

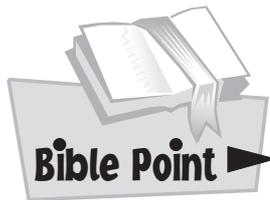
Worshipping God

Jesus' resurrection completed his mission here on earth, and his followers finally understood what that mission had been. Jesus sent them out into the world to preach the good news—that God had such love for people that he sent his Son to suffer and die for their sins. By taking on our guilt and conquering death, Jesus made it possible for all to have the amazing free gift of everlasting life with him in heaven. The only requirement is belief in Jesus. As the early Christians shared this message with others, they often suffered at the hands of those who rejected Christ. Yet they continued to spread the news and worship God through times of persecution.

Three- and four-year-olds can experience the joy of sharing the good news also and learning to worship God in both good times and bad.

Three Lessons on Worshipping God

Lesson	Bible Point	Page	Bible Basis
1	We worship God by singing to him.	11	Acts 16:16-34
2	We worship God by praying to him.	23	Acts 16:16-34
3	We worship God by thanking him.	37	Acts 16:16-34



Bible Point ▶

We worship God by singing to him.

Bible Verse

“Shout with joy to the Lord!” (Psalm 100:1a).

Growing Closer to Jesus

Children will

- make musical instruments for praising God,
- learn a new praise song,
- talk about singing when they're afraid, and
- learn that God enjoys hearing their praises.

Teacher Enrichment

Bible Basis

■ Paul and Silas sing praises in prison.



Picture Paul and his companions running into the demon-possessed slave girl, who was in demand to tell fortunes.

When Paul cast the demon out of the girl, she lost her ability to tell fortunes and, therefore, her owners saw Paul's actions as an attack on their property. They saw Paul and his companions as Jews propagating outlandish beliefs. On the basis of the owners' accusations, Paul and Silas were beaten and thrown in jail.

This time when God freed his servants from jail, he essentially freed everyone in the jail. Why didn't everyone flee? Perhaps they stayed because of the impression Paul and Silas had on them when they were singing hymns at midnight in spite of their chains!

When the jailer realized that the prisoners were still there and had not run away, he was ready to accept Paul's message: “Believe in the Lord Jesus and you will be saved.”

In the end, Paul and Silas undoubtedly realized that the beating and imprisonment they had endured were worth the joy that salvation had brought to the Philippian jailer.

Prayer

- Read Psalm 34:3.
- Paul and Silas found a way to praise Jesus despite their circumstances. How do you do this in your own life? How do you teach the children in your class to do this?
- Pray: Dear Lord, please help me remember that regardless of what happens, I need to lift up praises to you by...

Before the Lesson

- Collect the necessary items for the activities you plan to use, referring to the Classroom Supplies and Learning Lab Supplies listed on the chart.
- Make photocopies of the “Today I Learned...” handout (at the end of this lesson) to send home with your children.
- Pray for the children in your class and for God’s direction in teaching the lesson.

This Lesson at a Glance

	What Children Will Do	Classroom Supplies	Learning Lab Supplies
Welcome Time	Welcome! —Receive name tags and be greeted by the teacher.	Butterfly name tags (p. 8), washable markers, scissors, safety pins or tape	
Let’s Get Started Direct children to one or more of the optional activities until everyone arrives.	Option 1: Musical Instruments —Make musical instruments to use as they praise God.	Crayons, washable markers, paper towel tubes, masking tape, dry cereal, bowls, paper plates, stapler, spoons	
	Option 2: Locks and Keys —Experiment with locks and large keys, and hear that Paul and Silas were locked up in prison.	Variety of large locks and keys	
	Option 3: Key Rubbings —Watch key shapes appear, and hear that Paul and Silas got out of jail...but not with keys!	Variety of large keys, paper, crayons, masking tape	
	Pick-Up Time —Sing a song as they pick up toys and gather for Bible Story Time.	CD player	
Bible Story Time	Setting the Stage —Sing and make joyful music to the Lord.	Bible, instruments from Option 1, CD player	
	Bible Song and Prayer Time —Sing a song, bring out the Bible, and pray together.	Bible, CD player	
	Hear and Tell the Bible Story —Hear the story from Acts 16 of Paul and Silas singing to God while they were in jail.	Bible	
	Do the Bible Story —Play a jail game to review the Bible story.		
Closing 	Songs in the Night —Help Whiskers learn to sing to God when he’s afraid.		
	Like Paul and Silas —In a darkened room, pray as Paul and Silas did.	CD player	

*See the end of this lesson for extra-time ideas and supplies.

Welcome Time

SUPPLIES: “Butterfly Name Tags” (p. 8), washable markers, scissors, safety pins or tape

- Bend down and make eye contact with children as they arrive.
- Greet each child individually with an enthusiastic smile.
- Thank each child for coming to class today.
- Say: **Today we’re going to learn that ► *we worship God by singing to him.***
- Before class, photocopy the butterfly name tags, and cut out one for each child. Give each child a butterfly, help children write their names on their name tags, and pin or tape them on their clothing. You may want to photocopy the name tags onto card stock or heavyweight paper and then cover the name tags with clear adhesive plastic after your class. It will help them last throughout the quarter.
- Direct children to the Let’s Get Started activities you’ve set up.



BIBLE POINT

Let’s Get Started

Set up one or more of the following activities for children to do as they arrive. After you greet each child, invite him or her to choose an activity.

Circulate among the children to offer help as needed and direct children’s conversation toward today’s lesson. Ask questions such as “What’s your favorite song?” or “When do you like to sing?”



It’s important to say the Bible Point just as it’s written in each activity. Repeating the Bible Point over and over throughout the lesson will help children remember it and apply it to their lives.

Option 1: Musical Instruments

SUPPLIES: washable markers, crayons, paper towel tubes, dry cereal, spoons, bowls, paper plates, stapler, masking tape

Let each child make one or more of the instruments described below. Have volunteers make a few extras so each child will have an instrument during “Setting the Stage.” If you don’t have supplies available for children to make their worship instruments, set out wooden blocks, the *clapper*, pots and pans, or other rhythm instruments that are available at your church.



Horns—Set out washable markers, crayons, the *trumpet stamp* and *ink pad*, and paper towel tubes. If you don’t have enough tubes for each child, roll construction paper into tubes and tape the edges together. Allow children to decorate the tubes to make horns.

Shakers—Set out crayons, washable markers, paper plates, the *trumpet stamp* and *ink pad*, and bowls of dry cereal such as Cheerios or Froot Loops.

Have children decorate one side of their paper plates, and then show them how to fold the plates in half so the decorated side is on the outside. Help children pour a spoonful of cereal into each folded plate, and then staple around the edges. Add masking tape around the edges in order to cover the sharp edges of the staples.




teacher tips

If you don't have keys and locks at home, check with your church custodian. In addition, be sure all keys and locks are large enough so that children can't choke on them.



Short on supplies and time? Here's a simple way to make some shakers the children will love. Fill a plastic Easter egg with rice or dried beans. Make sure to tape the egg securely shut with colored electrical tape. Rather than sending the shakers home, collect them after each use. You'll have a set of musical instruments that can be used each week.


teacher tips

Preschoolers can recall some facts and events, which helps them memorize stories, songs, and finger plays. It also means they ask lots of questions. However, they typically have an attention span of no longer than four minutes.

Allow children to play with their instruments before setting them aside to use during "Setting the Stage." As children play with their instruments, explain that making music is one way we can praise God. Encourage children to sing familiar praise songs as they play their instruments. Remind them that ► we worship God by singing to him.

Option 2: Locks and Keys

SUPPLIES: variety of large locks and keys

Set out several different kinds of locks and keys, such as a padlock and key, a bike lock, or a key chain with old keys on it. Let children try unlocking the locks. Tell children that today's story is about two people who were locked in jail. Explain that even though Paul and Silas didn't have the keys to get out, God had another plan to break the jail doors open and set them free.

Option 3: Key Rubbings

SUPPLIES: variety of large keys, crayons, paper, masking tape

Tape a variety of old keys to a table top. Give each child a sheet of paper and a crayon with the paper peeled off. Jumbo crayons work best for this activity because they're easier for little fingers to hold.

Have children lay their sheets of paper on top of the keys. Show each child how to rub the side of the crayon over a sheet of paper and a key. Point out that the key appears. As they work, tell children that in today's Bible story two men who worshipped God got out of jail—not with a key, but in a very special way!

When everyone has arrived and you're ready to move on to Bible Story Time, encourage children to finish what they're doing and get ready to clean up.

Pick-Up Time

SUPPLIES: CD player



Lead children in singing "Come Along With Me" with the CD (track 2) to the tune of "Come and Go With Me." Encourage children to sing along as they help clean up the room.

You'll be singing this song each week to alert children to start picking up. At first, they may need a little encouragement. But after a few weeks, picking up and singing along will become a familiar routine.



**Come along with me and pick up all our things,
Pick up all our things,
Pick up all our things.
Come along with me and pick up all our things
So our room will be clean.**

(Repeat 2x.)

Bible Story Time

Setting the Stage

SUPPLIES: Bible, instruments from Option 1, CD player



Tell children you'll shake the *clapper* to get their attention. Explain that when you shake it, the children are to stop what they're doing and raise their hands. Practice this signal a few times. Encourage children to respond quickly so you'll have time for all the fun activities you've planned.

Ask: • **What did you make or do when you came to class today?** (Made an instrument; played with keys; made a crayon rubbing.)

Say: **Some of you made an instrument, some of you played with keys, and some of you made pictures by rubbing over keys with crayons. You were learning important things about our Bible story. Today we're learning that we worship God by singing to him.**

The Bible tells us some ways to worship God. Listen while I read a Bible verse to you. See if you can hear a way the Bible tells us to praise God.

Read aloud **Psalm 48:4-6**: "Shout to the Lord, all the earth; break out in praise and sing for joy! Sing your praise to the Lord with the harp, with the harp and melodious song, with trumpets and the sound of the ram's horn. Make a joyful symphony before the Lord, the King!"

Ask: • **What are some of the ways this verse says that we can worship God?** (Shout with joy; sing songs; play a harp or trumpet.)

Then show children today's Bible verse in your Bible, **Psalm 100:1a**, and say: **The Bible tells us we can "shout with joy to the Lord!" Let's shout together, "We love you, God!"**

Lead children in shouting the phrase. Then continue: **This verse also says to sing songs and make music with instruments. We're going to do that right now. First, let me hand out the instruments you made earlier.**

Distribute the instruments from Option 1, and lead children in playing the instruments while singing "Shout With Joy" (adapted from Psalm 100:1a) with the *CD* (track 10) to the tune of "Deep and Wide." The song is recorded on the *CD* twice.



SING

Shout with joy. (Wave hands in air and twirl around.)

Shout with joy. (Wave hands in air and twirl around.)

Let's all shout with joy for the Lord! (Cup hands around mouth.)

Yeehaw! (Throw hands in air with excitement.)

Shout with joy. (Wave hands in air and twirl around.)

Shout with joy. (Wave hands in air and twirl around.)

Let's all shout with joy for the Lord! (Cup hands around mouth.)

Yeehaw! (Throw hands in air with excitement.)

(Repeat.)

Say: **You're super singers! God likes to hear you sing because we worship God by singing to him. Let's learn about a time when Paul and Silas worshipped God by singing songs.**



BIBLE POINT

BIBLE VERSE



teacher tips

If you didn't make instruments during Let's Get Started, use the *clapper* from the Learning Lab and hand out pairs of small wooden blocks for children to clap together.



BIBLE POINT

■ Bible Song and Prayer Time

SUPPLIES: Bible, CD player



tracks 3, 4

Say: **Each week when we come to our circle for our Bible story, I'll choose someone to be the Bible helper. The Bible helper will bring me the Bible marked with our Bible story for that week. Before I choose today's Bible helper, let's learn our Bible song. As we sing, we'll pass around our special Bible. The person who's holding the Bible when the music stops will be our Bible person today.**

Lead children in singing "I'm So Glad for the Bible" with the CD (track 3) to the tune of "Give Me Oil in My Lamp." As you sing, pass around the special Bible.



SING

**I'm so glad for the Bible.
Keep me learnin', learnin', learnin'.
I'm so glad for God's book today.
I'm so glad for the Bible.
Keep me learnin', learnin', learnin'—
Keep me learnin' all about his way.**

**Let me hear 'bout God's love—
Keep me learnin', learnin', learnin'.
Let me hear 'bout God's love for me.
Let me hear 'bout God's love—
Keep me learnin', learnin', learnin'.
Let's shine the light for all to see.**

(Repeat first verse.)

When the music stops, invite the child who's holding the Bible to bring it to you. Stamp the child's hand with the *trumpet stamp*, and thank the child for bringing you the Bible. Then stamp the other children's hands. As they come up to you to get their hands stamped, take time to show them the Bible and explain to them that the Bible is God's Word for them.

Say: **I'm thankful for [name of Bible helper], and I'm thankful for everyone in our class today. Let's thank God together for all our friends in this class.**

Lead children in singing "I'm So Glad We're Together" with the CD (track 4) to the tune of "Give Me Oil in My Lamp."



SING

**I'm so glad we're together.
Keep us prayin', prayin', prayin'.
I'm so glad we're all here today.
I'm so glad we're together.
Keep us prayin', prayin', prayin'—
Prayin' for each other every day.**

Lead children in folding their hands and bowing their heads as you continue to sing.

**Thank you, Lord, for each one.
Keep me thankful, thankful, thankful.
Thank you for everyone who's here.
Thank you, Lord, for each one.
Keep me thankful, thankful, thankful—
Thankful for our friends both far and near.**

Hear and Tell the Bible Story

SUPPLIES: Bible



Have children stand around you. Bring out the *Bible Big Book: Paul and Silas Go to Jail* and a Bible. Open the Bible to **Acts 16**, and show the passage to the children. Say: **Our Bible story comes from the book of Acts in the Bible. Our Bible Big Book shows us pictures of our Bible story. Today we're going to hear what Paul and Silas did when they were in jail.**

Listen closely as I read the story. When you hear me say, "Paul and Silas," I want you to stand up, put your fist into the air, and say, "Yea, God!" When you hear me say "jailer," I want you to stamp your foot, shake your finger, and say, "Stay put." When you hear me say "prisoners," I want you cup your hand around your ear, and say, "What?"

Let's practice what you'll do. If I say, "Paul and Silas," what are you going to do? Remind children to put their fists in the air and say, "Yea, God!" What if I say "jailer"? Remind the children of what to say and do. And what if I say "prisoners"? Again, remind the children of what to say and do. Now I'm going to mix the three groups of people and see if you can still remember. Are you ready? Jailer. Pause. Paul and Silas. Pause. Prisoners. Pause. Very good. I think you're ready to help me with the story. When you read the story, pause whenever you say any of the three groups of people so the children have time to give their response.

Hold the *Bible Big Book* so children can see the pictures, and read aloud the back-cover text. When you finish, put the book away and out of sight. Then say: **Let's see what good listeners you were. If you know what Paul and Silas did when they were in jail, stand up and then sit down. Pause. Wow! What a lot of good listeners!**

Ask: • **What did Paul and Silas do when they were in jail?** (They sang songs; they prayed; they praised God.)

Say: **Paul and Silas could have been mad or afraid in jail. But they sang and praised God.**

Ask: • **When do you get scared?** (When it's dark; when there's a storm; when my mom and dad leave me with a baby sitter.)

• **What do you do when you're scared?** (Run away; hide in my room; cry.)

Say: **Just like Paul and Silas, we can remember that God is always with us, even when something scary is happening. When you get scared, you can sing songs to God, too. It'll help you feel brave and remind you that God is with you. ► We worship God by singing to him.**



This Bible story is featured in the new *My First Hands-On Bible™*. Order several now for your ministry at group.com.



Do the Bible Story

SUPPLIES: none



Before this activity, make a "jail" by setting up chairs in a triangle, with a wall as one side of the triangle. Set the *tambourine* and the *mini groan tube* from the Learning Lab inside the jail.

Say: **Let's see what it might have been like for Paul and Silas to go to jail. I've made a classroom "jail," and I'm going to send some people to jail right now. Listen carefully to hear whether you have to go to jail.**

Have children walk around near the chairs while you call out reasons to go to jail. Say things such as "If you're wearing pink socks go to jail" or "If you ate oatmeal for breakfast go to jail." After each reason, escort the "prisoners" to jail. Once you have two or three children inside the jail, have the prisoners play the instruments and sing songs such as "Shout With Joy." As children sing, pull away one chair and set them free. Repeat until everyone has had at least one turn in jail.

Gather children around you, and ask:

- **How did it feel to be told to go to jail when you hadn't done anything wrong?** (It was fun; it wasn't fair.)
- **How do you think Paul and Silas felt when they were put in jail?** (They were mad; they were unhappy; they were scared.)

Say: **Our jail was only a game, so we had fun. But it wasn't fun for Paul and Silas to be in jail. They hadn't done anything wrong. In fact, they'd helped a sad slave girl.**



Say: **Instead of being mad or afraid, Paul and Silas worshipped God. When something bad happens to us, instead of being afraid, we can worship Jesus. Jesus is with us when we worship him.**

When we worship him, Jesus helps us through the bad times. Let's see if our friend Whiskers can sing as well as you can!



teacher tips

You'll be amazed to discover how much your children have learned as they share the lesson with Whiskers. Children who are shy around adults or other children will identify with Whiskers and open up to him.

You can purchase Whiskers in your local Christian bookstore or directly from Group Publishing by calling 1-800-447-1070.

Closing

■ Songs in the Night

SUPPLIES: none

Bring out Whiskers the Mouse, and go through the following puppet script. Whiskers will sing with the children during the closing activity.



Whiskers: *(Comes out yawning.)*

Teacher: Hello, Whiskers. You look sleepy.

Whiskers: I'm so tired. I keep waking up in the middle of the night feeling scared. Then I can't get back to sleep.

Teacher: Oh, Whiskers, I know how you feel. That happens to me sometimes, too.

Whiskers: It does? I didn't know grown-ups get scared. I thought only little mice got scared at night.

Teacher: Oh, everyone gets scared sometimes.

Whiskers: *(Turning to children)* Is it true? Do you get scared sometimes?
(Let children tell Whiskers about times they get scared.)

Teacher: Whiskers, we heard a Bible story today about two men named Paul and Silas. They were thrown in jail when they hadn't done anything wrong.

Whiskers: Jail! I bet they were really scared in there.

Teacher: They might have been at first. But instead of staying afraid or getting mad, they did something that will surprise you. Children, tell Whiskers what Paul and Silas did in jail.
(Let children tell about Paul and Silas singing and praying.)

Whiskers: Singing? In jail? What good would that do?

Teacher: It made them feel better by reminding them that God was still taking care of them. Then God sent an earthquake that shook the jail so hard that the doors opened and their chains fell off!

Whiskers: What a cool story! Paul and Silas were really brave!

Teacher: God helped them, Whiskers. They worshipped instead of getting mad or afraid. We can worship God, too.

Whiskers: I heard you singing some great songs earlier. ► *We worship God by singing to him*, don't we?

Teacher: Yes, Whiskers. God loves to hear us sing to him.

Whiskers: Next time I wake up and can't sleep, I'm going to start singing!

Teacher: That's a great idea. In fact, I was going to teach the children a song called "I'll Talk to the Lord." Can you stay and learn it with us? Then when you're scared at night, you can sing it to God.

Whiskers: I'd like that a lot!

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BIBLE POINT

teacher tips

Be sensitive to children who might be afraid in a darkened room. If anyone expresses fear, have children cover their eyes to make it dark, rather than turning off the lights.

■ Like Paul and Silas

SUPPLIES: CD player



track 11

Gather children under a table, and turn the lights off to make it as dark as possible. Have Whiskers join the children.

Say: **Let's pretend we're Paul and Silas in jail. In our Bible story today, we learned that we can sing to God in scary times just as Paul and Silas did. ►We worship God by singing to him. Singing can help us remember that God is with us. Let's sing a song called "I'll Talk to the Lord." You can sing this when you're alone or scared.**

Lead children in singing "I'll Talk to the Lord" to the tune of "Frère Jacques" with the CD (track 11).



SING

**When I'm afraid, when I'm alone,
I'll talk to the Lord, I'll talk to the Lord.
I'll tell him how I feel, I'll tell him how I feel.
He'll help me, he'll help me.**

(Repeat.)

When the song ends, turn off the CD player. Pray: **Dear God, thank you for always being with us. Help us to sing our praises to you, even when we're afraid. In Jesus' name, amen.**

Lead children in a "jailbreak" by having everyone roll out from under the table.



Growing closer to Jesus extends beyond the classroom.

Photocopy the "Today I Learned..." handout (at the end of this lesson) for this week, and send it home with the children. Encourage parents to use the handout to plan meaningful family activities to reinforce this week's topic.



For Extra Time

If you have a long class time or want to add additional elements to your lesson, try one of the following activities.

■ **Lively Learning: Obstacle Course**

Set up a simple obstacle course using chairs, a table with a blanket over it, and pillows or carpet squares. Explain that going to jail was a hard thing for Paul and Silas to do, but God helped them through it.

Tell children that they'll get to play a game that may be hard for them to do. Then demonstrate how to go through the obstacle course. For example, you might have children step on each pillow, climb over the chairs, and crawl under the table.

Send children through the obstacle course two or three at a time. Encourage children who are waiting for a turn to sing praise songs as they watch their classmates wind through the obstacle course.

■ **Make to Take: In Jail**



Set out glue sticks, craft sticks, paper plates, and pieces of chenille wire. Help children glue chenille-wire "jail bars" to the paper plates. Then have them draw smiling faces on the rounded ends of craft sticks and place them in their jails to represent Paul and Silas. Have children sing as they work, and remind them that **▶ we worship God by singing to him.**

■ **Treat to Eat: Jailbreak**

Give each child a small paper plate, a tablespoon of spreadable cream cheese, a graham cracker square, and four or five pretzel sticks. Set out plastic knives, and have children spread the cream cheese on their cracker squares. Then direct them to lay their pretzel sticks down on top of the cream cheese in order to build a jail cell for Paul and Silas. Then tell them to set Paul and Silas free by eating the jail.



■ **Story Picture: Paul and Silas Sing in Jail**

Give each child a copy of the "Today I Learned..." handout. Let children color their pictures. Then set out glue sticks and black yarn, and help children glue the yarn to the jail bars in their pictures. Remind children that Paul and Silas worshipped God in jail.

Today i learned...

We worship God by singing to him.

Lesson 1

Today your child learned that **WE WORSHIP GOD BY SINGING TO HIM**. Children sang a new song and played musical instruments. They learned that we can sing to God any time.

Help me learn this:

"Shout with joy to the Lord!" (Psalm 100:1a).

Ask me:

- What did Paul and Silas do when they were put in jail?
- What can you do when you're scared?
- What songs does our family sing to worship God?

Family Fun

- Each night let a different family member choose a praise song to sing before dinner. Then have that same family member pray, thanking God for the good things he gives us.
- Make a list of favorite family praise songs. Post the list on the refrigerator. When a family member is afraid, frustrated, upset, or discouraged, choose one of the praise songs and sing it together.

Paul and Silas Sing in Jail (Acts 16:16-34)

