

PRISON BREAK

CLOSER: A SERIES ON WORSHIP – PART 4

START TALKING. WITH AN ICEBREAKER QUESTION:

- What is something you can't stand the sight of? (i.e. needles, blood)

START THINKING. ASK QUESTIONS THAT WILL GET YOUR GROUP THINKING.

- Scripture frequently speaks of the theme of light vs dark. How does our society speak of these themes? Specifically, how does our culture speak of the dark?
- Read the scriptures on the next pages in preparation for the following conversation.

START SHARING. CHOOSE THE QUESTIONS THAT WILL CREATE OPENNESS.

- Think of a time when your life was dark. Was it because you didn't see light, couldn't see light, or wouldn't see light?
- What circumstances have caused the darkest moments in your life? Health, finances, relationships, behaviors, other?
- How have you (or others) responded when in the dark?
- Mark shared that when we are in the dark, we can be trapped by, (bitterness and bargaining), (revenge and rage), and (anger and apathy). Which one's trap you most frequently?
- How do you get past the, "What did I do to deserve this?" and move towards the, "What should I do now?"
- Paul and Silas chose to worship, though they were unjustly jailed and beaten. What is your normal response when you are judged and mistreated unfairly?
- Why do you think Paul and Silas chose to do that?
- What is the biggest hurdle for you to worship when you don't feel like it?
- Mark's main point was, "The way out is not to look in, but lift up." When have you experienced breakthroughs in your life when you have done just that? Perhaps at an altar?
- What is bringing light into your life right now? Where are you finding light?
- Who's is watching you when you are in the dark?
- What would it take for you to worship God in the dark, and not just in the light?

START PRAYING. BE BOLD, AND PRAY WITH POWER.

- Jesus. You are the true light in the world, and in my life. No darkness can overtake you. Darkness does not have the power to stop my worship of you. Only I do. I choose to worship. Amen.

START DOING. COMMIT TO A STEP AND LIVE IT OUT THIS WEEK.

- When you have a dark moment this week, find a location where you can pray, and call out His name. Aloud. Authentically. With hope.

James 4:8 (NIV)

⁸ Come near to God and he will come near to you. Wash your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you double-minded.

Mark 12:30 (NIV)

³⁰ Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.'

Acts 16:16-26 (NIV)

¹⁶ Once when we were going to the place of prayer, we were met by a slave girl who had a spirit by which she predicted the future. She earned a great deal of money for her owners by fortune-telling.

¹⁷ This girl followed Paul and the rest of us, shouting, "These men are servants of the Most High God, who are telling you the way to be saved."

¹⁸ She kept this up for many days. Finally Paul became so troubled that he turned around and said to the spirit, "In the name of Jesus Christ I command you to come out of her!" At that moment the spirit left her.

¹⁹ When the owners of the slave girl realized that their hope of making money was gone, they seized Paul and Silas and dragged them into the marketplace to face the authorities.

²⁰ They brought them before the magistrates and said, "These men are Jews, and are throwing our city into an uproar

²¹ by advocating customs unlawful for us Romans to accept or practice."

²² The crowd joined in the attack against Paul and Silas, and the magistrates ordered them to be stripped and beaten.

²³ After they had been severely flogged, they were thrown into prison, and the jailer was commanded to guard them carefully.

²⁴ Upon receiving such orders, he put them in the inner cell and fastened their feet in the stocks.

²⁵ About midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the other prisoners were listening to them.

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 everybody's chains came loose.

Isaiah 50:10 (NIV)

¹⁰ Who among you fears the LORD and obeys the word of his servant? Let him who walks in the dark, who has no light, trust in the name of the LORD and rely on his God.