

=BOOKS OF THE BIBLE=

Lesson 50
Philippians

Objects to have:

The sign for this new Bible book: PHILIPPIANS
Praise God

Illustrations of smiling and crying faces, pasted together, back to back
Your Bible.

Introducing the lesson:

(Show the children your Bible. Show them the part of the Bible that is called the Old Testament. Tell them that the rest of the Bible is called the New Testament. Remind them that the Old Testament and the New Testament are divided into books.)

This one book, the Bible, is divided into 66 books. In the New Testament the first 4 books are Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. (Have the children say these with you.) The name of the next book is called Acts. What is it called? Yes, Acts.

The next few books are actually letters, that are mail, written by people. We have been hearing about messages in letters that were written by Paul. Paul wrote some of the letters that are in the New Testament. He wrote the letters to Christian people. The letters went to different places. One letter went to the city of Rome where many people had asked Jesus to be their Saviour. That letter is called Romans. Two letters were written to people in the city of Corinth. Those two letters are called First and Second Corinthians. The next letter was written to people who lived in a big place called Galatia. That letter is called Galatians. The next letter was written to people who lived in Ephesus. That letter is called Ephesians. Let's say together the names of the letters which Paul wrote: Romans, First Corinthians, Second Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians. Now let's say all the books of the New Testament; that is, all that we have studied so far in Sunday school. (Say these with the children.)

(Hold up the faces. Hold it so that the children can see the smiling face.) Look at this person. He/She looks very happy about something. I wonder what is making him/her happy. What do you think it might be? What would make you happy? (Let the children tell you some things that would make them happy: getting a new bicycle, being permitted to go outside to play, etc.)

(Turn the face so that the crying side can be seen by the children.) Now our boy/girl is crying. I wonder why. What would make you sad? What would make you cry? (Allow the children to name some of the circumstances that would make them weep.)

Telling the story:

The Bible tells us of a time when Paul was happy. (Turn the face to the smiling side.) Paul had traveled to another city. Paul really went to a lot of different places! He was in a city called Philippi. Philippi was a very important city. It was a big city. There were many houses in that city. There was a river that flowed through the city of Philippi. There were many stores where people could buy groceries, where they could go to buy dresses and suits, socks and shoes. There were stores where they could buy furniture. Philippi was a big, busy city where there were a lot of people.

Paul was so happy to be in the city of Philippi! He knew that God wanted him to be there. God wanted Paul to be in Philippi; God wanted him there because there were some people there who would ask Jesus to be their Saviour if only they knew about Him. God wanted Paul to go to Philippi to tell people there about Jesus.

So Paul obeyed and went to Philippi. Paul did not go alone, however; a man by the name of Silas went with Paul. Paul and Silas got to Philippi.

Paul and Silas decided to go down by the riverside. There were some people there, and you will never guess what those people were doing down by the river. They were having a prayer meeting. They were kneeling or standing or sitting by the riverside, praying. They were asking God to let them get to know Him. They knew that there had to be a true, living God, but they did not know Him.

Paul heard them as they were praying. He said to them, "Listen to me, people. I am going to tell you what you want to know. There is truly a real, true, living God. He made Heaven and earth. He made people. You can know Him. You can talk with Him. You can ask Him for help, and He will give it to you. You can go to Heaven when you die, to be with Him. First, your sins need to be washed away, and they can be. Just ask Jesus to be your Saviour."

The people by the riverside listened to Paul. Many of them asked Jesus to be their Saviour. One of those families then said to Paul and Silas, "You do not live in this city; you need a place to stay." How nice; this family invited Paul and Silas to go home with them so that Paul and Silas would have a place to stay while they were at Philippi.

Each day Paul and Silas would go from that house into different parts of the city of Philippi. They would talk to people whom they met. They would say, "We have good news to tell you. We can tell you how you can go to Heaven when you die." The people listened to Paul and Silas. Many of them were glad to hear the good news and many of them accepted Jesus as their Saviour.

Some of the people, however, did not like Paul and Silas. Every time they heard them preach, they became more and more angry with them. One day some of these men came running through the crowd. They grabbed hold of Paul and Silas and yelled at them, "You men are causing trouble here in this city." They dragged Paul and Silas to the City Hall. They pushed them into the office of the mayor. These men said, "Paul and Silas have come to our city to cause trouble."

When the men said this, the crowd of people who had followed to the mayor's office yelled, "That's right. These men are causing trouble in our city." How did you think Paul and Silas' faces looked about this time? Do you think they were smiling like this face (turn the faces), or do you think they were crying like this? We'll continue the story and find out whether they were sad or happy.

The mayor and the other men who ruled the city listened to the people who were angry with Paul and Silas. You see, whenever people don't want to accept Jesus as their Saviour, often they get angry with the person who tells them that they need to be saved. Finally the mayor said, "These men do need to be punished. Soldiers, come up here. Bring your whips with you. Beat these men." They tore the shirts off Paul and Silas. The soldiers picked up their big, long whips. They beat the backs of Paul and Silas. The backs of Paul and Silas became sore and bleeding, just like big, long cuts across them.

If I had been Paul or Silas, I would have been crying (hold up the crying face) like this. I think that I would have been crying and yelling, "You can't do this to me.

I don't deserve to be treated this way." But it seemed as if Paul and Silas were just waiting to see why God was letting this happen to them.

Then the mayor gave another command. He commanded that Paul and Silas be taken and thrown into prison. They were taken to prison. They were pushed inside. They were not allowed to stay in a room near the door; they had to be pushed clear down to the basement inside the prison. There the guards fastened big chains to Paul and Silas' legs and arms. Then Paul and Silas were left alone with other prisoners. Those other prisoners deserved to be in prison because they were bad criminals, but Paul and Silas did not deserve to be there.

Then Paul and Silas decided to pray. (Hold up the happy face.) They were happy as they prayed! They were so happy that they could ask God for help. Also, they were thinking of how nice it was that they had come to Philippi where they told about Jesus, because many people had been saved! They looked like this happy face. In prison they were happy? Yes, they knew that the worst that could happen to them would be that they would be killed. If Paul and Silas were killed, they would go to Heaven right then to be with Jesus!

Do you know what Paul and Silas did next? There they were, held by heavy chains in that dark, cold, damp place. They sang! They sang songs about Jesus. Maybe they sang a song something like, "Oh, How I Love Jesus."

Suddenly, while Paul and Silas were singing, there was a rumble in the ground. The building started to shake! The door of the prison flew open! The jailer had been sleeping because it was midnight. The earthquake woke him up. Then he looked at the prison doors and saw that they were open! He started to kill himself with a sword because he thought that the prisoners had escaped; and if the prisoners had escaped, the mayor would have him killed, anyway.

Paul saw the jailer, and Paul saw that the jailer had his sword out, ready to kill himself. Paul called out, "Mr. Jailer, do not kill yourself. All the prisoners are here."

The jailer came close, where Paul and Silas were. He unlocked the chains that were around their arms and legs. He said, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?"

Paul and Silas said, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house." The jailer right there asked Jesus to be his Saviour.

The jailer then led Paul and Silas out of the prison to his house so that they could tell his family about Jesus, too. They all trusted Jesus. Then they went down to the river. There Paul and Silas baptized the jailer, the jailer's wife and the jailer's children.

Then the jailer took Paul and Silas back to his own house. He got some nice, warm water with some soap and gently washed the backs of Paul and Silas. He gave them some clean clothes to wear. Paul and Silas felt much better. The thing that made them feel the best was that the jailer and his family got saved! Right there in Philippi the jailer and his family got saved. Paul and Silas were so happy about that! (Put down the illustrated faces.)

One day Paul and Silas felt that they needed to leave the city of Philippi and go other places to preach about Jesus. When they got to one place, Paul sat down and told somebody the words to write so that he could write a letter back to the Philippians. (Pull the letter to the Philippians from the mailbag.) But these were not Paul's words; the Holy Spirit told Paul exactly what to say so that God's words could be written down in the book of Philippians. Here is that letter.

(Show the children the book of Philippians in the Bible.) We can read this letter, too. Paul said in this letter, "Rejoice in the Lord alway." Paul practiced what he preached! He was always happy in the Lord. Let's be like that, too.

LEARN OUR BIBLE VERSE: Philippians 4:4, "Rejoice in the Lord alway: and again I say, Rejoice."