Singing in Jail

Bible Story
Acts 16:16-34

Teacher Challenge
Is anything more frustrating than not having a chance to tell your side of the story? It certainly feels like injustice!

When Paul and Silas were beaten and falsely accused, they were not allowed to speak. Instead, they were locked into stocks and then left in the depths of a jail! Frustrating! Unfair! We might have wondered, Where is God? But Paul and Silas were sure God WAS in it. So they began to pray and sing! The results? Conversions everywhere!

→ When have you felt you were treated unjustly? How did you respond?
→ How might the promise of God’s presence reassure you in similar circumstances?

Just as we see only a small part of light’s full spectrum, so we can see only a tiny portion of what God is doing in any situation. God invites us to overcome the pain of injustice by praising Him! In the most difficult thing you face, with the most trying person—thank Him for His presence and His ability. Praise Him—and expect startling results!

God’s Word
“Sing to God; tell of all his wonderful acts.” (See Psalm 105:2.)

God’s Word and Me
I can sing songs that tell about Jesus.

Teacher’s Planning
1. Choose which centers you will provide and the order in which children will participate in them. For tips on schedule planning, see page 9.

2. Plan who will lead each center, making sure to have one adult for approximately every six children. For staffing tips and ideas, see page 12.
Play to Learn
Active Game Center: Balloon Bounce

Collect
Bible, Preschool Music #2 CD and player, balloons.

Prepare
Blow up several balloons before class.

Do
1. Children spread out in the playing area. While you play “Go and Tell” (track 11 on CD), toss three balloons to children, who bat balloons up to keep them in the air.

2. When you stop the music, children allow balloons to float to the floor. The children nearest the balloons name things God has made, something they knew about God, or what He has done. Repeat game as time and interest allow.

Talk About

The Bible says, “Sing to God; tell of all his wonderful acts.” God has made many wonderful things in the world. God has done many wonderful things for people. We read about who God is in the Bible. Let’s play a game and remember all the good things God has made and done.

Tricia, what is a wonderful thing God made? You’re right! God made dogs!

Richard, what do you know about God? (God loves everyone.)

The most wonderful thing God did for us was send His Son, Jesus. We are so glad God sent Jesus. We can sing songs about Jesus! Pray briefly, Dear God, thank You for all the wonderful things You have made and all the wonderful acts You have done! Thank You for Jesus.

For Younger Children
For safety, young children should not play with balloons. An adult blows bubbles for children to pop while the music plays.

For Older Children
If children start crowding each other, have children sit down in a circle to play this game. Add an extra balloon each round.
Play to Learn

Art Center:
Cup Shakers

Collect
Bible, *Preschool Music #2* CD and player, shaker items (dried beans, rice, jingle bells, etc.), bowls, spoons, paper cups, foam shapes, masking tape.

Prepare
Place shaker items (dried beans, rice, jingle bells, etc.) into separate bowls. Place a spoon in each bowl.

Do
1. Children use foam shapes to decorate cups. Children spoon shaker items you provide into one of their cups.
2. Assist children in taping second cup on top of first cup (see sketch). Play “How Good It Is” (track 17 on CD) as children use shakers in a praise parade.

Talk About
- In our Bible story, two men, Paul and Silas, sang songs when they were put in jail for something they didn’t do. Other people heard about Jesus because of the songs they sang. Let’s make shakers to use when we sing about Jesus!
- Bailey, what part of our bodies do we use to sing? We use our mouths to sing. We can use our hands to clap and our feet to move! When these shakers are ready, we will use our hands to shake them up and down.
- The Bible says, “Sing to God; tell of all his wonderful acts.” One of God’s wonderful acts was sending Jesus. Singing about Jesus is a way to tell one of God’s wonderful acts.
- There are many ways to tell others about Jesus. Dominic, what is a way you can tell others about Jesus? (Tell someone “Jesus loves you.” Tell a Bible story about Jesus. Sing songs about Jesus.)
- Pray briefly, Dear God, help us to sing songs and tell others about Jesus.

For Younger Children
Provide just one item to put in cups.

For Older Children
Children also use markers to decorate cups.

God’s Word
“Sing to God; tell of all his wonderful acts.”
(See Psalm 105:2.)

God’s Word and Me
I can sing songs that tell about Jesus.
**Play to Learn**

**Construction Center:**
Earthquake Shake

**Collect**
Bible, several towels, blocks.

**Do**
1. Give each child a towel. Children spread out towels on the floor and use blocks to build constructions of their own choice on towels.
2. Children move to the edges of the towels. On your signal, children take edges of towels and pull gently to pretend there is an earthquake, knocking down their constructions. Repeat as time and interest allow.

**Talk About**

- **In today’s Bible story, Paul and Silas told others about Jesus. But one day, they were put in jail, even though they did not do anything wrong. While they were in jail, Paul and Silas sang songs to thank and praise God! During the night, there was a big earthquake. An earthquake is when the ground shakes. Let’s make some buildings and shake them down like an earthquake.**

- **Wherever Paul and Silas went, they told others about Jesus. Christopher, where can you tell others about Jesus? (Home. Playground. School.) We can tell others about Jesus wherever we are!**

- **The Bible says, “Sing to God; tell of all his wonderful acts.” We can tell others about Jesus by singing songs that tell about Jesus. Pray briefly, Dear God, we want to tell others about Jesus’ love!**

**For Younger Children**
Instead of building constructions on towels, children build walls that they then knock down as if there were an earthquake.

**For Older Children**
Children work together to build a wall no higher than their chins. As each child places a block on the wall, he or she repeats the Bible verse. When wall is complete, children tug on towel to cause a pretend earthquake.

**God’s Word**

“Sing to God; tell of all his wonderful acts.”
(See Psalm 105:2.)

God’s Word and Me
I can sing songs that tell about Jesus.
Play to Learn

Dramatic Play Center:
Songs of Praise

Collect
Bible, *Preschool Music #2* CD and player, aluminum foil, ruler, craft sticks, rhythm instruments.

Prepare
For each child, tear off one 6-inch (15-cm) length of aluminum foil.

Do
1. Children crumple foil and mold onto craft sticks to make pretend microphones.
2. Using pretend microphones and rhythm instruments, children sing “Go and Tell” (track 11 on CD). Repeat, giving children an opportunity to exchange instruments.

Talk About
- The Bible says, “Sing to God; tell of all his wonderful acts.” One way to tell others about Jesus is by singing songs about Jesus. Let’s sing songs.
- We can tell others about the wonderful things God has made. Claire, what is something God made? God made beautiful flowers! We can thank God for the things He has made.
- Wyatt, who can you tell about Jesus? We can tell our friends about Jesus!
- Pray briefly, Dear God, thank You for all the wonderful things You have made. Thank You for Jesus.

For Younger Children
Instead of making microphones, children only play rhythm instruments.

For Older Children
Children make up motions to do while singing “Go and Tell.”

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Listen to Learn
Acts 16:16-34

Collect
Bible, Bible Story 49 pictures from God’s Story for Me Poster Pack #2, Preschool Music #2 DVD or CD and player, different-colored sheets of construction paper, large sheet of paper, marker.

Prepare
On large sheet of paper, print the following:
I love Jesus, yes I do, yes I do,
I love Jesus, yes I do, He ___________.

Greet Each Other
Place construction paper in a circle on the floor, one for each child. Children walk around paper circle while you clap your hands. When you stop clapping, children stand on the sheet of paper closest to them. If you’re standing on a red paper, say your name! Continue game several times, calling different colors each round.

Tell the Story
Open your Bible to Acts 16. Tell the story using the pictured motions (keywords in bold) or show Bible Story 49 pictures.

When are some times you sing songs? Listen to hear about a time two men sang songs.
Paul and his friends traveled to different places to tell people about Jesus. One day Paul and his friend Silas went to the city of Philippi. They told people about Jesus. But some of the people in Philippi did not like hearing about Jesus. These men were angry! These men took Paul and Silas to the leaders. The men told lies about Paul and Silas. Even though Paul and Silas had done nothing wrong, they were put in jail! The jailer put their feet in pieces of wood called stocks. Paul and Silas could hardly even move!

Paul and Silas probably hurt all over! But they didn’t get mad at the jailer or the angry people. They knew God cared about them. So they prayed! They thanked God. Then Paul and Silas sang! They praised God. All the other people in jail could hear them!

Suddenly the ground began to shake, harder and harder. It was an EARTHQUAKE! The doors to the jail broke open! The jailer was afraid all the prisoners would run away. He was sure that he would be in big trouble.

But Paul called out, “Don’t worry! We are all here!” The jailer ran to Paul and Silas. He asked, “What must I do to be saved?” Paul and Silas said, “Believe in Jesus!” The jailer and his whole family listened to the good news about Jesus. They believed in Jesus! The family took care of Paul and Silas. They made a big meal together!

In the morning, the leaders told Paul and Silas they were free to leave. Paul and Silas started walking to a new town. It was time to tell other people about Jesus! Paul and Silas told about Jesus by talking. They told about Jesus by praying. They told about Jesus by singing! Many people heard God’s good news about Jesus.
Talk About the Story

Why was the jailer scared? (He thought all the prisoners had escaped.) Paul and Silas didn’t run away when the earthquake made their chains fall off. Instead they stayed to tell the jailer and his family about Jesus. Who is someone you would like to tell about Jesus? What are some ways to help others learn about Jesus? (Sing songs about Jesus. Tell Bible stories about Jesus. Invite someone to church to hear about Jesus.)

Sing to God

Let’s sing a song about something Jesus told us to do. Lead children in singing “Go and Tell” (on DVD or track 11 on CD). What is the good news we must tell others? (We can tell about Jesus. We can tell about Jesus’ love. We can tell about the great things God has done.)

Hear and Say God’s Word

Holding your Bible open to Psalm 105:2, say verse aloud. One of the great things God has done is send Jesus to us. We can sing songs that tell others about Jesus! Lead children in saying the verse as a group several times. Then have children sit in a circle. As you lead children to say the verse, point to a child for each word of the verse. Children stand up as you point to them and then sit down. Repeat the verse in this manner several times.

Pray to God

Lead children to repeat this prayer, phrase by phrase, after you: Dear God, help us to tell others about Your Son, Jesus. Thank You, God, that we can sing songs about Jesus. In Jesus’ name, amen.

Praise to God

Show the large sheet of paper you prepared. Let’s see how many different ways we can end this verse. Children suggest things they know about Jesus (He loves everyone. He was born at Christmas. He is alive!). Singing about Jesus is a way to show we love Him! (Optional: Lead children in singing the verse to the tune of “Mary Had a Little Lamb” or “London Bridge” as they experiment with endings.)

I love Jesus, yes I do, yes I do,
I love Jesus, yes I do, He (loves everyone).
Talk to Learn

Bible Story Activity Pages Center

Collect
A copy of Activity 49 from The Big Book of Bible Story Activity Pages #2 for yourself and each child, scissors, crayons or markers; optional—aquarium gravel, glue.

Do
Lead children to complete pages following the instructions. (Optional: Children glue gravel to floor in Scene 1.) Use the conversation suggestions as children complete their pages and retell the story.

Preschool Puzzle Center

Collect
Copies of Bible Story Puzzle 36, Bible Verse Puzzle 36 and/or Challenge Puzzle 36 from The Big Book of Preschool Puzzles #2 for each child; pencils, crayons or markers.

Do
Children complete the puzzles and color pages. Use the conversation suggestions on the pages.

Read-Aloud Story Center

Collect
A copy of Story Picture 36 from The Big Book of Read-Aloud Stories #2 for yourself and each child, crayons or markers.

Do
Read the story and distribute pictures. Use the conversation suggestions as children complete their pages.