



Part 3: Don't Lose Your Joy In The Detour (Acts 16:16-40)

Theme: When your focus is heaven, even the worst detour on earth can't change your destination.

Ice-Breaker

1. **Fun Start:** If you could choose your last meal, what would be on the menu?
2. **Good Memories:** Can you remember a difficult season that produced something good you could not see at the time?

Reflect (Read Acts 16:16-40 together)

3. Lydia, the slave girl, and the jailer came from very different backgrounds, yet each needed Jesus. What do these three people teach us about who the gospel is for? (Acts 16:14-15, 16-18, 29-34)
4. Paul and Silas were beaten, imprisoned, and put in stocks after faithfully obeying God. What does their experience teach us about the false assumption that following God should make life easier? (Acts 16:22-24; Philippians 1:29)
5. Paul and Silas prayed and sang hymns while their backs were bleeding and their feet were in stocks. What do you think allowed them to worship in circumstances that could have easily produced anger, fear, or bitterness? (Acts 16:25; Philippians 4:4)
6. Years later, Paul wrote, "I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation." Why do you think Paul says contentment is something he had to **learn**? What had his detours taught him? (Philippians 4:11-13)

Take Action

7. Paul says, "One thing I do...forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, I press on toward the goal." What past disappointment, regret, success, or hurt most threatens to distract you from faithfully moving forward? (Philippians 3:13-14)
8. What "current" are you swimming against right now: health, finances, parenting, marriage, work, grief, or another unexpected detour? How is it affecting your joy?
9. Paul writes, "For to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain." How does knowing your final destination change the way you face uncertainty, suffering, and even death today? (Philippians 1:21; Philippians 3:20)
10. The jailer encountered Jesus because Paul and Silas remained faithful in the middle of their suffering. Who may be watching the way you walk through your current detour, and what would it look like for your response to point them toward Jesus? (Acts 16:25-34; Philippians 1:12-14)

 **Group Prayer:** Pray for joy that is rooted in Jesus rather than circumstances, strength to keep pressing forward when life feels like swimming against the current, and eyes fixed on heaven. Pray specifically for those facing painful or unexpected detours.