

Pray Together

Use the first few minutes of your time together to lead your group in a focused prayer time.

- **Praise:** Spend time praising God for who He is.
- **Repent:** Take a few moments to silently confess any sin that is lingering in your heart.
- **Ask:** Verbalize your needs and the needs of others to God.
- **Yield:** Surrender your will to God.

Read Together

Singing stirs the soul and provides a way for us to express our deepest feelings. Songs give us the opportunity to pour out emotions whether joy-filled, sad, or melancholy. We sing when we are happy. We sing in grief and sorrow. We sing out of the overflow of what is truly stirred in our hearts.

In Acts 16 we read of Paul and Silas' imprisonment, and of the glorious duet that rang through the cold, prison cell walls that night. Though bound in shackles and chains, God's Word, through song, remained free to lace the ears of those around them in bondage.

But how could Paul and Silas' hearts be joyful with songs of praise after all they had been through that day? A demon-possessed slave girl had tormented them with an endless refrain of taunting. A crowd of onlookers jeered at them. Blow after blow they heard and felt the strikes from the whips and rods on their bodies as they were beaten. Those were the sounds that filled Paul and Silas' heads and hearts that day. Yet even with the conflicts and adversities they endured, a chorus of hope, even jubilee, filled their hearts and flowed from their lips.

Hymns of prayer and praise echoed forth that night in the jail, and the reason for Paul and Silas' rejoicing was the assurance that the name of Jesus was proclaimed. Jesus' name proclaimed—the advancement of the Gospel—this was the overture of Paul and Silas' heart. As these men of God sat—side by side—singing together, the Spirit of God moved and made miracles happen that night.

Discuss Together

Use these questions to engage in an informative and impactful discussion.

- Describe a time in your life when singing a hymn of praise helped you endure a trial or adversity. Did your circumstance change or was there a shift in your perspective as a result of your time of praise and worship?
- Discuss ways that worship draws you closer to God, helping you focus on Him.
- Read Acts 16:25-40 along with Philippians 1:12-18.
 - Describe the jail scene in Acts and note the miracles that occurred.
 - In Philippians 1:12-13 Paul says that what happened to him served to advance the Gospel and to embolden others sharing the Gospel. Give examples of these results.
- What is your usual response to adversity?



- Have you ever been in the midst of adversity and combated the enemy's warfare with prayer, praise, and worship? If so, describe this experience.
- Do you give thanks for adversity and delight in sharing how the Gospel was advanced as a result of your trial? Why or why not? Give an example of a time when you were able to rejoice in suffering and share your experience with someone in need.
- What do the following verses say we should do in adversity?
 - Psalm 103:1-5
 - Romans 12:12
 - Ephesians 5:19-20
 - 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18
 - Hebrews 13:15
- Identify some immediate concerns that are impacting members of your Life Group in the days ahead. Discuss ways you and your Life Group can pray, praise, and worship God in the midst of these adversities.
- Discuss the story of King Jehoshaphat and Judah in 2 Chronicles 20. When they were faced with adversity, what steps did Jehoshaphat and the people of Judah take *together* to attain victory? Did they stand together, side by side, in battle?
- Who did King Jehoshaphat send out in front of the army? (verse 21) What was the result?
- When you or someone you know face adversity this week, how will you respond? Will you stand side by side with them? Will you pray, praise, and sing along with them? Will you look for ways to advance the Gospel in the midst of the trial?

How I must obey Christ...

- Examine yourself. As a result of this study, identify a specific area in which you need to obey Christ this week.
- How do you specifically need to obey Christ in this area this week?
- How can Jesus redeem this area? How has He proven that in Scripture?
- Who will keep you accountable to this commitment this week?

Pray Together

Pray Psalm 118 aloud each day this week.

