

# Midnight Song Service

Acts 16:16-40; *The Acts of the Apostles*, pp. 211-220

**H**ave you ever been blamed for something you did not do? Paul and Silas were beaten and put into prison because men told lies about them, but they still praised and worshipped God.

**T**hese men are servants of the Most High God.” The slave girl’s voice rang out as she followed Paul and Silas down the street. She had been following them for days, shouting over and over, “these men are servants of the Most High God.”

Suddenly, Paul turned and commanded, “In the name of Jesus, come out of her!” Immediately the evil spirit left her, and she became silent. Her masters watched in astonishment. Then their astonishment turned

to anger as they realized what Paul had done. The slave girl had made them wealthy by telling people’s fortunes. Now the evil spirit had left her! She would not be able to tell fortunes! She would no longer earn money for them.

Her owners grabbed Paul and Silas. They dragged them to the marketplace and took them before the local judge. They accused Paul and Silas, saying, “These men are Jews. They are stirring up trouble and encouraging people to go against Roman practices.” An unfriendly crowd quickly gathered. Soon the judge ordered that Paul and Silas were to be beaten and thrown into jail.

The jailer took them into his deepest dungeon. He put their feet in stocks and locked the door, leaving them in darkness. It was cold and damp in the cell. Their backs were bleeding and sore. The stocks dug into their ankles. They could not move.

As they sat in the dark cell, Paul and Silas began to pray and sing hymns to God. The more they sang, the better they felt. They forgot about their sore backs and ankles. They worshipped God for keeping them alive. They praised Him for being with them and looking after them, even in prison. The other prisoners listened in amazement. How could these men sing after being so badly beaten?

Around midnight an earthquake began to shake the prison. The prisoners’ chains fell off. The cell doors flew open. They could walk out of prison.



## The Message

*I worship God when I praise  
Him no matter what happens.*

## Memory Verse

*"About midnight  
Paul and Silas were  
praying and singing  
hymns to God"*

*(Acts 16:25, NIV).*

The jailer ran out of his house. He saw the open prison doors and was sure that all the prisoners had escaped. Immediately he took out his sword to kill himself. He knew the penalty for letting prisoners escape was a painful death. He would rather take his own life!

Paul called out to the jailer, "Stop! We are all here!"

The jailer called for lights. He hurried to their cell. "Yes!" he shouted. "They are all here."

The jailer took Paul and Silas to his home. He had heard Paul and Silas singing and worshipping God in their cell. As he washed their cuts and bruises, he asked them to tell him more about the God they worshipped.

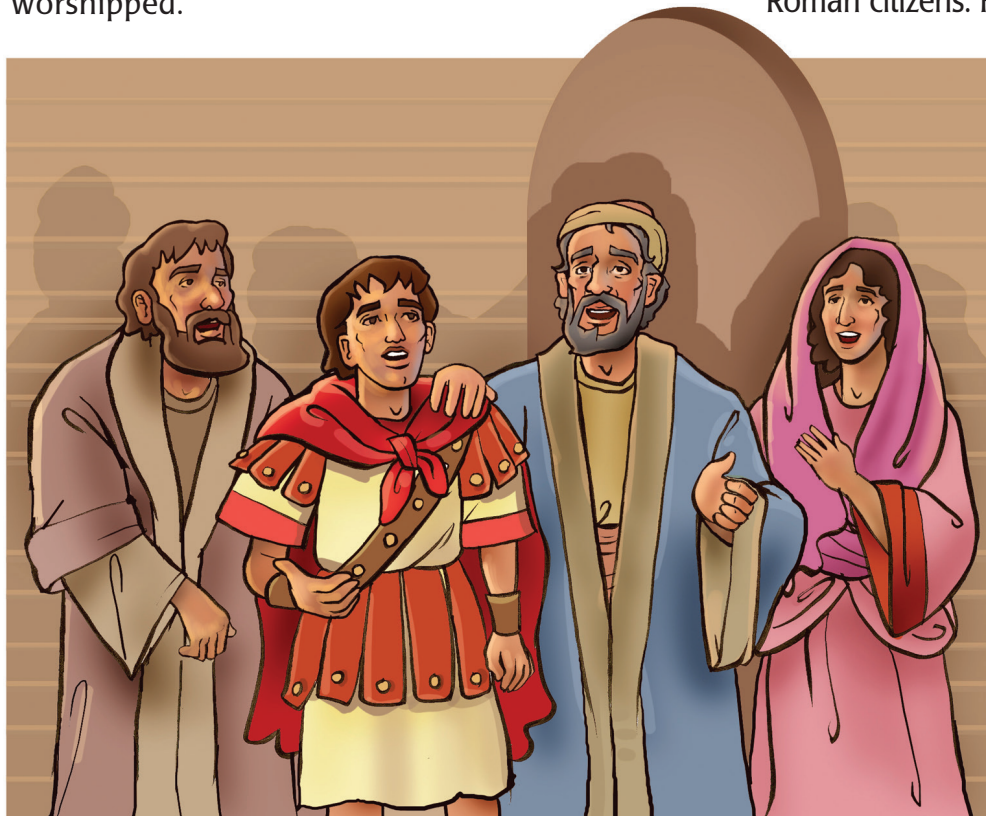
The two men told the wonderful story of Jesus. They told how God had sent His Son to die for their sins. The jailer and his family listened carefully. And they decided that they wanted to follow Jesus. They immediately joined with Paul and Silas in worshipping God and were baptized.

The next morning Paul and Silas were released. The judge had learned that they were Roman citizens. He knew that the law said

Roman citizens could not be imprisoned without a trial. So he apologized to them.

As Paul and Silas left the town, they worshipped God for giving them the opportunity to witness to the jailer and his family. They continued to praise God as they traveled to tell others about Jesus.

No matter where we are or what happens, we can always praise God too.



## S A B B A T H

**DO** Share your lesson story with your family. Then have a praise fest. One person chooses a song that everyone knows. Then the next person chooses a song. Keep singing until you cannot think of any more songs. How many songs did you sing?

**PRAY** Thank God that you can sing praises to Him.

## S U N D A Y

**READ** During family worship, read and discuss Acts 16:16-21. (See also *The Acts of the Apostles*, pp. 213, 214.) What kind of spirit had controlled the girl's mind? What do you think happened to her when that spirit left her?

**PRAY** Have a tug-of-war with your family. Who is "tugging" at you to get you to do wrong? Pray for strength to do what is right at all times.

## M O N D A Y

**READ** Read and discuss Acts 16:22-24 during family worship. Describe how the jailer treated Paul and Silas before he believed in Jesus. Have family members sit on the floor with their ankles tied together, then try to stand. What happens? What was it like for Paul and Silas?

**PRAY** Thank God for freedom to worship Him. Ask Him to bless and encourage those in prison for their faith.

Roman law said that if a prisoner escaped, the jailer had to have the prisoner's punishment.



## T U E S D A Y

**READ** During family worship, read and discuss Acts 16:25-34. What changed the jailer's treatment of Paul and Silas?

**DO** Write your memory verse on an adhesive bandage. Put it on your finger or arm to help you remember the verse.

**DO** Learn how to treat cuts and scratches. Practice on your family.

**PRAY** Ask God to help you help others.

## W E D N E S D A Y

**SHARE** Teach your memory verse to your family. What time of day did Paul and Silas sing? When can you praise God?

**DO** Use a paper plate to create a clock. Instead of numbers, write a word or draw a picture to tell what you do at each hour. How can you worship God in each activity? Explain your clock during family worship. Thank God that you can worship Him anywhere, at any time.



# T H U R S D A Y

**READ** Read and discuss Acts 16:35-39 during family worship today. Why didn't Paul want to leave the prison? Now read Acts 16:20, 21. Why did the magistrates think that Paul and Silas were Jews? What difference did it make in their treatment of the men? What if someone misjudges you? Have you ever been wrong about someone? What did you do about it?

**PRAY** Pray that God will help you to treat others fairly at all times.

# F R I D A Y

**DO** The jailer shared a meal with Paul and Silas. Help prepare and serve your family's evening meal.

**READ** Read Acts 16:16-40 together, then act out the story with your family. Sing praise songs before prayer. Thank God for freedom to worship Him. Pray for those who don't have that freedom.

## Midnight Song Service PUZZLE

Directions: Use the numbers on the clock to find out what Paul and Silas did at midnight.

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9 10 1 6 11 3 2

— — —  
1 7 2

— — — — — — — — —  
12 8 10 11 5 6 9 3 2

— — — — — — — — —  
4 8 2 6 7 11 8 7 4

