

Paul and Silas in Prison; Philippian Jailer Converted Acts 16:16-40



New Testament 6
Part 1: The Apostle Paul

SUNDAY MORNING

New Testament 6 [Class Attendance Sheet](#) provided in activity sheets (NOTE: The document is interactive, allowing the teacher to type in the Class, Teacher, and the children's names.)

SCRIPTURE REFERENCES:

Acts 16:16-40; 2 Corinthians 11:25; Romans 8:28

MEMORY WORK:

YOUNGER CHILDREN: “[A]t midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing” (Acts 16:25a).

OLDER CHILDREN: “But at midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the prisoners were listening to them” (Acts 16:25).

SONGS AND FINGERPLAYS (SEE END OF LESSON FOR WORDS):

A [song book](#) and [audio recordings](#) of many of the curriculum songs are available on the curriculum Web site.

- [“The Philippian Jailer”](#)

LESSON VISUALS AND TEACHING AIDS (NOTE ANY DISCLAIMERS):

- See [AP's Pinterest page](#) for ideas on bulletin boards, visuals, crafts, etc. [DISCLAIMER: Pins may sometimes need to be adjusted to be Scriptural.]
- [Paul & the Fruit of the Spirit](#) Bible fact cards (provided under “N.T. 6 Bible Facts” on curriculum Web site)
- “Summary of the Bible” from “[Kids Prep](#)” CD by Jeff Miller
- Pictures/drawings from any books listed under 3rd-4th Grader Pre-Class Activities/Learning Centers
- Betty Lukens' felt pieces
- Life of Paul (Series 2) A Beka picture set (DISCLAIMER: use the cards, *not the lesson book*)
- [“Map of Paul's Evangelistic Trips”](#) (provided in map section of curriculum Web site)
- Puppets of Paul, Silas, and Philippian Jailer (Let the puppets describe their experiences firsthand.)



- Ask a man from the congregation to dress up as the jailer, and interview him about this eventful night in his life.

PERSONAL APPLICATION:

When bad things happen to me, I can pray and trust in God just as Paul and Silas did, because I know that He will work everything out for my good.

LESSON STARTS HERE

INTRODUCTION: (YOUNGER CHILDREN)

Last week, we learned about a woman who was baptized (became a Christian). She sold expensive purple cloth, and she wanted to obey God. Who can tell me her name? (Lydia) Good! We want to be like Lydia and obey God’s Word. Today, we are going to talk about some more people who became Christians because Paul and Silas taught them about Jesus.

INTRODUCTION: (OLDER CHILDREN)

Review last week’s lesson.

Have you ever been accused of something you didn’t do? Have you ever been punished for doing the right thing? How do you think you would feel if you were put in prison for doing what God wanted you to do? Paul and Silas were not only beaten, but they were thrown in prison for teaching about Jesus! Let’s see what we can learn from their courage.

POINTS TO EMPHASIZE:

1. At some point after Paul, Silas, Luke, and Timothy taught Lydia the Gospel, they were returning to “the place of prayer” outside of Philippi (probably where they first met Lydia and others). On their way there, a young slave girl possessed by a demon followed them. The Jewish men who owned the girl used her to make money as a fortuneteller. The girl kept calling out to the people around them: “These men [Paul, Silas, Luke, and Timothy] are the servants of the Most High God, who proclaim to us the way of salvation” (Acts 16:17). [See Acts 19:11-20 for a similar encounter between Paul and a **demon-possessed** man, an encounter with very different results.] She continued to follow them around, annoying Paul. He was angry at the demon that controlled her—not at the young girl. He turned to the girl and told the demon, in the name of Jesus Christ (i.e., by His authority), to come out of the girl. Suddenly, she was in her right mind and able to control what she said and did. When the slave girl’s owners saw that their source of income was gone, they took Paul and Silas to the local authorities [magistrates] to have them punished. The girl’s owners encouraged a mob of people to be angry with Paul and Silas, telling lies about what they did (Acts 16:20-21).

RECOMMENDED READING FOR TEACHERS: See the articles “[Exorcism, Demons, Witchcraft, and Astrology](#)” by Dave Miller and “[Demons: Ancient Superstition or Historical Reality?](#)” and “[Demon Theology](#)” by Wayne Jackson on the Apologetics Press Web site for a discussion about demons, the Bible, and modern times.





Demon possession: When an evil/unclean spirit went into a person’s body, it could cause blindness, speaking, or the inability to speak, convulsions, etc. Demon possession only occurred during New Testament times.

2. Under Roman law, any Roman citizen accused of a crime (even slaves) had the right to defend themselves in a hearing or trial. But Paul and Silas were not even given the opportunity to defend themselves. Their robes were torn off, and they were beaten with rods. After this severe beating, Paul and Silas were thrown into the “inner prison”—the very darkest, coldest dungeon of the prison. There was (supposedly) no escape. To add to their humiliation and pain, both men were locked into stocks.

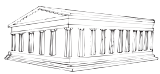


HISTORICAL NOTE: Romans did not particularly like Jews, just as Jews did not like Christians, but for different reasons. Judaism was a legal religion in the Roman Empire, but Roman law said that Jews could not make converts, or “proselytize.” At this point in history, the Romans considered the Church to be a branch of Judaism (a sect). The Jews hoped to convince the Romans that Christians were a separate entity (not just a part of Judaism) and a danger to the Empire. If successful, the government would help Jewish extremists to eradicate the Church. The slave girl’s owners were appealing to the Romans’ pride and their prejudices (Acts 16:20).

3. In spite of their physical pain and terrible surroundings, Paul and Silas decided to sing praises to God and pray. At about midnight, a powerful earthquake shook the prison, broke their **stocks**, and opened all the doors to the prison. All the other prisoners were freed from their chains as well. The jailer woke up and saw what had happened. Frightened and knowing that he would pay with his life if his prisoners escaped, he attempted to kill himself by falling on his sword. But Paul shouted at him not to harm himself; not one of the prisoners had escaped. The jailer asked, “What must I do to be saved?” Paul told him to “believe in the Lord Jesus.”



Stocks: Two thick boards, with hole(s) cut for a prisoner’s head or feet, were clamped together, making it impossible for a prisoner to move very much, much less escape. Some stocks were constructed to lock both feet, both hands, and the head all at once.



HISTORICAL NOTE: Roman “lictors” were men whose job it was to publicly beat people as punishment. This beating—usually in the marketplace in the center of the city—was designed to make people admit their guilt, to humiliate people accused of crimes, and to discourage others from following them. According to Jewish tradition, a beating was limited to “39 stripes” (lashes with a whip made of three leather throngs), lest the Law’s limit of 40 be broken (Deuteronomy 25:3); if the man doing the beating gave more than 39, he would be punished himself. But Roman law had no limit on the number of lashes.



RECOMMENDED READING FOR TEACHERS: See the articles “[Baptism and the Philippian Jailer](#)” by Dave Miller and “[One Question, Three Different Answers](#)” by Eric Lyons on the Apologetics Press Web site for discussion about the specifics and implications of the jailer’s conversion.

4. The jailer took Paul and Silas—but none of the other prisoners—to his home, which may have been above the prison. They taught the jailer and his household about Jesus Christ while the jailer kindly gave them food and medical attention. He and his household believed in Jesus and were baptized that night. Then he returned them to their cells.
5. The next morning, the Roman officials wanted to let Paul and Silas go quietly; maybe the earthquake had frightened them, too. But Paul refused to leave the prison. He accused them of allowing “uncondemned” Roman citizens to be beaten, which was against the law, and said he would not leave the prison until the officials came to the prison and apologized in person. The officials finally went to the prison and pleaded with Paul and Silas to leave their town. They had neither legal authority nor right to force other Roman citizens to leave a city without a trial. But if these authorities held a trial, their mistake in beating Paul and Silas would have become known to the Roman government.
6. Paul and Silas did finally leave the prison, but they did not leave town right away. They went to the house of Lydia. They could share their story about the earthquake with her and her household, encouraging and being encouraged.
7. Paul and Silas trusted God even in hard times, even when they were enduring terrible physical suffering. They were willing to trust God because He would work everything out for their good (and for the benefit of the Church as a whole). What can I do when bad things happen to me? I can pray, praise God, study His Word, and trust Him.

PRE-CLASS ACTIVITIES/LEARNING CENTERS (TO BE USED AS CHILDREN ARE ARRIVING—BEFORE CLASS, AND UP TO THE FIRST FIVE MINUTES OF CLASS; OR AS HOMEWORK):

- Click here for complete [Activity Book](#).

Ages 2-5:

- [“Paul and Silas in Prison Coloring Sheet”](#) (provided in activity sheets)
- Help the children make sack puppets of Paul and the jailer. ([“Man Face Cutouts”](#) provided in activity sheets)
- The same face patterns can be used to make masks for the main characters of the story. Color and cut out masks and glue them to large craft sticks to use to retell the story. ([“Man Face Cutouts”](#) provided in activity sheets)
- Make “go and preach” sandals. Trace the children’s feet onto brown poster board and cut it out (or make a basic pattern for everyone’s feet). Cut strips of brown construction paper eight inches long and one inch wide. Staple one end of a strip to the bottom of the “sandal” and loop it over the top of the sandal, leaving space so that children can slide their feet in. Staple the other end of the strip to the bottom of the sandal. Write on the straps, “We will go and tell others about Jesus, like Paul and Silas did.”
- Memory verse chain: Cut out strips of different colored construction paper with one word from the memory verse written on each strip. Make enough so that each child can make a chain. Then help the children put them in the correct order and staple them together to make a chain by looping the strips together. (While making chains, tell the children that Paul and Silas were in prison and their chains fell off.) ([“Memory Verse Chain Activity”](#) provided in activity sheets)

1st-2nd Graders:

- “Life of Paul” egg carton game: In each section of an egg carton, put places where important events in Paul’s life happened. Write statements or questions describing what happened to Paul in each place on small scrolls or small cardboard disks. Students should match each question to its correct answer by putting the scroll/disk in the correct section of the carton.
- “Who Am I” game: Divide the class into two teams. Give one clue at a time about a person in this unit, and let the students try to guess the person you are describing. (Examples: Saul, Barnabas, Stephen, Ananias, Lydia, Philippian Jailer, Silas, etc.) The team that guesses correctly first, gets a point.
- Memory verse chain: Cut out strips of different colored construction paper with one word from the memory verse written on each strip. Make enough so that each child can make a chain. Then help the children put them in the correct order and staple them together to make a chain by looping the strips together. (While making chains, tell the children that Paul and Silas were in prison and their chains fell off.) (“[Memory Verse Chain Activity](#)” provided in activity sheets)

3rd-4th Graders:

- “Life of Paul” egg carton game: In each section of an egg carton, put places where important events in Paul’s life happened. Write statements or questions describing what happened to Paul in each place on small scrolls or small cardboard disks. Students should match each question to its correct answer by putting the scroll/disk in the correct section of the carton.
- “Who Am I” game: Divide the class into two teams. Give one clue at a time about a person in this unit, and let the students try to guess the person you are describing. (Examples: Saul, Barnabas, Stephen, Ananias, Lydia, Philippian Jailer, Silas, etc.) The team that guesses correctly first, gets a point.
- Memory Verse Scramble: Write memory verses from this unit on index cards, one word per card. Scramble the words and have students unscramble the verses. You can divide the class into groups to work together; have the groups trade verses until all the groups have unscrambled each verse. (“[Memory Verse Scramble Activity](#)” provided in activity sheets)
- Have the children read the following:
 - *Discovery* magazine articles: “The Conversion of a Philippian Jailer,” ([December, 2008](#)); “A Man Name Legion!” and “Demons!” ([December, 2002](#))
 - *Jailhouse Rock Arch* book, by Glynis Belec

SONGS:

“THE PHILIPPIAN JAILER” ([Click to Hear](#))

Author: Lora Laycook

(Tune: “Pass Me Not, O Gentle Savior”)

VERSE 1:

Paul and Silas were in prison,
They were not afraid.
They sang praises there at midnight,
And they also prayed.

CHORUS:

Our God, our God, heard their prayer that night;
All the prison doors were opened,

By His power and might.

VERSE 2:

The trembling jailer cried unto them,
“What must I do to be saved?”
When they preached Christ unto him,
He was not afraid.

(CHORUS)

Now the jailer was so happy,
The same hour of the night,
He and those he loved so dearly,
Were baptized into Christ!

(CHORUS)

*** IF YOU HAVE SUGGESTIONS PERTAINING TO THIS LESSON, PLEASE CLICK THE
“SUGGESTION” BUTTON BESIDE THE BUTTON FOR THIS LESSON ON THE
CURRICULUM WEB SITE.



Paul and Silas in Prison; Philippian Jailer Converted Acts 16:16-40



New Testament 6
Part 1: The Apostle Paul

WEDNESDAY EVENING

New Testament 6 [Class Attendance Sheet](#) provided in activity sheets (NOTE: The document is interactive, allowing the teacher to type in the Class, Teacher, and the children's names.)

SCRIPTURE REFERENCES:

Acts 16:16-40; 2 Corinthians 11:25; Romans 8:28

MEMORY WORK:

YOUNGER CHILDREN: “[A]t midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing” (Acts 16:25a).

OLDER CHILDREN: “But at midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the prisoners were listening to them” (Acts 16:25).

SONGS AND FINGERPLAYS (SEE END OF SUNDAY'S LESSON FOR WORDS):

A [song book](#) and [audio recordings](#) of many of the curriculum songs are available on the curriculum Web site.

- [“The Philippian Jailer”](#)

LESSON VISUALS AND TEACHING AIDS (NOTE ANY DISCLAIMERS):

- See [AP's Pinterest page](#) for ideas on bulletin boards, visuals, crafts, etc. [DISCLAIMER: Pins may sometimes need to be adjusted to be Scriptural.]
- [Paul & the Fruit of the Spirit](#) Bible fact cards (provided under “N.T. 6 Bible Facts” on curriculum Web site)
- “Summary of the Bible” from [“Kids Prep”](#) CD by Jeff Miller
- Pictures/drawings from any books listed under 3rd-4th Grader Pre-Class Activities/ Learning Centers
- Betty Lukens' felt pieces
- Life of Paul (Series 2) A Beka picture set (DISCLAIMER: use the cards, *not the lesson book*)
- [“Map of Paul's Evangelistic Trips”](#) (provided in map section of curriculum Web site)
- Puppets of Paul, Silas, and Philippian Jailer (Let the puppets describe their experiences firsthand.)



- Ask a man from the congregation to dress up as the jailer, and interview him about this eventful night in his life.

PERSONAL APPLICATION:

When bad things happen to me, I can pray and trust in God just as Paul and Silas did, because I know that He will work everything out for my good.

INTRODUCTION:

Review [N.T. 6 Bible Fact Flash Cards](#) (provided under “N.T. 6 Bible Facts” on curriculum Web site)

POINTS TO EMPHASIZE:

Review Sunday’s lesson (see [N.T. 6 Review Questions](#) for example questions).

Let the younger children use sack puppets to tell the story. With older children, discuss the fact that Paul wrote Philippians while he was in prison several years later, and that letter is full of references to **joy**. Read those passages together.

Sing children’s songs about joy (“I’ve Got the Joy, Joy, Joy, Joy”; “If You’re Happy and You Know It”; etc.)

Review in depth how the Philippian jailer and his family became Christians (see the articles below).



RECOMMENDED READING FOR TEACHERS: See the articles “[Baptism and the Philippian Jailer](#)” by Dave Miller and “[One Question, Three Different Answers](#)” by Eric Lyons on the Apologetics Press Web site for discussion about the specifics and implications of the jailer’s conversion.

PRE-CLASS ACTIVITIES/LEARNING CENTERS (TO BE USED AS CHILDREN ARE ARRIVING—BEFORE CLASS, AND UP TO THE FIRST FIVE MINUTES OF CLASS; OR AS HOMEWORK):

See Sunday morning’s lesson.

*** IF YOU HAVE SUGGESTIONS PERTAINING TO THIS LESSON, PLEASE CLICK THE “SUGGESTION” BUTTON BESIDE THE BUTTON FOR THIS LESSON ON THE CURRICULUM WEB SITE.

