

The Early Church: Paul, Silas, and the Philippian Jailer

Lesson 6

LESSON OVERVIEW

Key Point: Life is all about Jesus

Repeat this phrase throughout the lesson.

Bible Story: Bible Reference: Acts 16:19-34

Challenge Verse: Ephesians 5:1—“Therefore be imitators of God as dearly loved children.”

ITEMS NEEDED

Each class needs the following:

- One trash bag for each class
- At least 50 pieces of regular white paper
- 2 Bible Story Bags for each class—see the end of the lesson for the contents.
- 100 slips of colored paper to be used in making Thankful chains (apx. 2 by 8 ½ inches)
- Something with which to write.
- Scotch tape to put the Thankful chains together
- Bible Verse Poster

BEFORE CLASS

- Put up the Bible Verse Poster for today.
- Set out any items you need for today’s lesson
- Pray for each student by name.

AS STUDENTS ARRIVE

- Greet each student by name as they enter.
- Give each student an attendance sticker for the attendance chart, and feel free to add guest names to the chart. This will give them a sense of belonging.
- Get to know any guests and help them fill out a guest form.
- Be sure to smile—Your smile and attitude sets the atmosphere as students enter.

NOTE: Today your class gets to participate in a Bible Bowl. These review questions reach back to the first week of the Early Church series and can be either a competition within your own class or a time where your class challenges another class. Be creative with this special time and have fun with your kids.

OPENING ACTIVITY

As Students Enter

As students enter direct them to begin wadding up pieces of paper.
(*Important: Tell them to wad it up one sheet at a time.*)

After they are finished, SAY: On the count of three, put all the paper wads in the trash bag I am holding and sit in the group circle.
1...2...3...Go!

Control Tool #1

Anytime you say, “What’s life all about,” students should shout back, “It’s all about Jesus!” Feel free to have a boys vs. girls or a side vs. side competition to see who can say it the loudest.

Control Tool #2

Anytime you say, “Make the choice,” students should shout back, “To rejoice.” Feel free to have a boys vs. girls or a side vs. side competition to see who can say it the loudest. And remember that students are going to mimic how you say it—so be excited.

Leader: Make the choice / Students: To rejoice!

Leader: What’s Life all about / Students: It’s all about Jesus!

Take out one piece of wadded up paper.

SAY: You took this paper and you made a mess out of it. That’s what sin—the wrong things we do—does to us. Sin will always make a mess out of a person’s life.

Control Tool

Leader: What’s Life all about / Students: It’s all about Jesus!

CHALLENGE VERSE

Divide your class into two equal teams. Tell each team which side of the tape-line to sit on. Then explain that you are going to dump out all the paper wads along the tape line. Their job is to push it or toss it to the other side. The side with the least amount of paper after 45 seconds wins..

Their job is to *push* it to the other side of the tape line. However, they cannot throw it hard or intentionally hit someone else with a paper wad . Tell them to begin when you pour out the paper.

Play the activity a second time.

After the second game, tell the kids that you are going to see how fast they can pick up the paper wads, put them back in the trash bag, and sit in the group circle. Go! Go! Go!

SAY: In that game you wanted to push the paper wads as far away from you as possible. That's just like sin. God wants you to stay away from sin. In other words, God want you to do what's right.

Repeat after me: God wants me to do what's right.

Ask the children—What are some examples of sin? (*Help the kids to understand that anything that is wrong is sin—both big things like murder and small things like not picking up your room after mom tells you to.*)

Read Ephesians 5:1 from your Bible and direct the kids to look at the Bible Verse poster.

Read Ephesians 5:1 from your Bible

Ask the children—What does “imitate” mean? (Answer: To act just like someone.)

SAY: For example, I am going to imitate an animal and I want you to imitate me. (*Be creative and have fun, but here are some suggestions: Cow, chicken, lion, elephant, monkey, duck, etc.*)

SAY: God wants us to imitate Him—to be just like Him and to always do what's right.

Repeat after me: God wants me / to do what's right.

Tell the kids on your left that when you point to them, you want them to say, “Be imitators of God.” When you point to those on your right side, they will shout, “As dearly loved children.”

Use other variations as well:

Have boys say the first part / Girls say the second part.

Have those with dark hair shout the first part / Those with light hair, the second part.

Have those wearing tennis shoes say the first part / Those with sandals the second part.

SAY: In today's Bible story, a man is going to give his life to Jesus and the reason he will is because he met two other men who were different because they lived for Jesus.

Ask the children—**How does a person give his life to Jesus?**

SAY: This is how a person can give their life to Jesus:

Everybody say: A (Kids: A!)—**SAY:** A—Admit that you've done wrong.

Everybody say: B (Kids: B!)—**SAY:** B—Believe that Jesus is the Son of God who died and rose from the dead.

Everybody say: C (Kids: C!)—**SAY:** C—Call on Jesus, pray and Commit (or give) your life to Him.

BIBLE LESSON

SAY: I want you to help me tell a story about a man and his family who gave their lives to Christ.

Pass out the slips from the “Bible Story Bag.” (See the end of this lesson for the contents of this.) If you have a class large enough, use two bags. If you have extra slips, give more than one to each student, but make sure all the slips are passed out. If you don’t have enough, let the kids share.

SAY: In a moment I am going to read a story that’s from the Bible. On your slip(s) you have a word to listen for. When you hear that word, out loud and as fast as you can, say the other word.

(NOTE: For Kindergarten and even first grade, you will have to help you kids know what is written on the slip of paper. Then practice it with them several times so that they know what word(s) belong to them.)

Example: Your card says, “Listen for: JAILER / Say: THAT’S ME!”

Practice each of the following parts:

Jailer—That’s me!
Prison—Uh oh!
Earthquake—Whoa!
Prisoners—We’re bad men!
Girl—I’m free!
Paul and Silas—We follow Jesus!
Beaten—Ouch!
Magistrates—We are important people!
Stripped—Close your eyes!
Said—Talk to me!
Flogged—Hey, that hurt!
Singing—La, la, la!
Jesus—He’s the best!
Stocks—How am I suppose to sleep like this!

SAY: Two men named Paul and Silas, who loved God and served God had been telling people about Jesus. They had traveled a long way for a long time, and they had just helped a slave girl, but helping her upset her owners. Now listen close and get ready to do your parts, and remember you may need to do your part more than once.

(Pause after the words in bold. These are the ones that cue the students’ part, which are indicated below.)

Acts 16:19-34

When the owners of the slave **girl** (I’m free!) realized that their hope of making money was gone, they seized **Paul and Silas** (We follow Jesus!) and dragged them into the marketplace to face the authorities. They brought them before the **magistrates** (We are important people!) and **said** (Talk to me), “These men are

Jews, and are throwing our city into an uproar by advocating customs unlawful for us Romans to accept or practice.”

The crowd joined in the attack against **Paul and Silas** (We follow Jesus!), and the **magistrates** (We are important people!) ordered them to be **stripped** (Close your eyes!) and **beaten** (Ouch!). After they had been severely **flogged** (Hey, that hurt!), they were thrown into **prison** (Uh oh!), and the **jailer** (That’s me!) was commanded to guard them carefully. Upon receiving such orders, he put them in the inner cell and fastened their feet in the **stocks** (How am I supposed to sleep like this!)

About midnight **Paul and Silas** (We follow Jesus!) were praying and **singing** (La, la, la) hymns to God, and the other **prisoners** (We’re bad men!) were listening to them. Suddenly there was such a violent **earthquake** (Whoa!) that the foundations of the **prison** (Uh oh!) doors flew open, and everybody’s chains came loose. The **jailer** (That’s me!) woke up, and when he saw the **prison** (Uh oh!) doors open, he drew his sword and was about to kill himself because he thought the **prisoners** (We’re bad men!) had escaped. But Paul shouted, “Don’t harm yourself! We are all here!”

The **jailer** (That’s me!) called for lights, rushed in and fell trembling before **Paul and Silas** (We follow Jesus!). He brought them out and asked, “Sirs, what must I do to be saved?”

They replied, “Believe in the Lord **Jesus** (He’s the best), 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** (That’s me!) took them and washed their wounds; then immediately he and all his family were baptized. The **jailer** (That’s me!) 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 family.

(NOTE: The rest of this section will look very familiar to you. It’s very similar to a section from last week. It is not here by accident, but is an important truth that is worth repeating.)

SAY: Trusting God gives you peace—just like in last week’s lesson.

Ask the students—**Who remembers what Peter did while he was in jail waiting for his trial and maybe even his execution?** (He slept.)

Ask the students—**Who remembers why he could sleep?** (Because he trusted God.)

SAY: Even when bad things happen, God is with you and because He is with you not only can you have peace, you can also **make the choice to rejoice**.

Have your class REPEAT:
Make the choice / To rejoice!

Split them into two sides. Have one side say, "Make the choice," and the other side call back, "To rejoice." Go back and forth three times to see which side can be the loudest.

SAY: When things don't seem to go your way, just trust (Have your students repeat: Just Trust) and make the choice to rejoice because...

Last Week's Control Tool (See if they remember it!)
Leader: *God will never leave you!* / Students: *No, not never!*

SAY: You can always rejoice in God, no matter what is happening because Jesus will never leave you.

Get ready for a Bible Drill

Ready...Philippians 4:4...Go!

Read this verse aloud and then emphasize to the students that God wants us to *always* rejoice in Him, no matter what situation we find ourselves in.

SAY: After everything I say, I want you to say: Rejoice!

*When you have a great supper, you can...*Students: Rejoice!

*When the dog eats your supper, you can...*Students: Rejoice!

*When, because the dog at your supper, you had to eat a Big Mac at McDonalds, you can...*Students: Rejoice!

*When you loose everything you own, you can...*Students: Rejoice!

*When your mom picks her nose and your friends all see her, you can...*Students: Rejoice!

*When someone steals from you, you can...*Students: Rejoice!

*When a tornado is heading for your house, you can...*Students: Rejoice!

*When you get an A on a test, you can...*Students: Rejoice!

*When you're watching TV, you can...*Students: Rejoice!

*When you're TV blows-up because you watched it too much, you can...*Students: Rejoice!

*Every moment of everyday, you can...*Students: Rejoice!

SAY: You can always rejoice because if you've given your life to Christ, God will never leave you.

Control Tool

Leader: *Make the choice!* / Students: *To rejoice!*

Control Tool

Leader: *What's Life all about!* / Students: *It's all about Jesus!*

BIBLE BOWLS

Bible Bowls

Today you're class gets to participate in the first-ever Bible Bowl. These review questions reach back to the first week of this series and can either be a competition within your own class or can be a time where your class challenges another class. Be creative with this special time and have fun with your kids.

SAY: During the Early Church series, we've talked about a lot of great stories: The Ethiopian and Phillip, Peter and John at the Gate Beautiful, and some of Paul's life. But we've missed out on some other great stories like how Paul was shipwrecked and bitten by a poisonous snake or about the young man who went to sleep listening to Paul preach, fell out of a upper window and died and how God used Paul to bring him back to life. There's more in the Bible than we could ever show you in one hour a week, so we want to encourage you to read these stories for yourself or have your parents read them to you.

SAY: Anyway, today we're getting ready to challenge another class (or each other) in a Bible Bowl. This competition will be a review of all the stories and verses we've talked about in this series.

The Bible Bowl Questions are located at the end of this lesson.

PRAYER TIME & WRAP-UP

Prayer Chains

In last week's lesson the students made "Thankful Chains." This week the students are going to add to your class chain by making "Prayer Chains" using 2"x8 1/2" slips of paper and tape.

(NOTE: For Kindergarten, some of your kids will be able to write words they way they "hear" them but not all will be doing this yet. These may need to tell you the word and you write it for them.)

Ask the students—Earlier today we learned about Paul and Silas. Why do you think Paul and Silas would pray and sing after being beaten so badly? (Answer: They trusted God. They knew that He was with them and wouldn't leave them.)

SAY: In today's lessons we also learned about a jailer who didn't know Jesus. All of us probably know someone—either in our family or at school who doesn't know Jesus. Last week we made "Thankful Chains," but this week we're going to make a "Prayer Chain." I want you to list as many people as you want who you think might not know Christ on different slips of paper and use them to make this week's chain.

While the students work, ask the following questions:

Ask the students--**Who would like to tell us about someone whose name you wrote on the prayer chain?**

Ask the students--**Who are some other people who may not know Jesus besides those in your family and friends at school?** (A teacher, the lady who greets you when you walk into Walmart, the McDonald's worker who took your order, etc.)

SAY: You won't always be able to tell everyone about Jesus. For example, at your age we don't want any of you to go up to strangers to talk about Jesus—that is, unless your mom or dad is with you and they say it's okay. But you can pray for strangers you see from a distance. God knows who they are and your prayers can make a big difference in their lives.

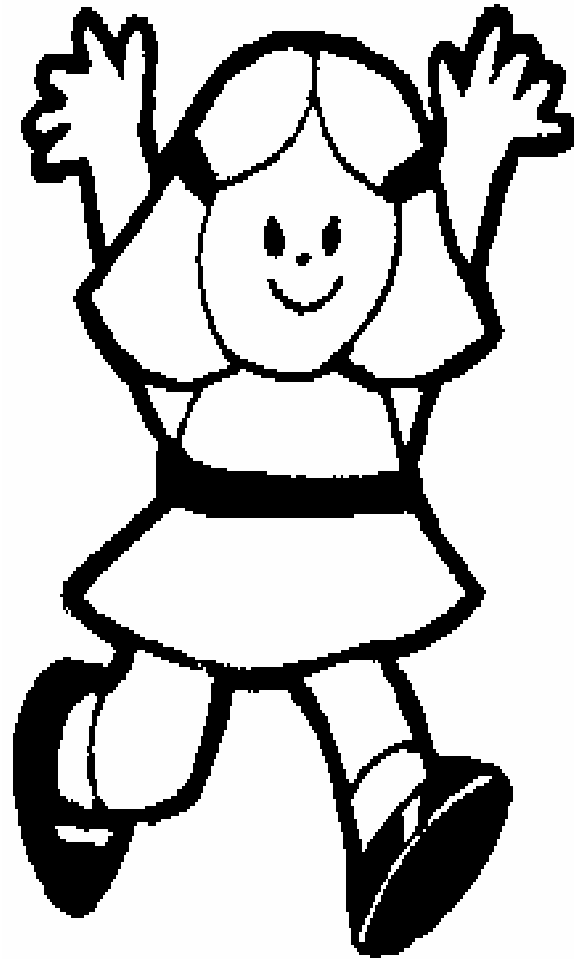
Take prayer requests but also spend time praying specifically for the people your students listed who may not know Christ. If you want, even let your students have an opportunity to pray for the people they listed. Help them to understand how to pray specifically that someone will give their life to Jesus.

List Prayer Requests Here

Be sure to pray specifically for each request above.

EXTRA TIME

Use any extra time to help your students memorize the verse for today.



“Therefore be imitators of God
as dearly loved children.”

Ephesians 5:1

Bible Bowls

Teachers, on the next few pages you will find a host of questions. There is no way that you will be able to cover all of the questions, so choose randomly from the different sections.

Rules

- Make it fun for the kids
- Have a coin toss or choose a number between 1 and 2 to determine who goes first.
- Always ask two questions from each section, but spend most of the time in the Bible Lesson and Bible Skills sections. Add in Challenge Verses for variety and Key Phrases for easy points if the teams have missed several questions in a row. If the younger grades are having trouble answering the questions, begin to ask some other simple questions about Jesus such as: How do you know Jesus loves you? Why did God send Jesus? How did Jesus die? Name one person Jesus healed? Who were Jesus' friends that traveled with Him? What happened after Jesus died? Is Jesus still dead? Why did Jesus die for you? And so forth.
- If the first class doesn't get it right, let the second team try, but they have to be prepared to give an answer within five seconds. In other words, they need to discuss the questions while the other team is discussing it. If neither team gets it right, announce the answer and move on to the next question.
- Each team gets a point (or you can use 10 pts. or 100 pts.) for each correct question. Feel free to have a designated score keeper.
- Don't linger on questions. Move quickly.
- Give the team (or class) a few seconds to discuss the answer before responding. If you have large classes, divide them in two halves and let them take turns sharing.
- Games are timed and are 15 minutes long. The team with the most points at the end is declared the Bible Bowl Champion. (NOTE: This time can be longer or shorter depending on the time available to you.)

Bible Lesson Review Questions



Be sure to mix up the questions below and mark them off once you've asked them. Also, if you have 1st grade, give them the easier questions.

Ask the students: **What was Paul's name before he began traveling and telling people about Jesus?** (Saul)

Ask the students: **Who told Saul about Jesus?** (Ananias)

Ask the students: **Is there any other way besides Jesus to have your sins forgiven?** (No. He's the only way.)

Ask the students: **Is there anything a person can do that's so bad that Jesus can't forgive them?** (No, Jesus died for *all* sins. So He can forgive anything, no matter how terrible it might be.)

Ask the students: **Who is Peter?** (One of the twelve disciples; he wrote 1 & 2 Peter in the Bible; etc.)

Ask the students: **What is a big mistake that Peter made on the day that Jesus died?** (He denied that he knew Jesus.)

Ask the students: **How many times did Peter deny he knew Jesus?** (Three times.)

Ask the students: **What happened to Peter and John on the way to worship at the temple?** (They met a crippled man and through them the Lord healed him.)

Ask the students: **After God used Peter and John to heal the crippled man, what did the religious leaders command them to do?** (To stop teaching and preaching in Jesus' name.)

Ask the students: **What do you think Peter and John did after they were commanded not to preach or teach in Jesus' name?** (They said, "For we cannot help speaking about what we have seen and heard." In other words, they couldn't stop being "witnesses." Then they went to other Christians and prayed for boldness to continue being good witnesses.)

Bible Lesson Review Questions Continued

Ask the students these questions from the story of Philip and the Ethiopian

Who told Phillip to go south on the road? (An angel)

From where was the man in the chariot? (Ethiopia)

What was the name of the Queen of the Ethiopians? (Candace)

What did the Ethiopian do for the Queen? (He was in charge of all the treasury of the Queen)

From where in the Bible was he trying to read? (The book of Isaiah)

What did the Ethiopian do after do after Phillip left? (He went on his way rejoicing)

Ask the students these questions from the story of Saul, Stephen, and Ananias:

What happened to Stephen? (People killed him for preaching about Jesus.)

Who helped kill Stephen? (Saul who later changed his name to Paul.)

What happened to Saul on the road to Damascus? (Jesus appeared to him in a bright light.)

Why was he going there? (To arrest the Christians.)

What did God tell Ananias to do? (To go to Saul and tell him about Jesus.)

Why did this scare him? (Because Saul had been arresting and killing Christians.)

What was God's call for Stephen? (To live for Jesus and share Christ even though the people listening didn't like it.)

What was God's call for Saul? (To give his life to Christ and later to share Christ everywhere.)

What was God's call for Ananias? (To tell Saul about Jesus even though he was a bad man.)

Ask the students these questions from the story of Peter's Great Escape:

Why did King Herod have Peter arrested? (Because he was a Christian and because the king had just had James killed and it seemed to please the people.)

What did Peter do to escape King Herod's jail? (Nothing. He just trusted God.)

Who did God use to set Peter free? (Let students tell you how they would escape.)

How many soldiers were guarding Peter? (16.)

What was Peter doing when the angel came to set him free? (He was asleep.)

Bible Skills Review Questions

Ask the students: **What does the word “Gospel” mean?**

(Good News)

Ask the students: **Who remembers how to find Psalms in the Bible?** (Hold your Bible sideways and open it to the middle. Usually this is the book of Psalms.)

Ask the students: **Who wrote the book of The Gospel of John?** (John)

Ask the students—**Why do some Bibles read differently than others?** (The Bible wasn't written in our language. This is the reason that we have different translations. They contain the exact same message, but they may use different words to express it.)

Ask the students: **Where is Matthew found in the Bible?** (It's the first book of the New Testament)

Ask the students: **What are the other Gospels?** (Refer them to the Bible Book Chart)

Ask the students—**Who wrote the book of 1 Corinthians?** (Paul.)

Ask the students--**Who wrote the book of Acts?** (Luke wrote the book of Acts.)

Ask the students—**What is the first book of the Old Testament?** (Genesis)

Ask the students—**The Bible is divided into two big parts. What are they?** (The Old and New Testaments.)

Ask the students—**Who wrote of Philippians?** (Paul, who had been called Saul.)

Ask the students: **Who wrote the book of Jude?** (Jude)

Ask the students—**Where can Jesus' life be found on the Bible Time Line?** (Don't accept just the New Testament as an answer. Ask where: At the very beginning of the New Testament.)

Ask the students: **Is Hebrews in the Old Testament or the New Testament?** (It's in the New Testament.)

Ask the students: **Who wrote the book of 1 & 2 Peter?** (Peter)

Bible Skills Review Questions Continued

Ask the students: **How many times does the Bible tell the story about Jesus dying for us and rising again?** (Four times—once in each Gospel).

Ask the students: **What is the second book of the Old Testament?** (Exodus)

Ask the students: **What is the name of the book that comes after Acts?** (Romans)

Ask the students: **Did you know that only two of the Gospels tell about Jesus' birth? Which two do you think they are?** (Matthew and Luke)

Ask the students: **In what book of the Bible could you find the story about Peter preaching after Jesus ascended into heaven?** (The book of Acts.)

Ask the students: **Why is the book of Acts called "Acts"?** (It's about the "acts" of the disciples after Jesus rose again and ascended into heaven.)

Ask the students: **Who wrote the book of Revelation?** (John wrote the book of Revelation.)

Ask the students: **Where is the book of Acts located?** (Just after the Gospels.)

Ask the students: **Is the book of John in the Old Testament or the New Testament?**

Ask the students: **Who wrote the book of 1 Timothy?** (Paul wrote to Timothy in this letter.)

Ask the students: **What book comes just before Proverbs?** (Psalms)

Ask the students: **Is Proverbs in the Old Testament or the New Testament?** (Have a student point it out on the Bible Book Chart.)

Ask the students: **Who wrote the book of Matthew?** (Matthew)

Ask the students: **Who wrote the book of 1, 2, & 3 John?** (John--These are letters John wrote to a church.)

Ask the students: **Who wrote the book of 1 Thessalonians?** (Paul. He wrote this letter to the church in Thessalonica.)

Challenge Verses Review Questions

Before reading any of these verses, give the reference and see if any of the students can quote the verse. Give double points if they can. If not, read part of the verse and see if they can finish it or fill in words that you have left out.

Challenge Verse:

“Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!”
2 Corinthians 5:17

1st grade option: “Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation.” 2 Corinthians 5:17

Ask the students: **What do you think the Bible means by “a new creation?”** (That God gives the person a new life regardless of what he’s done in the past.)

Ask the students: **What are the “old” things that are gone?** (The sins and bad things a person did before he accepted Jesus into his life.)

Challenge Verse:

“But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.” Acts 1:8

1st grade option: “You will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses.” Acts 1:8

Challenge Verse:

“You are the light of the world. A city on a hill cannot be hidden.” Matthew 5:14

Challenge Verse

“And there is salvation in no one else; for there is no other name under heaven that has been given among men, by which we must be saved.” Acts 4:12

1st grade option: “And there is salvation in no one else.” Acts 4:12

Challenge Verse:

“...God has said, ‘Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you.’ So we say with confidence, ‘The Lord is my helper; I will not be afraid. What can man do to me?’” Hebrews 13:5-6

1st grade option: “...God has said, ‘Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you.’” Hebrews 13:5

Challenge Verse:

“Therefore be imitators of God as dearly loved children.” Ephesians 5:1

Key Phrases Review Questions

Omit the words the students should say.

Leader: *Let Jesus' love flow* / Students: *Wherever you go!*

Leader: *God's got a call* / Students: *For us all!*

Leader: *God will never leave you!* / Students: *No, not never!*

Leader: *Make the choice* / Students: *To rejoice!*

Leader: *What's Life all about* / Students: *It's all about Jesus!*

Bible Story Bag labeled “Bible Story Bag”

Each class should get two bags of the following slips of paper printed.

Listen for: JAILER / Say: THAT’S ME!”

Listen for: PRISON / Say: UH OH!

Listen for: EARTHQUAKE / Say: WHOA!

Listen for: PRISONERS / Say: WE’RE BAD MEN!

Listen for: GIRL / Say: I’M FREE!

Listen for: PAUL AND SILAS / Say: WE FOLLOW JESUS!

Listen for: BEATEN / Say: OUCH!

Listen for: MAGISTRATES / Say: WE ARE IMPORTANT PEOPLE!

Listen for: STRIPPED / Say: CLOSE YOUR EYES!

Listen for: SAID / Say: TALK TO ME!

Listen for: FLOGGED / Say: HEY, THAT HURT!

Listen for: SINGING / Say: LA, LA, LA!

Listen for: JESUS / Say: HE’S THE BEST!