had met

much opposition and persecution; but the intervention of Providence in their behalf, and the conversion of the jailer and his household, more than atoned for the disgrace and suffering they had endured. The news of their unjust imprisonment and miraculous deliverance became known through all that region, and this brought the work of the apostles to the notice of a large number who otherwise would not have been reached" (*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 218).

Room Decorations

See Lesson 4.

Teaching the Lesson

Welcome

Welcome children at the door. Ask how their week has been—what they are pleased/troubled about. Ask if they are preparing to bring or have brought something for the community service project (if applicable). Encourage them to share any experiences from last week's lesson study. Have them begin the readiness activity of your choice.



Readiness Activities

Select the activity most appropriate for your situation.

A. Build a Tower

You Need:

- ☐ building blocks or cardboard boxes

Have the children build a tower of building blocks or cardboard boxes. Ask: **What happens when we shake the tower?** Let the children shake it until it falls over.

Debriefing

Allow responses as you ask: **What happened?** Say: **Sometimes deep underground the earth moves. This causes the earth to shake, and buildings may fall over just like our tower did. We call this an earthquake. In today's story Paul and Silas were in an earthquake. The earthquake opened the prison doors. They could have escaped but they did what was right. Our message is:**



We share Jesus by doing what is right.

Say that with me.

B. Three-legged Walk

You Need:

- ☐ wide strips of cloth
- ☐ chain

Have the children sit on the floor in pairs. Use wide strips of cloth to tie the ankles of each pair together. Ask them to stand and walk around the room. After each pair has tried, remove the cloth strips, and have the children sit in a circle.

Debriefing

Allow responses as you ask: **How easy was it to walk around when you were tied together? What would you do if you were chained together all day?** Say: **This is what happened to Paul and Silas. They were put in prison and chained together.** Let children feel the weight of real chains. **But Paul and Silas didn't get angry. They did what was right. Our message is:**



We share Jesus by doing what is right.

Say that with me.

C. Baptistry Tour

The children probably have seen a baptism but did not fully understand what was happening. Arrange to look at the baptistry. Explain that being baptized tells everyone else that we have asked Jesus to make us clean on the inside. And when people decide to follow Jesus, they want everyone to know about it.

Debriefing

Allow responses as you ask: **Have you ever seen a baptism? What happens? Why are people baptized?** (The person wants to follow Jesus, wants everyone to know they love Jesus, etc.) Say: **Paul and Silas baptized many people. Today we will learn about a very special baptism and how Paul and Silas did what was right. Our message is:**



We share Jesus by doing what is right.

Say that with me.

PRAYER AND PRAISE



Fellowship

Report the students' joys and sorrows (pleased and troubled) as reported to you at the door (as appropriate). Allow time for sharing experiences from last week's lesson study and review the memory verse. Acknowledge any birthdays, special events, or achievements. Give a special, warm greeting to all visitors.

Suggested Songs

"Prayer to Grow Strong" (*Little Voices Praise Him*, no. 196)

"I Have the Joy" (*Little Voices Praise Him*, no. 216)

"Jesus Helps Me Choose" (*Little Voices Praise Him*, no. 304)

"Oh, Where" (*Little Voices Praise Him*, no. 311)

"This Little Light of Mine" (*Little Voices Praise Him*, no. 313)

Mission

Say: **Today our story is about _____ and how they shared Jesus by doing what was right.** Use a story from *Children's Mission*.

Offering

Say: **When we give our offerings, we help other people learn how to love God and live honestly and joyfully as Paul and Silas did.**

Prayer

Sing a prayer song. Sing together the first verse of "Prayer to Grow Strong" (*Little Voices Praise Him*, no. 196).

*Prayer and Praise may be used at any time during the program.

2

Bible Lesson

Experiencing the Story

You Need:

- ☐ large box(es) (see activity)
- ☐ two adult Bible-times costumes
- ☐ two adult male actors
- ☐ *Little Voices Praise Him* songbook

Have a large box (a washing machine box or a packing case) available. Let two or three of the children get inside, and shake it to give the feeling of being in an earthquake. If you have a large group, you will need more than one box.

Have two men dressed as Paul and Silas read or tell the story.

Paul: Good morning. My name is Paul, and this is my friend Silas. One day we were on our way to pray when a servant girl ran after us shouting, "These men are servants of the Most High God. They are telling you how you can be saved!" She was right, but everyone knew she had an evil spirit inside her. After this happened for several days, I said to that spirit, "In Jesus' name, leave her!" The evil spirit left her, and she immediately became silent.

Silas: Her masters were very angry. They grabbed hold of us and took us to the rulers. A crowd soon gathered, and everyone became very angry with us. They beat us with sticks and then put us in jail, where we were chained together.

Paul: The jail was cold, damp, and dark, but we were happy because we knew Jesus was with us, so we sang some songs to praise Him. We were happy to be in jail for Jesus, even if we were in chains. Sing a praise song with us now.

(Sing "Praise Him, Praise Him" [*Little Voices Praise Him*, no. 221].)

Silas: We kept singing way into the night. The other prisoners listened to our songs about Jesus. They had not heard Jesus songs before. The man in charge of the jail couldn't believe what we were doing. People don't usually sing praise songs in jail!

Paul: During the night the ground began to shake. It shook so hard that the prison walls shook and the door to our cell opened. All our chains fell off too. The earthquake woke up the jailer. He was sure we all had escaped. He thought he was going to get in trouble because his prisoners had escaped. He almost killed himself, but we shouted to him and told him not to worry—we were all there.

Silas: The jailer couldn't believe that we were so honest that we hadn't run away. He took us to his home and washed all our cuts and bruises. He asked us to tell him about our friend Jesus. Before the night was over, he and all his family wanted Jesus to be their Saviour too. We were glad to baptize them. Then we all sang praises to God together.

Paul: I really like to sing. And I like to hear you sing too. Let's sing the first verse of "Praise Him, Praise Him" again.

Debriefing

Allow responses as you ask: **What happened to Paul and Silas? What do you think Paul and Silas felt like while in jail?** (uncomfortable, nervous, happy to be doing something for Jesus, at peace) **What would you have thought if you had heard Paul and Silas singing? Why didn't Paul and Silas run away during the earthquake? How did Paul and Silas share Jesus with the jailer and other prisoners? Do you want to do the right things for Jesus too? Remember our message:**



We share Jesus by doing what is right.

Bible Study

You Need:

- ☐ Bible

Open your Bible to Acts 16:16–34. Point to the text and say: **This is where today's story is found in the Bible.** Read the verses aloud, paraphrasing as necessary.

Debriefing

Allow responses as you ask: **Why were Paul and Silas put in jail? What did they do in jail that was so unusual? What did Paul and Silas do when their chains fell off?** (stayed there, told the jailer about Jesus)

What did the jailer do for Paul and Silas? What did Paul and Silas do for the jailer and his family? Remember . . .



We share Jesus by doing what is right.

Memory Verse

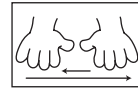
Turn to 2 Corinthians 8:21 and say: **This is where we find our memory verse in God's Word, the Bible.** Read the verse aloud. **"Do what is right . . . in the eyes of the Lord."** Then proceed to teach the memory verse as outlined below.

You Need:

- ☐ Bible

Do what is

With palms down, move hands from side to side.



right . . .

Lift up right hand.



in the eyes

Point to eyes



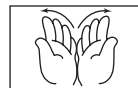
of the Lord.

Point fingers up; bring the side of the hand from forehead to chin.



2 Corinthians 8:21

Palms together, then open.



3

Applying the Lesson

A. What Could You Do?

You Need:

- ☐ rock
- ☐ cookie
- ☐ toy stuffed cat
- ☐ adhesive bandage
- ☐ jump rope
- ☐ bag
- ☐ *Little Voices Praise Him* songbook

In advance, gather the following objects or pictures of these objects, and place them in a bag: rock, cookie, toy stuffed cat, adhesive bandage, and jump rope. Ask for volunteers each to take one object out of your bag. Then you read the scenario about it. Allow response time.

1. David is throwing rocks at his fence. One goes too far and

breaks the neighbor's window. What could David do that would be sharing Jesus with his neighbor? (Tell his parents; say he's sorry to his neighbor; offer to help pay for a new window; stop throwing rocks.)

2. Jackson asks his mom if he and his friends can have a cookie. His mom says no, because she made them for the new neighbors. What could Jackson do that would be sharing Jesus with his friends and mom and new neighbors? (Obey; say OK; find something to play with; offer to take the cookies to the new neighbors.)

3. **It is Paige's job to feed her cat, Pepper, and give her fresh water every day. Her friend Amber wants her to come out to play. Paige wants to play with Amber. She doesn't want to feed Pepper first. What could Paige do that would be sharing Jesus with her mom? with Amber?** (Obey and feed Pepper first.)
4. **Miguel hurt his knee yesterday, and he can't run and play tag with his friends. What could Miguel do that would be sharing Jesus with them?** (Smile anyway; sing; sit near his friends and encourage them while they play.)
5. **Kirstin is playing jump rope with her friends when she misses the rope and falls. Her friends say she's out. She thinks it's not fair, because her untied shoelace tripped her up. What could Kirstin do to share Jesus with them?** (Wait for her next turn; accept that she's out; say that's OK; smile.)

Say: **Let's sing together "Jesus Helps Me Choose"** (*Little Voices Praise Him*, no. 304).

Debriefing

Allow responses as you ask: **Is it always easy to do the right thing?** (no) **Who can help you choose to do the right thing?** (Jesus)

Say: **Remember Paul and Silas in jail. They didn't complain; they sang songs of praise to Jesus. They didn't run away when their chains fell off during the earthquake. Because they did the right things, they shared Jesus with others.**

You can share Jesus with others too when you make the right

choices. People notice how you act and what you say. They see you when you do what is right. That is one way you can share Jesus with others. Let's say our message again:



We share Jesus by doing what is right.

B. Missionaries Today (optional)

You Need:

- ☐ information about a missionary or have a missionary guest

Talk about a missionary family from your area, or invite a former missionary to tell about life as a missionary.

Debriefing

Say: **Thank you, (name), for coming to Sabbath School. What can we do to help (name)?** Discuss ideas (send money or old Sabbath School papers; pray; ask parents if they could sponsor a child who needs extra help; send an e-mail from your Sabbath School to a missionary family; etc.).

You don't have to wait until you are grown up and can travel to faraway places to tell people about Jesus. Think of other ways that we can tell others about Jesus.

Remember: Paul and Silas shared Jesus with others just by the way they acted. They were cheerful and thankful and honest.

People notice how you act and what you say. That is one way you can share Jesus with anyone you meet. Let's say our message together again:



We share Jesus by doing what is right.

4

Sharing the Lesson

Memory Verse Chain**You Need:**

- ☐ Memory Verse Chain pattern (see p. 146)
- ☐ paper
- ☐ scissors
- ☐ tape or stapler

In advance, make a copy of the Memory Verse Chain pattern (see page 146) for each child, and cut the strips apart. Tell the children they are going to make a memory verse chain. The chain will remind them of the chains that Paul and Silas

wore in jail. Help them tape or staple the memory verse strips together in the correct order (the strips are numbered) to form a paper chain.

Debriefing

Allow responses as you ask: **What did you make? What does it remind you of?** (chains Paul and Silas wore in jail)

How did Paul and Silas act in jail? (happy, thankful, honest, etc.)
How can we act so that other people will see that we love Jesus? (the same, do the right things)

Say: **Take your chain home and share it with someone as you tell them about Paul and Silas in jail. Remember that you share Jesus with others by the way you act. Let's say our message one last time:**



We share Jesus by doing what is right.

Closing

Remind the children of your continuing community service project and the part they are playing (what to bring, etc.), and that next week is the last week you will be collecting items. Say: **Dear Jesus, help us to remember this week to share You with others by doing what is right. We love You. Amen.**

STUDENT LESSON

Prison Praises

References

Acts 16:16–34;
The Acts of the
Apostles, pp.
211–220

Memory Verse

“Do what is right
... in the eyes
of the Lord”
(2 Corinthians
8:21, NIV).

The Message

We share
Jesus by doing
what is right.

Paul and Silas were in jail. They could easily have grumbled and complained, but they loved Jesus and did some things very differently. Let’s see how they shared Jesus.

“These men are servants of the Most High God! They are telling you how you can be saved!”

Paul and Silas spun around. A girl with an evil spirit followed them. Her masters made money by listening to this evil spirit and then telling people what was going to happen to them. For days the girl followed and shouted the same message after Paul and Silas.

Even though what the girl was saying was right, it was not good for people to think that Christians had anything to do with evil spirits. So Paul finally turned to the girl and ordered the evil spirit, “By the power of Jesus Christ I command you to come out of her!”

The evil spirit left the girl immediately, and she became quiet.

The servant girl’s masters became very, very angry. They dragged Paul and Silas to the city rulers. “These men are Jews, and they are making trouble!” they shouted. “They are teaching things that are unlawful for us to practice!”

An angry crowd gathered and heard them. They began to beat Paul and Silas with big sticks. So the rulers threw Paul and Silas into jail.

Even though they were in pain, that night

Paul and Silas began to pray and sing praises to God. The other prisoners and the jailer couldn’t believe what they were hearing!

About midnight the ground suddenly shook so hard that all the doors of the jail fell open and all the chains fell off the prisoners. The jailer was sure all the prisoners had escaped. He shook with fear. He believed he would be punished because the prisoners were gone.

But just then Paul shouted, “We are all here!”

“Bring me a light!” the jailer called to a servant. He ran to look for himself. Not one prisoner had run away!

The jailer took Paul and Silas to his own home. There he fed them and lis-

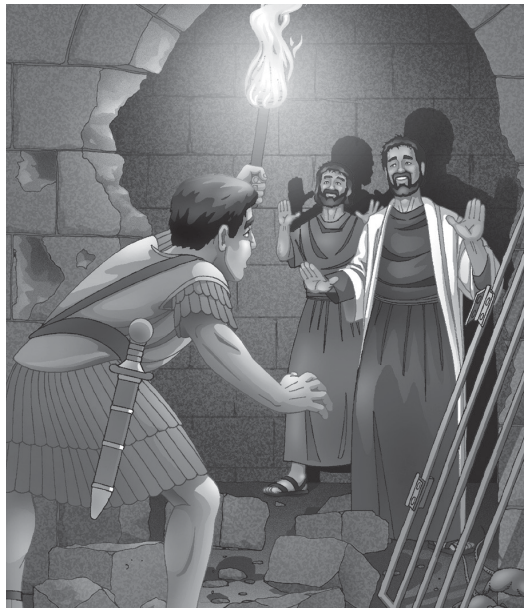
tened as they told him about Jesus. “Men,” he said, “what must I do to be saved?”

Paul and Silas smiled. “Just believe!” they said. “Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved.”

“I believe,” the jailer said as he tenderly washed Paul’s and Silas’s wounds.

Before the night was over, Paul and Silas baptized the jailer and all his family.

Paul and Silas did the right things. They praised God even when bad things happened to them. And they showed the jailer about Jesus’ love. You can share about Jesus by doing what is right too.



Do and Say

Sabbath

Each day this week, read the lesson story and review the memory verse:

Do what is With palms down, move hands from side to side.
right Lift up right hand.
in the eyes Point to eyes
of the Lord. Point fingers up; bring the side of the hand from forehead to chin.
2 Corinthians 8:21 . Palms together, then open.

Sunday

Encourage your child to share the memory verse chain made in Sabbath School with someone and tell them about Paul and Silas in prison. Or make a paper chain by joining strips of paper with a memory verse word written on each.

Monday

Read together Acts 16:16–34. Ask: What did the jailer do for Paul and Silas? What did they do for the jailer?

Tell your child about your baptism. What did it mean to you? Let them “baptize” a doll, or duck their head under the water at bath time.

Tuesday

Have your child sit on the floor as you bind their legs together with yarn or a scarf. Ask: Can you stand up? What was it like for Paul and Silas?

Sing praise songs together before

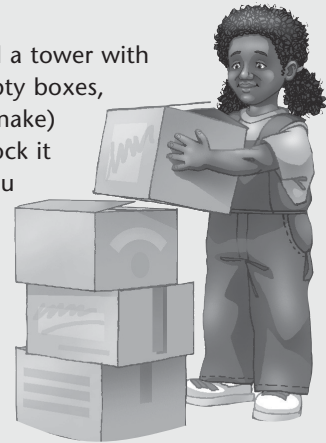


prayer. Thank Jesus for keeping your family safe.

Wednesday

Let your child build a tower with building blocks or empty boxes, then pretend to feel (make) an earthquake and knock it down. Ask: How do you think Paul and Silas felt during the earthquake? Who watched over them? Why didn't they run away? Thank Jesus for watching over your child.

Collect community service project items to take to Sabbath School.



Thursday

Look in your medicine cupboard together. Talk about what is good for cuts and bruises. Let your child put an adhesive bandage on you. Thank Jesus for His healing power.

Friday

For worship, help your child act out the lesson story. Get a big box or laundry basket for the jail, and have your child sit in it. Shake it as if an earthquake is happening.

Sing praise songs and pray together as Paul and Silas did.