

# WEEK 2: PAUL AND SILAS IN PRISON, JOY

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*About midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the other prisoners were listening to them. (Acts 16:35)*

## **Acts 16:23-25**

**Praising** God and His goodness in the midst of a trial can seem nearly impossible. The light at the end of the tunnel seems miles away when we are going through a tough time and often talking to God during this time just results in anger or arguing. How can we possibly be **joyful** when everything around us feels like it is falling apart?

Paul and Silas were in the midst of a trial. They had been thrown in prison for casting an evil spirit out of a **fortune** teller. They were not happy about their situation, but **instead** of complaining or crying out in anger to God, they began singing praises and praying to Him. They exemplified true joy in a trial by choosing to worship God even when they were unhappy with the **circumstances**. This type of joy comes from the Holy Spirit and is one of the Fruits of the Spirit that He has produced in us. Joy is **greater** than happiness because happiness is a feeling **dependent** on our circumstances, but joy is a choice we make in spite of our circumstances.

The best part of the story of Paul and Silas is that because of their praising and singing, the Lord sent an earthquake and the **chains** of the prisoners came loose. Because of this, the **prison** guard came to know Christ. Their joy was a testimony of the **power** of God and by choosing to be joyful in all circumstances, we can bring others to Christ.

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### **Questions to think about:**

1. What is your typical reaction when facing a trial in your life?
  2. What is one small step you can take toward choosing to be joyful in a trial?
  3. Is there someone in your life who exemplifies joy? How?
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