

Paul and Silas in Prison

A responsive story about joy in suffering, taken from Acts chapter 16 verses 16-34. Teach the audience/congregation the 6 words and responses in bold below, before telling the story. You may like to have a group of volunteers at the front leading the responses throughout.

Dragged – Pull at your own collar, as if dragging yourself away
Wait! – hold up one hand as if telling someone to stop **Trouble** – say ‘Oh oh!!’
Prison – Mime holding prison bars and say “Clang!”
Shake/Shook/Shaking – Tremble a lot
Bad guys – All say “Gurrr!” and look mean

Sometimes it’s hard to be happy. Especially when life is full of troubles. But sometime people find that God is able to help them in their troubles. Like Paul and Silas.

They were in a place called Philippi, and they were busy telling people about their faith in Jesus when suddenly some rather annoyed folks grabbed hold of them and **dragged** them away. They were **dragged** to the people who were in charge of the city and accused of causing **trouble**. And then they were **dragged...** into **prison!** And locked inside! Now they really were in **trouble!** Paul and Silas could have been sad and worried, they might have been **shaking** with fear. But they weren’t, instead they sang songs of joy to God in the **prison**, and even though they were in **trouble**, this helped them to feel better.

Just around midnight there was a loud rumbling sound and the ground began to **shake...** and **shake...** and **shake!**

The man in charge of the jail ran in and cried, “What’s all this **trouble?** What’s going on?” Just then there was a very big earthquake, so big that it **shook** the doors off the prison, and there was nothing to stop the prisoners from escaping and running away.

“Oh no!” said the jailer, and he **shook** with terror, “this is terrible, all the **bad guys** will escape. I’m in big **trouble.**”

Of course it wasn’t really his fault, but he felt so bad about it that he picked up a sword and got ready to kill himself. Oh dear!

Then he heard a voice yell, “**Wait!** Stop! **Wait** a minute!”

The jailer picked up a torch and looked into the **prison**, all the **bad guys** were still there, and Paul and Silas were there too.

“**Wait!**” said Paul, “we’re still here, it’s okay, don’t hurt yourself.”

The jailer was amazed, he’d heard about Paul and Silas and knew they believed in God.

“Tell me about this God of yours,” said the jailer, “I want to know how to be saved by him.”

So Paul and Silas started to tell him, but he said, “Hang on! Stop! **Wait** a minute!”

And then he **dragged** them over to his house.

“Tell all my family about him too!” he said.

And so that night Paul and Silas told the jailer and all his family about Jesus and every one of them believed in God and decided to follow him. And even though Paul and Silas were in big **trouble** in **prison**, they did not let that get them down. Instead they found joy by looking to God.