#### Lesson 13:

#### Paul and Silas/The Phillipian Jailer

SCRIPTURE REFERENCE:

Acts 16

MEMORY WORK:

All Bible skills

Mark 16:15

All Apostles

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

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| **LESSON STARTS HERE** |

INTRODUCTION:

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.

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).

**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.

**RECOMMENDED READING FOR TEACHERS:** See the articles “[**Exorcism, Demons,**](https://www.apologeticspress.org/apcontent.aspx?category=11&amp;article=1198)[**Witchcraft, and Astrology**](https://www.apologeticspress.org/apcontent.aspx?category=11&amp;article=1198)” by Dave Miller and “[**Demons: Ancient Superstition or**](http://apologeticspress.org/apPubPage.aspx?pub=1&amp;issue=480&amp;article=105)[**Historical Reality?**](http://apologeticspress.org/apPubPage.aspx?pub=1&amp;issue=480&amp;article=105)” and “[**Demon Theology**](http://apologeticspress.org/apPubPage.aspx?pub=1&amp;issue=480&amp;article=106)” by Wayne Jackson on the Apologetics Press Web site for a discussion about demons, the Bible, and modern times. For kids, see also *Discovery* magazine articles: “A Man Name Legion!” and “Demons!” by Rhonda Thompson ([**December, 2002**](http://apologeticspress.org/pub_dm/12012002/December%202002.pdf) issue).

1. 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).

1. 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.”

**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.

**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.

1. 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.
2. 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.

**RECOMMENDED READING FOR TEACHERS:** See the articles “[**Baptism and the**](http://apologeticspress.org/APContent.aspx?category=11&amp;article=1429&amp;topic=379)[**Philippian Jailer**](http://apologeticspress.org/APContent.aspx?category=11&amp;article=1429&amp;topic=379)” by Dave Miller and “[**One Question, Three Different Answers**](http://www.apologeticspress.org/APContent.aspx?category=11&amp;article=646&amp;topic=379)” by Eric Lyons on the Apologetics Press Web site for discussion about the specifics and implications of the jailer’s conversion.

1. 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.
2. 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.

RECOMMENDED ADDITIONAL VISUALS (note disclaimers):

##### Betty Lukens’ felt pieces

* ABeka Flash-a-Card Series (DISCLAIMER: use the cards, not the lesson book;)
* Free Bible Images – Saved on flash drive. Can be presented on classroom tv. Script included in lesson file. File will be labeled “13.”

SONGS AND FINGERPLAYS:

**“THE TWELVE** **APOSTLES”**

Author: Unknown\* (Tune: “Jesus Loves me”)

Jesus called them one by one, Peter, Andrew, James, and John; Next came Phillip, Thomas, too, Matthew and Bartholomew.

James the one they called “The Less,” Simon, also Thaddeus,

The twelfth apostle Judas made, Jesus was by him betrayed.

Yes, Jesus called them. Yes, Jesus called them. Yes, Jesus called them.

And they all followed Him.

Mathias then took Judas’ place, To preach to men of every race.

Paul three preaching trips did make, He went to Rome for Jesus’ sake.

### SUNDAY

LEARNING CENTERS AND ACTIVITIES:

* Have NT Binders Completed and ready to give to students. Use these to review the NT.
* Sing Songs like Paul and Silas. Take Requests

### WEDNESDAY NIGHT

### Note: If the calendar falls for this night to be in August, class is usually cancelled for a singing night.

POINTS TO EMPHASIZE:

Review Sunday’s lesson (see [Review Questions](http://www.apcurriculum.com/dcirfol/3-22-30RQ.pdf) for example questions).

LEARNING CENTERS AND ACTIVITIES:

* 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.”
* Paul and Silas Jail Sheet – Color and add strips of black construction paper.

### Review Questions

### After Paul, Silas, and Luke taught Lydia the Gospel, where does the Bible say they were going?

### The place of prayer

### While on their way, who was following them?

### A young slave girl possessed by a spirit

### How did the Jewish men who owned the slave girl use her?

### To make money as a perceived fortune teller

### What did the girl call out to the people about Paul, Silas, and Luke as she followed them for several days?

### They were servants of the most High God, and they proclaimed the way to salvation.

### How did Paul feel about the young girl following him?

### It made him angry at the demon inside of her.

### What did Paul say to the demon?

### In the name of Jesus Christ, come out of the girl.

### What did the slave girl’s owners do when they found out that she was no longer demon possessed?

### They took Paul and Silas to the magistrates to have them punished.

### What happened to Paul and Silas when they were brought to the magistrates?

### Their robes were torn off, and they were beaten with rods.

### Where were Paul and Silas thrown?

### Into the inner prison and locked up in stocks

### What were Paul and Silas doing in spite of their physical pain?

### Singing praises to God and praying

### What happened after midnight?

### An earthquake shook the prison, broke their stocks, and opened all the doors.

### What did the jailer try to do when he thought the prisoners had escaped?

### Kill himself by falling on his sword

### After Paul told the jailer what had happened, what did the jailer ask Paul?

### What must I do to be saved?

### What did the jailer and his household do after Paul and Silas taught them in the jailer’s home?

### They believed in Jesus and were baptized.

### Of what did Paul accuse the Roman officials when they tried to let Paul and Silas go quietly?

### He accused them of allowing “uncondemned” Roman citizens to be beaten.

### Where did Paul and Silas go after they were released from prison?

### They went to Lydia’s house.

Additional Notes / Activities Performed & Curriculum Feed Back

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