

Bible Story 12: PAUL'S SECOND MISSIONARY JOURNEY

SCRIPTURE: Acts 15:4, 36-41; 16:1-40; 17:1, 10; 18:1-6, 18-22
MEMORY VERSE(S): Acts 16:30-31 or Proverbs 3:5-6

BIBLE STORY:

After a period of time in Antioch of Syria, Paul said to Barnabas, *"Let's revisit the believers and new churches we began."* Barnabas wanted to take John Mark with them. However, Paul did not want to take him, because he did not stay with them on their first missionary trip. They disagreed so strongly that they went their separate ways. Barnabas took John Mark, going to the island of Cyprus. Paul chose Silas to go with him.

As Paul and Silas traveled northwest, they strengthened the churches in Syria and Cilicia. At Lystra, they met young Timothy. His mother was a Christian Jew and his father was a Greek (*a Gentile*). Timothy joined Paul and Silas on their missionary trip. As they traveled westward from town to town, people came to know Jesus and believers grew in their faith in the Lord.

The Holy Spirit of God prevented Paul, Silas and Timothy from preaching in a region of Asia. So they went to Troas, an important seaport. Paul had a vision of a man begging them to go to the region of Macedonia to preach about Jesus. They got on a boat to travel there. Medical doctor Luke joined them. They continued west, crossing the sea, and eventually arrived in Philippi, a city in eastern Macedonia. **Lydia**, a seller of purple cloth, and members of her home believed in Jesus and were baptized. Lydia invited Paul and his co-workers to stay at her house.

Lydia
was a wealthy
businesswoman
who sold dyes and
dyed cloth, such as
the purple cloths.

In the town was a slave girl who was possessed with a spirit, which enabled her to earn money by foretelling the future. For days she followed and shouted at Paul. Turning to her, Paul said to the spirit, *"In Jesus Christ's name, come out of the slave girl!"* The spirit immediately left. Her owners were upset because they could no longer profit from the slave girl. They started a riot. The government officials had Paul and Silas beaten with rods, whipped, and placed in a prison cell with their feet in chains. At midnight, Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns. The other prisoners listened. Suddenly there was a strong earthquake. All the prison cell doors opened. The chains on their feet came off. The jailer in charge woke up, thought their prisoners had escaped, and drew a sword to take his own life. Paul yelled, *"Stop! We're all here! Do not hurt yourself!"* The jailer trembled as he went to them. He asked, *"What must I do to be saved?"* Paul answered, *"Believe in the Lord Jesus."* The jailer and his household believed in Jesus and were baptized. The jailer washed Paul and Silas' wounds and gave them food to eat." The next day the officials released them from jail. Paul and Silas went to Lydia's home, encouraged the **brethren**, and left.

Brethren
referred to men and
women believers.
The believers
(Christians) called
each other brothers
and sisters.

Paul and his co-workers continued traveling to different cities, such as Thessalonica, Berea, and Athens. Paul traveled alone to Corinth and met tent makers Aquila and his wife Priscilla, who were believers. Paul worked with them in tent making until Silas and Timothy arrived. Then Paul spent full time preaching about Jesus, staying a year and a half in Corinth. They traveled to Ephesus and then began their journey back to their home base, the church in Antioch of Syria.

At each place, Paul and his co-workers shared the Good News of Jesus. Many people believed in Jesus and new churches were begun. However, others persecuted them for teaching about Jesus. Upon arriving at the church in Antioch, Paul finished his second missionary journey.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS: *(Ask questions appropriate for your group of listeners.)*

PERSONAL QUESTIONS:

1. What did you learn from this story?
2. How can you apply this story to your life?

GENERIC QUESTIONS:

1. What do you like about the story?
2. What is there in the story that you do not understand?
3. Who are the main people in the story?
4. What problems did the people face? What happened?
5. Have you had any similar problems you would like to share? What happened?
6. What does the story tell about God?

SPECIFIC QUESTIONS:

1. Why did Paul and Barnabas disagree?
 - What happened?
 - Even though Paul and Barnabas strongly disagreed, how did God still use them?
 - How can people with strong opinions get along and work together?
2. Eventually Paul restored a good relationship with Barnabas and John Mark. What are some things we can do to restore broken relationships?
3. How did Lydia help the missionaries?
 - How can we use our homes to help others know about Jesus? To help missionaries?
4. Why were the slave owner's upset when the slave girl was healed?
 - Today, how do people take advantage of others in order to gain money, power, etc.?
 - How does God want us to treat others?
5. What were Paul and Silas doing in their prison cell? What happened?
 - What should our attitude and response be when we face difficult situations?
 - Share how God has helped you during a difficult situation in your life.
 - How can we help people going through difficult situations in their lives?

LIFE LESSONS: (Choose Life Lessons appropriate for your group of listeners.)

1. Believers should pray and trust in God to help them through difficult situations.

While in prison, Paul and Silas prayed and sang hymns, trusting God to be with them through this difficult situation. Trust in God to be with you whenever as you face difficult situations in your life.

2. A person who believes in the Lord Jesus, God’s Son, is saved.

Lydia and her household, and the jailer and his household believed in Jesus and were saved. Believe in Jesus, God’s Son, so you will be saved. John 3:16 says, “For God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life” NIV.

PARTICIPATION ACTIVITY: (Choose an activity or activities appropriate for your group of listeners.)

CHANT:

Tell the Bible story. Afterwards teach the listeners the chant, **“God is with you.”** Explain that you will retell the story of Paul and Silas in prison. When you raise your hand, they are to say the chant, **“God is with you.”** Retell the story.

Storyteller:	In the town of Philippi was a slave girl who was possessed with a spirit, which enabled her to earn money by foretelling the future. For days she followed and shouted at Paul. Turning to her, Paul said to the spirit, <i>“In Jesus Christ’s name, come out of the slave girl!”</i> The spirit immediately left. Slave girl...
Listeners:	“God is with you.”
Storyteller:	Her owners were upset, because they could no longer profit from the slave girl. They started a riot. Government officials had Paul and Silas beaten with rods, whipped and placed in a prison cell with their feet in chains.
Listeners:	“God is with you.”
Storyteller:	At midnight, Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns.
Listeners:	“God is with you.”
Storyteller:	The other prisoners listened. Suddenly there was a strong earthquake. All the prison cell doors opened. The chains on their feet came off.
Listeners:	“God is with you.”
Storyteller:	The jailer in charge woke up, thought the prisoners had escaped, and drew a sword to take his own life. Paul yelled, <i>“Stop! We’re all here! Do not hurt yourself!”</i>
Listeners:	“God is with you.”
Storyteller:	The jailer trembled as he went to them. He asked, <i>“What must I do to be saved?”</i> Paul answered, <i>“Believe in the Lord Jesus.”</i> The jailer and his household believed in Jesus and were baptized.
Listeners:	“God is with you.”
Storyteller:	The next day the officials released Paul and Silas from jail.
Listeners:	“God is with you.”
Storyteller:	Paul and Silas went to Lydia’s home, encouraged the brethren, and left to continue their journey.
Listeners:	“God is with you.”
Storyteller:	And God is with us!

SHARE AN EXPERIENCE:

Ask volunteers to share experiences on how God helped them through difficult situations.