

# Unconditional Praise, Unstoppable Power

## Small Group Guide

**Warm-up Question:** (Choose one, make up your own, or skip this part all together, depending upon the nature of your group.)

1. Do you enjoy listening to music? If so, what do you like to listen to?
2. What is one of the most beautiful places you have been?

**Read the following passage:** Read Acts 16:20-34.

Paul and his co-workers traveled to the region of Macedonia in response to a vision Paul received in which a man begged him, "Come over to Macedonia and help us" (Acts 16:9). Once in Philippi, they had a dramatic encounter with a demon-possessed slave girl that resulted in her deliverance. Upset by what took place, the slave girl's owners stirred up a mob, and Paul and Silas were beaten and thrown in prison. But as Paul and Silas worshiped God from an inner prison cell, God performed a powerful miracle.

**Questions for Discussion** (Choose several that are relevant for your group):

1. Paul's and Silas's wholehearted commitment to the mission of Christ led to a very painful moment. Often we think that if we do what God instructs, then we will have a happy, comfortable, and "successful" life. Given that the Scriptures include so many examples to the contrary, why do you think this belief persists? What can we do to keep from becoming bitter or disillusioned when it feels like our commitment to God is not being rewarded with the kind of life we imagined for ourselves?
2. Paul and Silas prayed and sang hymns to God with their feet in stocks in the inner cell of a Roman prison. What are some different ways we can express worship to God? Read Romans 12:1. What might Paul's instructions in this verse look like practically in our lives?
3. What are some things in your life for which you are deeply thankful?
4. Read Psalm 42. Describe how the psalmist is navigating pain and disillusionment in this passage. What can we learn from his example?
5. God performed a rather stunning miracle which led to the freedom of many people (including Paul and Silas) and the salvation of the Philippian jailer. How might our worship play a role in God doing something extraordinary in or through our lives?
6. Luke indicates that as Paul and Silas prayed and sang hymns, "the other prisoners were listening to them." How might our "worship" be a witness to others of God's goodness and saving power?
7. What is one way you can put attention on worship this week?

**Pray**