

BIRDS OF A FEATHER

WEEK 3: Paul + Silas (Acts 16:16-40)

INTRO//

-Hey Faith Students! Welcome to the best night of the week!

Tonight we are continuing a brand new series called: "Birds of a feather" Tonight let's explore the profound friendship between Paul and Silas. Their bond teaches us valuable lessons about loyalty, support, and the strength we can find in true friendship.

-ASK THE STUDENTS-

REMIND THEM

- Comes from the saying "Birds of a feather flock together"
- The saying means that similar people stay together
- The community we keep reflects who we are and who we're becoming, so who we keep around us/in our circle is important!

-This week we will look at the story of Paul + Silas and how their friendship encouraged one another to praise God despite their circumstances, and it led to breakthrough. That's the kind of community and friendship we need to seek! Those are the type of people we need to surround ourselves with!

Illustration//

Has there ever been a time in your life where you and a friend had gotten into some serious trouble and somehow managed to get out of it.....

(Tell Your Story or maybe a story of a friend)

Scripture//

Acts 16:16-40

16 One day as we were going down to the place of prayer, we met a slave girl who had a spirit that enabled her to tell the future. She earned a lot of money for her masters by telling fortunes. **17** She followed Paul and the rest of us, shouting, "These men are servants of the Most High God, and they have come to tell you how to be saved."

18 This went on day after day until Paul got so exasperated that he turned and said to the demon within her, "I command you in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her." And instantly it left her.

19 Her masters' hopes of wealth were now shattered, so they grabbed Paul and Silas and dragged them before the authorities at the marketplace. **20** "The whole city is in an uproar because of these Jews!" they shouted to the city officials.

21 "They are teaching customs that are illegal for us Romans to practice."

22 A mob quickly formed against Paul and Silas, and the city officials ordered them stripped and beaten with wooden rods. **23** They were severely beaten, and then they were thrown into prison. The jailer was ordered to make sure they didn't escape. **24** So the jailer put them into the inner dungeon and clamped their feet in the stocks.

25 Around midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the other prisoners were listening. **26** Suddenly, there was a massive earthquake, and the prison was shaken to its foundations. All the doors immediately flew open, and the chains of every prisoner fell off! **27** The jailer woke up to see the prison doors wide open. He assumed the prisoners had escaped, so he drew his sword to kill himself. **28** But Paul shouted to him, "Stop! Don't kill yourself! We are all here!"

29 The jailer called for lights and ran to the dungeon and fell down trembling before Paul and Silas. **30** Then he brought them out and asked, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?"

31 They replied, "Believe in the Lord Jesus and you will be saved, along with everyone in your household." **32** And they shared the word of the Lord with him and with all who lived in his household. **33** Even at that hour of the night, the jailer cared for them and washed their wounds. Then he and everyone in his household were immediately baptized. **34** He brought them into his house and set a meal before them, and he and his entire household rejoiced because they all believed in God.

35 The next morning the city officials sent the police to tell the jailer, "Let those men go!" **36** So the jailer told Paul, "The city officials have said you and Silas are free to leave. Go in peace."

37 But Paul replied, "They have publicly beaten us without a trial and put us in prison—and we are Roman citizens. So now they want us to leave secretly? Certainly not! Let them come themselves to release us!"

38 When the police reported this, the city officials were alarmed to learn that Paul and Silas were Roman citizens. **39** So they came to the jail and apologized to them. Then they brought them out and begged them to leave the city. **40** When Paul and Silas left the prison, they returned to the home of Lydia. There they met with the believers and encouraged them once more. Then they left town.

PRAY//

Transition//

How many of you guys have had a moment where you met someone in your life

and you had an instant connection.... And no Guys Im not talking about the girl you saw when you walked in the door tonight and girls I'm not talking to the guy you out here crushing on because you saw him outside hooping.....

1. Shared Purpose:

Having friends with a common goal or a shared purpose allows us to navigate through life in a much simpler manner.

-1. Stronger Bonds

- **Unity:** Sharing a common goal fosters a sense of unity and belonging, strengthening relationships.
- **Support:** Friends and teammates rally around each other, providing encouragement and motivation.
- **Growth:** Iron sharpens Iron when you both of you understand the goal you will hold one another accountable in ensuring you are both growing from the purpose that is at hand.

Paul and Silas shared a PURPOSE

That purpose was to spread the Gospel.

Their friendship was built on a common goal, reminding us that friendships thrive when we support each other's dreams and aspirations. As friends, we can encourage one another to pursue our God-given purposes, just as Paul and Silas encouraged each other in their ministry.

2. Standing Together in Adversity: When Paul and Silas were imprisoned, they didn't face their struggles alone. Instead, they prayed and sang hymns together. This act of worship in the darkest hour showcases the power of companionship. In our own lives, when we encounter trials, it's essential to have friends who will stand by us, offering support and encouragement.

25. Around midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the other prisoners were listening. **26** 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. **27** 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.

Faith in the Face of Trials:

FAITH FILLED FRIENDS DON'T LET YOU FALL SHORT!!!

- **Worship in Adversity:** Instead of despairing, Paul and Silas prayed and sang hymns at midnight. Their act of worship turned the prison cell into a sanctuary, showcasing the transformative power of faith.
 - Someone of you need to find some friends that will answer the phone at 2am when you re struggling.... Not just answer but worship with you!
 - They made a choice in the chaos to still give God praise.
- **Trusting God's Plan:** Even in their darkest hour, they believed in God's sovereignty. This teaches us that faith is not just for good times; it sustains us when we face challenges.

You see in this crazy unforeseen circumstances Paul and Silas did something that many of us as Christians struggle with they

— Transformed Adversity into Opportunity

They viewed their challenges as opportunities for sharing the Gospel, demonstrating their trust that God could use any situation for His glory.

Many times We are faced with an opportunity to show the true power of Jesus in a situation in our life but because the situation doesn't seem like a good one we don't use it for the Glory of God!

GOD'S GLORY WILL BE SHOWN IN THE OPPOSITION !

APPLICATION//

- In the moments of crazy stop and give God thanks
- Turn your heart to Jesus and give him the glory, honor, and praise
- Be like Paul and Silas find that one friend to call and come in agreement on behalf of your situation
- Be a Paul or Silas in your friends lives around you!

3. The Impact of Friendship

Illustration//

Give students an example on how a friendship you had or still have has had an impact in your life or maybe in the lives around your friendship.

Scripture//

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29 The jailer called for lights and ran to the dungeon and fell down trembling before Paul and Silas. 30 Then he brought them out and asked, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?"

- Here we see the massive impact that Paul and Silas had on the jailer
- Because of their obedience and their faith in Christ the jailer gave his life to Jesus and then was immediately baptized.
- When we live a lifestyle that screams Jesus people come to know of his love grace and mercy
- Having friendships like we see here in Acts caused not only the jailer to be saved but then everyone in his entire household

We serve a God who can change entire generations through friendships!!!!

I have a few scriptures for you to understand what the Bible calls a TRUE FRIEND

A true friend shows love, no matter what ([Proverbs 17:17](#)).

A true friend gives heartfelt advice, bringing joy to the heart ([Proverbs 27:9](#)).

A true friend rebukes when necessary, but the correction is done in love ([Proverbs 27:5-6](#)).

A true friend influences, enlivens, and sharpens ([Proverbs 27:17](#)).

A true friend avoid gossip ([Proverbs 16:28](#)).

A true friend forgives and does not hold grudges ([Proverbs 17:9](#)).

A true friend is loyal ([Proverbs 18:24](#)).

A true friend helps in time of need ([Ecclesiastes 4:9-12](#)).

Paul and Silas bond not only strengthened them but also affected those around them. The jailer and his family came to faith as a result of their unwavering trust in God. Our friendships can have a ripple effect, impacting others in ways we might not even realize. Let's strive to be friends who uplift and inspire those around us, reflecting God's love in our relationships.

See some of you here tonight think you have true friends

START PICKING YOUR FRIENDS ON WHAT THE BIBLE SAYS A TRUE FRIEND IS NOT WHAT SOCIETY, SOCIAL MEDIA OR YOUR SCHOOL SAYS IS COOL FRIEND IS!!!

WE WANT TO HAVE FRIENDSHIPS THAT ARE Forged in faith, unshaken by chains, and singing praises even in the darkest of nights."

ALTAR + RESPONSE//

- Reflect + think about what kind of friends circle you have and what impacts that is having in your relationship with Jesus...
 - Is it causing you to fall short, maybe you even feel like you have lost your relationship with Jesus and have replaced him with some of the friends you have now!!
- Think of what friends are in your life are they friends that are lifting you up praising in the storm or leading others to know who Jesus is!
 - Or maybe you have friends in your circle that are like the jailer..... They want to give their life to Jesus... ITS TIME FOR YOU TO BE THAT PAUL AND SILAS IN THEIR LIVES!