

# Paul's Jailer Believes in Jesus

Acts 16:16-34

First- and second-graders may think that rewards should be based solely on behavior and effort. So when it comes to salvation, they may not fully understand that Jesus wants to give them eternal life just because he loves them. They may think they need to earn eternal life by doing things such as always obeying their parents, getting good grades in school, never lying or cheating, and being nice to everyone. Use this lesson to help kids understand that all they need to do to have eternal life is to believe that Jesus is God's Son.



### ► Bible Point


Jesus saves us.

### Key Verse

"Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved" (Acts 16:31).


### Weaving Faith Into Life

Kids will thank Jesus for saving them.

LESSON	WHAT CHILDREN DO	SUPPLIES	EASY PREP
<p><b>1</b></p> <p>Getting Started</p>	<p><b>Earthquake!</b> <i>(about 15 min.)</i></p> <p>Play a fun game of pretending to be in an earthquake.</p>	<p>masking tape, thin rope</p>	<p>Use masking tape to mark two large circles on the floor, one circle inside the other. Make the inner circle large enough for all kids to stand on the line.</p>
<p><b>2</b></p> <p>Bible Exploration</p>	<p><b>Saved!</b> <i>(about 20 min.)</i></p> <p>Listen to the Bible passage and place characters in scenes on their student page.</p>	<p>Bible, My Bible Fun, scissors, craft sticks, tape, CD player, 1 copy per child of the lyrics page (at the end of the lesson) <b>Teacher Pack:</b> CD, "Paul and Silas" puppets</p> 	<p>Tear out the Lesson 11 pages from each My Bible Fun student book. Cut apart the "Paul and Silas" puppets.</p>

*Bold text within the lesson is spoken text.*





LESSON	WHAT CHILDREN DO	SUPPLIES	EASY PREP
<b>3</b> Weaving Faith Into Life	<b>I Believe</b> <i>(about 20 min.)</i> Draw pictures of what they believe about Jesus and share them with other kids in class.	Bible, 3 index cards per child, crayons, hole punch, 5-inch length of ribbon per child	
<b>4</b> Lasting Impressions	<b>Daily Challenges</b> <i>(about 5 min.)</i> Choose a Daily Challenge to apply God's Word.	My Bible Fun	
	<b>Weaving Faith at Home</b> <i>(about 2 min.)</i> Talk about how to share what they learned with their families.		

***Bold text within the lesson is spoken text.***





# Paul's Jailer Believes in Jesus

Acts 16:16-34

BIBLE BACKGROUND  
FOR LEADERS

## Paul Casts a Demon Out of a Girl and Ends Up in Jail

When Paul cast the demon out of the girl, she lost her ability to tell fortunes. Therefore, her owners saw Paul's actions as an attack on their property. They saw Paul and his companions as Jews propagating outlandish beliefs. On the basis of the owners' accusations, Paul and Silas were flogged and put in jail.

This time when God freed his servants from jail, he essentially freed everyone in the jail. Why didn't everyone flee? Perhaps they stayed because of the impression Paul and Silas had on them when they were singing hymns at midnight in spite of their chains!

The Romans dealt severely with jailers who were unable to deliver their prisoners at the appointed time. Assuming that all the prisoners had escaped as a result of the earthquake opening the gates, the jailer thought he would die at the hands of his superiors. Taking his own life seemed a better choice at that point. Only a shout from Paul stopped him. When the jailer realized that all the prisoners were still there, he was ready to accept Paul's message. And Paul's message was clear: "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved."

## The Jailer Takes Paul and Silas to His Home

It was not against any rule for the jailer to take Paul and Silas to his own home. The jailer was commissioned only to produce the prisoners when they were called for. After what had happened that night, he probably didn't fear that they would try to escape. Instead, he took care of their wounds from the flogging, gave them some good food, and rejoiced in the salvation he had received. Paul and Silas undoubtedly realized that the flogging and imprisonment they had endured were worth the joy that salvation had brought to the Philippian jailer!

## The Jesus Connection

Paul and Silas were the real deal. Their actions matched their message. Your genuine relationship with Jesus is capturing the attention of others around you.

Have you believed in Jesus? How committed are you to living out his gift of salvation? Pray about what it means to you that Jesus saved you. You can write your prayer here.

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### Earthquake! Supplies

masking tape  
thin rope

### Earthquake! Easy Prep

Use masking tape to mark two large circles on the floor, one circle inside the other. Make the inner circle large enough for all kids to stand on the line.

## 1 GETTING STARTED

# Earthquake!

### What You'll Do ■■■■■■

Welcome kids warmly as they arrive, and ask them how their week went.

Gather everyone together.

Say: **Today we're going to play a game called Earthquake! I want you to walk around the room, and when I yell "Earthquake!" I want you to shake your bodies as if you were in an earthquake. When I yell "Stop!" I want you to stand still.**

Have kids shake their bodies once, and then have them stand still.

Say: **Okay, now we're going to add a little twist to this game. I want you to find a partner.**

When kids have found partners, carefully tie their legs together at the ankles with pieces of rope. Tie one child's right leg to the other child's left leg. Tie the ends of the rope together as you would when tying a shoe, so kids can easily remove the rope. Have pairs stand inside the inner circle you put on the floor prior to class.

Say: **Now I want you to try to walk around the line of the inner circle with your partner. Once you've done that, I want you to walk around the outer circle with your partner. And I want you to sing a song while you do this. It can be any song you want as long as you and your partner are singing the same song. If I yell "Earthquake!" you can stop and untie the rope from around your ankles, and you are free to get out of both circles.**

Have kids begin to try to walk the lines while singing. Once you see that all the kids are singing, yell "Earthquake!" After all kids have untied their ropes and stepped out of the circles, have them sit down.

### Talk With Kids ■■■■

Lead children in this discussion.

Ask:

- How did you feel having to walk around with your legs tied together?
- How did you feel having to sing while you were trying to walk the lines?

Say: **In our lesson today, we're going to learn about two men, Paul and Silas, who were thrown in jail, in the inner cell, and had their feet fastened in chains. That meant that they couldn't move their feet. But they sang songs and praised God anyway! We'll find out what happened to these two men and learn that ► JESUS SAVES US.**





**2** BIBLE  
EXPLORATION

## Saved!

### What You'll Do

Open your Bible to Acts 16:16-34, and show the passage to the kids.

Say: **In today's Bible story, Paul and Silas were teaching about Jesus to people in a town called Philippi. They were telling people that by believing in Jesus, they would be saved.**

Have kids turn to the "Saved!" activity in their My Bible Fun pages. Set out scissors, craft sticks, and tape. Have kids cut off the characters from the bottom of the page. Also give each child a "Paul and Silas" puppet from the Teacher Pack. Show kids how to tape a craft stick to the back of each character cutout.

Then help kids carefully cut along the solid insert line in the picture on the student page. This slit will enable kids to insert their character cutouts into the scene, creating a mini puppet theater.

Show kids how to insert the "Paul and Silas" cutout through the slit in the picture from behind so it appears that Paul and Silas are part of the scene.

Say: **Paul and Silas were in the town of Philippi, telling the people about Jesus.** Have kids move Paul and Silas back and forth in the left part of the picture. **There was a slave girl who was following Paul and Silas around saying that they were from God and that they were telling people how they could be saved.** Have kids insert the slave girl cutout so it looks as though she is following Paul and Silas.

**What the girl was saying was true, but the people in the town knew the girl was a fortuneteller. Paul and Silas wanted people to know that they were not telling fortunes but that they were telling God's truth. So Paul commanded the evil spirit that was controlling the girl to leave her. And it did!** Have kids remove the slave girl from the scene.

**The owners of the slave girl didn't like that! They realized that their chance of making money with her was gone. So they dragged Paul and Silas to the marketplace to face the town judges.**

**The crowd of people that had gathered there joined in attacking Paul and Silas. The judges ordered Paul and Silas to be beaten and put in jail. Paul and Silas were thrown into the innermost part of the jail, with their feet locked up so that they couldn't escape.** Have kids move Paul and Silas into the jail on the picture. Then have kids turn to partners to answer the following questions. After each question, invite partners to share their answers with the rest of the class.



### Saved! Supplies

- Bible
- My Bible Fun
- scissors
- craft sticks
- tape
- CD player
- 1 copy per child of the lyrics page (at the end of the lesson)
- Teacher Pack**
- CD: "A New Creation" (2 Corinthians 5:17) (track 13)
- "Paul and Silas" puppets

### Saved! Easy Prep

- Tear out the Lesson 11 pages from each My Bible Fun student book.
- Cut apart the "Paul and Silas" puppets.






Ask:

- How do you think Paul and Silas felt when they were put in jail?
- How would you feel if someone put you in jail for talking about Jesus?
- What do you think Paul and Silas said when they were put in jail?

Say: **You'd think Paul and Silas would be mad about being in jail, right? Well, instead of getting mad, they started singing and praising God. Let's sing a praise song with Paul and Silas.**

Play "A New Creation" (2 Corinthians 5:17) (track 13 on the CD) as kids sing along. Have kids move their Paul and Silas figures back and forth in time to the music.

Sing:

 **If anyone** *(if anyone)*  
**Is in Christ** *(is in Christ),*  
**He is a new creation** *(a new creation);*  
**The old has gone** *(the old has gone),*  
**The new has come!** *(The new has come!)*  
**He is a new creation** *(a new creation);*  
**We have been made new!**  
**If anyone** *(if anyone)*  
**Is in Christ** *(is in Christ),*  
**He is a new creation** *(a new creation);*  
**The old has gone** *(the old has gone),*  
**The new has come!** *(The new has come!)*  
**He is a new creation** *(a new creation);*  
**We have been made new!**  
**We have been made new!**

"A New Creation" (2 Corinthians 5:17) by Carol Smith. © 2003 Group Publishing, Inc. All rights reserved.

After the song, turn off the CD, and have kids turn to new partners to answer these questions. Invite volunteers to share their answers with the rest of the class.

Ask:

- How did Paul and Silas act, even though they were in a bad situation?
- How can you be more like Paul and Silas when you're in a bad situation?

Say: **Let's continue with our story and find out what happened next.**

**It was about midnight, and Paul and Silas were sitting in the inner jail cell singing, when a violent earthquake shook the prison.** Have kids move their Paul and Silas figures as if they're shaking. **The doors of the jail flew open and everybody's chains fell off. Everyone was free!** Have kids move their Paul and Silas figures up and down as if they're jumping for joy.



The jailer, who was responsible for the prisoners, was very scared. Have kids insert the jailer figure into the scene. He thought all of the prisoners had escaped. If they had, the judges would have killed him. The jailer was so upset that he pulled out his sword and was ready to kill himself when he heard someone say, “Don’t hurt yourself! We’re all here!” It was Paul. The jailer called for lights, and rushed into the inner cell. Have kids move the jailer toward Paul and Silas. The jailer fell down trembling before Paul and Silas and said, “What must I do to be saved?”

Paul and Silas told him, “Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved.”

The jailer took Paul and Silas and cleaned their wounds from when they had been beaten. Then the jailer and his family were all baptized. The jailer was so happy that he’d come to believe in Jesus that he took Paul and Silas to his house and fed them. Have kids move the jailer and Paul and Silas as if they are walking away from the jail.

### Talk With Kids ■■■■

Lead children in this discussion.

Ask:

- Why do you think Paul and Silas were able to sing even while they were in prison?
- What do you think the jailer thought when he saw Paul and Silas still in the prison after the earthquake?
- What did Paul and Silas say when the jailer asked how to be saved?

Say: Let’s take a look at our Key Verse and find out how we can be saved!

## 3 WEAVING FAITH INTO LIFE

### I Believe

#### What You’ll Do ■■■■

Turn to Acts 16:31, and show the verse to the kids. Say: **Our Key Verse says, “Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved” (Acts 16:31).**

Ask:

- What do you believe about Jesus?

Give each child three blank index cards. Have crayons available for kids to use. Have kids write or draw a picture of something they believe about Jesus on each card. Kids should write or draw three separate sentences or pictures. For example, kids could write that Jesus is God’s Son or draw a picture of a father and a son. Or they could write that Jesus loves them or draw a picture of a heart. Once kids have finished writing or drawing on each of their cards, have them set the cards in front of them.



#### I Believe Supplies

- Bible
- 3 index cards per child
- crayons
- hole punch
- 5-inch length of ribbon per child





Say: **I want you to take one of your cards and pass it to the person on your right. Tell that person what your picture means.**

Allow time for kids to do this.

Say: **Now I want you to take another one of your cards and pass it to the person on your left. Tell that person what your picture means.**

Have kids give their cards to the person on their left. Make sure they give away one of their own cards and not the card that was just given to them by their other neighbor.

Say: **Just as Paul and Silas shared what they believed about Jesus with the jailer, you've just shared what you believe, too.**

Help each child place his or her cards together, and punch a hole in the upper left corner of each card. Then help each child string a length of ribbon through the holes and tie it off.

Say: **Our Key Verse tells us, "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved." To be saved means that when you believe in Jesus, you can live with him forever in heaven. In fact, that's the only way to live forever in heaven. All you have to do is believe in Jesus. Take home your "I Believe" cards as a reminder of what you believe about Jesus. And take home your My Bible Fun page and puppets to tell your family today's Bible story.**

## 4 LASTING IMPRESSIONS

### Daily Challenges

#### Daily Challenges Supplies

My Bible Fun

#### What You'll Do ■■■■■■

Say: **Let's think about how ► JESUS SAVES US.**

Have kids find this week's Daily Challenges in their My Bible Fun pages and choose one to do this week. They can choose one or more of these three options:

- **Think of a way you disobeyed this week and ask Jesus to forgive you.**
- **Pray and thank God for his Son, Jesus, who died for our sins so we can be saved.**
- **Tell a friend about Jesus' forgiveness and ask if he or she would like to pray with you.**

Make sure you choose a Daily Challenge as well, and tell kids what you chose. Kids will be more inclined to follow through on their commitments when they see you doing the same.







## Talk With Kids

Lead kids in this discussion.

Ask:

- **What's a practical way you're going to do your Daily Challenge? Include a time, a place, and other ideas.**

Say: **This week, let's remember that ► JESUS SAVES US by following through on our Daily Challenges.**

## Weaving Faith at Home

Encourage kids to talk with their parents about the Daily Challenges they chose and what they learned about how Jesus saves us. Kids can also do the activities in the "HomeConnect" section of their My Bible Fun pages with their families.

Talk to your Director about emailing the FREE FamilyConnect to all your church's families. Available at [group.com/digital](http://group.com/digital).

Then have kids stand in a circle and hold hands.

Pray: **Dear Lord, thank you for sending Jesus so that we can believe in him and be saved. Help us to tell our friends about him, too. In Jesus' name, amen.**



**Lyrics** ■■■■**A New Creation (2 Corinthians 5:17)**

**If anyone** *(if anyone)*  
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