

Wednesday

Read Acts 16:25 *Praying and singing to God*

Questions for Reflection and Application

1. What sustained Paul and Silas while in prison? How was this a witness to others?
2. What prayers and songs sustain you while undergoing hardship? How are you a witness to others?

Prayer Focus: Loving God, ground us in our faith as we undergo hardship. Help us nurture the resources of our faith to be ever-present sources of strength.

Thursday

Read Acts 16:26-28 *Do not harm yourself...*

Questions for Reflection and Application

1. Why were Paul and Silas not tempted to escape when the jail doors were opened?
2. How do they demonstrate integrity?

Prayer Focus God, when I am tempted to do the easy, but less honorable thing, send your guiding Spirit.

Friday *Believe on the Lord Jesus and you will be saved*

Read Acts 16:29-34

Questions for Reflection and Application

1. What about Paul and Silas so impressed the jailer that he asked for salvation?
2. How does the jailer express his gratitude and joy for salvation?

Prayer Focus

Saving God, refresh and renew our enthusiasm for my faith in You. May my actions demonstrate that You are my first and greatest love.

An Ironic Escape

While imprisoned, Paul and Silas were praying and singing. Suddenly an earthquake shook the prison; doors were opened and chains unfastened. The jailer supposed that prisoners escaped, but Paul and Silas had not. The jailer asked what he could do to be saved. He and his entire household were baptized as believers in Jesus.

This story is one of reversals: everyone whom we assume to be free (the jailer, magistrates, owners of slave girl) is really in bondage, and everyone whom we assume to be enslaved (Paul, Silas, slave girl) has been freed. Christ makes us free.

Message Notes:

Small Group Format

Welcome

- Introductions/getting acquainted
- Mutual Invitation question: *Share an experience of integrity witnessed in another such that it inspired you to become like that person in word, deed, belief.*

Opening Prayer

Song (optional)

Reflection on Acts 16:16-34.

- Have someone read **Acts 16:16-34**.
- Discuss observations about the text
 - *What word or phrase strikes you the most?*
 - *What do you think is the most important point of the text?*

Application of Scripture (The central transformative questions)

- What did you hear God say to you through this week's Scriptures?
- What are you doing about it?
- How can we support you?

Share your faith (in groups of 3)

- *How have you experienced God recently in your life?*
(This is a weekly question – it may be difficult to answer at first, but if you ask it each week you may start to notice God more in your life.)

Pray for each other

Refreshments (optional)

May 26, 2019

Surprise!



Monday

Read Acts 16:16-18 *A way of salvation*

Questions for Reflection and Application

1. What does the slave girl who told fortunes, yielding great money for her owners, remind you of today?
2. How does the slave girl experience the “way of salvation” of which she spoke? What does salvation mean for her?

Prayer Focus

Most High God, we pray for those enslaved in unhealthy circumstances to bring wealth to others. Save them that they might know freedom and your love.

Tuesday *These men are disturbing our city....*

Read Acts 16:19-24

Questions for Reflection and Application

1. What angers the girl's owners such that they take Paul and Silas to the magistrate?
2. How might Paul and Silas have felt being stripped, beaten, flogged, and imprisoned for proclaiming salvation in Jesus' name?

Prayer Focus

Source of Courage, grant me such faith and conviction to stand up for my beliefs, even when I am not respected. Embolden all who speak up for your inclusive love and justice.