



THE LIFE OF
PAUL

FAMILY DEVOS

Set Free

Scripture: Acts 16:16-40

Memory Verse: John 8:36

“Therefore if the Son makes you free, you shall be free indeed.”

For My Family:

Have you ever been in a situation that you wished you could get out of, or a situation that didn't feel fair? How did you respond? Paul and Silas were led by God in a dream to go to Macedonia to share the Gospel, but soon found themselves badly beaten and imprisoned for obeying God and doing the right thing! Their response was very interesting. They didn't complain. They didn't question God. Instead, they prayed and sang hymns, trusting that this was part of God's perfect plan. It's important to remember, as we learned last time, that God doesn't always do things the same way we would do them, but His ways are always best.

Some of the prisoners may have thought Paul and Silas were crazy, but they soon received a shock when an earthquake shook the prison, opened the doors, and made their chains fall off! It was so strange that no one even got up to escape. As the guard of the prison woke up, he saw the open doors and feared everyone had escaped. Paul called out to him and showed him love even though he was his enemy. No doubt Paul was beginning to understand why God had wanted them in Macedonia and allowed them to be thrown into prison. God wanted this man and everyone else in the prison to see that all of them needed to be set free, not from prison, but from sin and death. There was something about these men and what God had done in the prison that brought the jailer to Paul and Silas in desperation, asking the most important question anyone can ask: “What must I do to be saved?”

You see, even though Paul and Silas had been the ones in chains, their hearts were free and knew that God was in control. And while this guard watched over the prisoners and had freedom to come and go, his heart was actually bound in chains. Everyone in this world has sin in their hearts, and sin is like an unbreakable chain that holds us prisoner. One day, unless something or someone is able to free us from those chains, everyone will pay the price for sin: death.

But Jesus came to set the prisoners free, and those He sets free are free indeed! He is the chain-breaker and death-destroyer! He lived a perfect and sinless life, then took the punishment for everyone else's sin so that all who believe in Him could be forgiven and receive the gift of eternal life! He paid the wages of sin (death) so we could receive the gift of God (eternal life). But there is only one way to receive this gift. Jesus is the Way, the Truth, and the Life. Everyone needs to be saved, and everyone needs Jesus to save them. You need Jesus. What must you do to be saved? Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and be saved.

Questions for Young Children:

What did Paul and Silas do when they were in prison?

Why do you think none of the other prisoners tried to escape?

What must you do to be saved?

Questions for Teens and Pre-teens:

How could Paul and Silas praise God even when they had been mistreated for doing the right thing?

What was it that led the jailer to ask Paul and Silas, "What must I do to be saved?"

Do you think it was tempting for Paul and Silas to escape once their chains were off and the doors were open? What would have (and wouldn't have) happened if they did?