**“All In” – Week 3 (Paul & Silas)**

**June 18-19, 2022**

What’s up, everyone?! Let’s get right into our next New Testament passage as we continue our series called “All In.” It starts with a pretty familiar guy in the New Testament named Paul (who some of you may have heard about or read about). Paul was one of the most prolific authors of the New Testament and I want us to look at an event that deeply shaped Paul’s life. However, it also involves a second guy that maybe you don’t know that much about. His name was Silas and he was a friend of Paul’s who traveled with him to preach about Jesus. They were in a pretty bad situation and instead of moping or complaining about it, they asked for God’s help and something pretty incredible happened.

Speaking of moping and complaining, how many of you have ever overreacted and yelled at your parents when you got into trouble for something? Now…some of you may not want to admit this…but how many of you tend to pout when you get in trouble or pout when you get sent to your room? Sometimes our attitude only makes things worse!

**(Teacher’s Note: Tell a short story about a time when you got in trouble or were in a hard situation as a kid and you only made things worse because of your attitude!)**

We will go through challenging situations (sometimes by our own doing) in this life – many of them. We need to learn, fail, re-learn, re-fail…how to praise God in all those situations. So here’s our **THP (Take Home Point)** for the message today:

**Praise God in all situations!**

I know that’s a big statement to make because it doesn’t seem very fair, does it? Who wants to praise and worship God when life stinks? If God loves us, he wouldn’t allow these bad situations to happen to us, right? Well, let’s look at Paul and Silas’s story in Acts 16 in the New Testament to see if we can learn anything from them!

First of all, they get arrested and beaten severely because they were preaching about Jesus. In fact, the reason they get thrown in jail is because Paul drives out an evil spirit from a woman…I mean, it wasn’t even anything bad. It was good! Who gets thrown into jail for something good?! They get thrown in jail and one prison guard is ordered to shackle their feet and watch them very closely so they wouldn’t try and escape. Pretty terrible situation, right? I bet Paul and Silas complained, I bet they were plotting how they were going to get even, and I’m sure they were mad at God. Maybe…but maybe not. The writer of Acts, Luke, gives us our answer right here in Acts 16:25 in the New Testament – *“About midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the other prisoners were listening to them.*

They were doing the exact opposite! They were praising God! When was the last time any of us did that? That’s a pretty big challenge for our life, isn’t it? Even in really tough situations, we should praise God! The story doesn’t end there; let’s read on!

Acts 16:26-34 – *“Suddenly there was such a violent earthquake that the foundations of the prison were shaken. At once all the prison doors flew open, and everyone’s chains came loose. The jailer woke up, and when he saw the prison doors open, he drew his sword and was about to kill himself because he thought the prisoners had escaped. But Paul shouted, “Don’t harm yourself! We are all here!” The jailer called for lights, rushed in and fell trembling before Paul and Silas. He then brought them out and asked, “Sirs, what must I do to be saved?” They replied, “Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved—you and your household.” Then they spoke the word of the Lord to him and to all the others in his house. At that hour of the night the jailer took them and washed their wounds; then immediately he and all his household were baptized. The jailer brought them into his house and set a meal before them; he was filled with joy because he had come to believe in God—he and his whole household.”*

Simply because Paul and Silas CHOSE to praise and worship God in spite of their bad situation, the guy who was in charge of them in the jail – he and his entire family became Christians! God blessed them for doing the right thing! I’m sure it wasn’t easy, but it was totally worth it.

I want this story to challenge us to think about two questions: what kind of attitude do I have and how do I usually react in bad situations (whether they happen to me or I caused them)? The second question is this: how can I learn to praise God in all situations?

**(Teacher’s Note: If you have a personal story where you praised God through some difficult circumstances, please share it here. Share the good AND the bad!)**

The story of Paul and Silas should encourage us that even when life isn’t going well, we should still trust God! It doesn’t mean that you can’t be angry or sad or feel betrayed by someone. Just express those emotions to God in prayer. Even though it might be easier to depend on our EMOTIONS, we need to learn the importance of depending on GOD in ALL situations. It takes time to learn how to praise and trust God in the midst of challenging circumstances.

As we go to our group discussions, let’s be challenged to commit to our **THP (Take Home Point)** today: **Praise God in all situations!** Let’s pray!