



COURAGEOUS

CHRISTIANS

Courageous Christians: Paul and Silas

God turns weakness into opportunity *(taken from Acts chapter 16)*

Paul and Silas were in Philippi, a large bustling city. One day, as they were going to meet with others to pray, they were met by a young slave woman who had an evil spirit that enabled her to predict the future. She earned a lot of money for her owners by telling fortunes. She followed Paul and Silas, shouting, “These men are servants of the Most High God!” She kept following them, until Paul became so upset that he turned around and said to the spirit, “In the name of Jesus Christ I order you to come out of her!” The spirit went out of her that very moment. But when her owners realized that their chance of making money was gone, they grabbed Paul and Silas and dragged them to the crowded market place.

“These men are causing trouble in our city. They are teaching against our law! We don’t have to listen to them!” And the crowd jeered and shouted and joined in the attack against Paul and Silas.

Paul and Silas were beaten and whipped and thrown into jail. “Not again!” groaned Silas, but Paul smiled through his bruises. “Don’t worry, Silas! God is with us, even in jail. He will never leave us alone! Be strong and courageous!” The jailer was ordered to lock them up tight so he threw them into the dark cell and fastened their feet between heavy blocks of wood. But this didn’t stop Paul and Silas praying and singing hymns to God. They sang and prayed loudly so that all the other prisoners could listen to them and hear the good news about Jesus.

Suddenly, at about midnight, there was a violent earthquake, which shook the prison to its foundations. At once all the doors opened, and the chains fell off all the prisoners. The jailer woke up, and when he saw the prison doors open, he thought that the prisoners had escaped.



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“Oh no! My life is over if the prisoners have escaped!” he cried. “My life is finished!” Just as he pulled out his sword, Paul shouted at the top of his voice, “Don’t harm yourself We are all here!”

The jailer called for a light, rushed in, and fell trembling at the feet of Paul and Silas. Then he led them out and asked, “Why are you still here? You must have something very special... I want to live like you! What do I need to do to be courageous like you?”

Paul answered, “Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be rescued—you and all your family.” Paul and Silas told him all about Jesus and the amazing stories about his life and death. Then they went with the jailer to his house and told him and his whole family about the power of the Holy Spirit to help them change and live their lives for Jesus. The jailer washed their wounds and he and all his family were baptized by Paul. “Stay with us!” cried the jailer. “Come, eat and rest.” He and his family were filled with joy, because they now had faith in Jesus.

The next morning, the jailer told Paul, “The officials have sent an order for you and Silas to be released. You may leave, then, and go in peace.”