

Overcoming the Prison You Find Yourself In – April 27 & 28, 2019

Follow-up Bible Studies

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Day One: Genesis 39

- Set the scene of this story, which occurs shortly after Joseph's brothers sold him (1). Describe Joseph's experience as Potiphar's slave (2-6). What happened when Potiphar's wife entered the picture (6-20)? Re-read Joseph's words and actions in verses 8-10. After enduring horrific family betrayal and forced labor, Joseph maintained integrity. How do you think he did it?
- While imprisonment was a great injustice, what didn't change for Joseph (20-21)? Describe his leadership role (21-23). God's kindness and favor can reach anyone in any situation. Pray this would be your reality, especially in areas that seem hopeless.
- At which points in this story do you think Joseph realized God was fighting for him? In troubled times, how do you come to recognize God's presence and power in your life? When are you most apt to fail to recognize him? Pray for grace to sense the Lord at work. And when you don't? Pray you'd still believe he's fighting for you.

Day Two: Luke 23:26-43

- How does Luke begin his account of the crucifixion (26-27)? What did Jesus say to the mourning women (28-31)? Why do you think he said these things? What is your response to them?
- Who was crucified alongside Jesus (32-33)? Describe Jesus' prayer (34). Even when we were his enemies, Jesus prayed for us. He was even willing to die for us. Speak to the Lord about this.
- Summarize the abuse and shame heaped on Jesus during his crucifixion (35-39). Which of these vignettes elicits the strongest response in you? Why do you think that's the case?
- What did "the other criminal" say and do (40-42)? Why do you think he proclaimed these things? How did Jesus respond to the man's request (43)? Jesus set this man free from sin and fear of his fate. He does the same for you! Receive his liberation; accept his invitation to paradise.

Day Three: John 16:16-33

- Describe the disciples' confusion (16-18). What clarification did Jesus offer (19-22)? In what ways do you "weep and mourn while the world rejoices"? In what ways is your life like that of a woman in labor? Now, look to the future: visualize receiving joy that can never be taken from you. What does this mean for you today?
- Summarize Jesus' remarks about asking "in his name" (23-28). What do you think it means to pray like this; is it simply uttering a phrase, or does it entail something more? Consider the ways you pray in Jesus' name; how does he help you to overcome?
- How did the disciples respond to all of Jesus' remarks (29-30)? What causes *you* to believe Jesus? Thank him for revealing himself to you in this way. What did Jesus prophesy (32)? How did he conclude this teaching (33)? Make a list of your troubles. Then, picture Jesus as your overcomer. Receive his peace.

Day Four: Acts 16:16-40

- Summarize Luke's story about the fortune-telling slave (16-18). Which parts grab you? What do you make of Paul's annoyed outburst? How did the slave's owners respond to

her deliverance (19-21)? Describe all that Paul and Silas endured in front of the authorities in the marketplace (22-23).

- What orders did the jailer carry out (23-24)? What happened at midnight (25-27). How did Paul defuse the situation (28)? What happened next (29-34)? Recount the events: prayer, earthquake, thwarted suicide attempt and the spread of the Good News. No matter how trapped we are, God can move! Speak to him about all the ways you feel trapped; ask him to make a way.
- Describe Paul and Silas' release, and what they did next (35-40). Re-read Paul's words in verse 37. How can you follow his example? Regarding the injustices of our criminal justice system, what is God asking you to do?

Day Five: Revelation 5

- As John's vision of the heavenly throne room continued, what did he see (1)? What did the angel ask (2)? Describe the initial response (3-4). But then what did an elder say (5)? What does the scroll symbolize? Why is it so important that it be opened? And why is Jesus the only one who can do so?
- While told to look for a lion, what does John actually see (6)? What does this shift in imagery say about God's style of overcoming obstacles? What work has the lamb done in *your* life? Describe the lamb (6). What did he do, and how did the elders and creatures respond (7-8)? Summarize the song they sang (9-10). Where do you appear in this song? How does that make you feel?
- Describe the angels and their proclamation (11-12). Then what did *every* living creature proclaim (13)? Join the chorus: read verse 13 aloud. This week, how can you *live* the verse? How does this chapter conclude (14)?