

Paul, Silas and the jailer

You can do this session with your children any time you like. The story is taken from Acts 16:20-34. If you want to read it online just go to this link: <https://www.biblegateway.com> and type the passage in the search engine.

Start

How do you feel if you are treated unfairly?

Our story for today is about 2 friends called Paul and Silas who were followers of Jesus. In the story today we see how they react when they are treated unfairly by other people.

Bible story

Paul and Silas were friends and they were going around telling people about Jesus. One day they were in a place called Philippi which the Romans were in charge of. Paul and Silas ran into trouble when they were arrested. They hadn't done anything wrong, but some people didn't like that they were following Jesus and talking about him. They grabbed Paul and Silas and brought them to the marketplace. They told the people in charge, "These 2 friends are troublemakers! They say that we shouldn't live like Romans do!" This was a very serious thing to say, because it meant Paul and Silas were being accused of fighting against the Roman emperor all because they were following Jesus! The people in charge had Paul and Silas hurt then put in jail. The jailer was told to guard them closely, so he put their feet in the stocks so they couldn't walk around.

Paul and Silas had bruises and were hurting because people had been hitting them. It had been a very hard day, but they knew Jesus was with them. They decided to sing songs about Jesus in the prison. The other people could hear them, then something amazing happened. There was a huge earthquake and all the chains of the prisoners fell off and the prison doors opened up. The jailer woke up and felt really scared. He knew that if any prisoners were to escape he would be in big trouble. But Paul called out, "Don't panic, we're all still here!" The jailer was so relieved and he came to see Paul and Silas. He asked them, "How can I be a friend of Jesus like both of you are?" Paul said, "You can follow Jesus by believing in him and he will be your friend just like he's our friend." The jailer was so happy and he brought Paul and Silas to his home and took care of them because they'd been hurt earlier by people. Paul and Silas explained all about Jesus to the jailer and his family and they all became friends of Jesus.

How do you think Paul and Silas felt when they were in prison?

How do you think Paul and Silas felt when the earthquake came and freed them?

Why do you think they were kind to the jailer even though he'd been unkind to them at the start?

What does this story show us about what Jesus is like?

What to do next

Below are some suggestions:

- You could chat about your favourite part of the story.
- You could re-create the story with lego/plasticine.
- You could act out the story.

You could pray together. Below are some ideas for prayer:

- Thank Jesus that he is always with us even when things are hard.
- Pray for people who are unkind like the jailer was at the start of the story. Ask Jesus to show them who he is just like he did in this story.
- Pray for anything you are finding hard right now and ask Jesus to help you.



Paul and Silas told the jailer all about who Jesus is and he and his family became followers of Jesus too.

