# Stuff They Didn't Teach Me In Sunday School

## Episode 155 - Whatever It Takes
(Acts 16-18)

**Caving In?**
Paul stood firm against Jewish believers who were requiring Gentile believers to be circumcised. But then when he wanted to bring Timothy along on a missionary trip he had him circumcised? Did Paul cave?

Paul knew it would be a stumbling block to the Jews he wanted to reach if they knew Timothy was uncircumcised. So out of concern for the Jews he would encounter, Paul asked Timothy to be circumcised.

- What are some things that don't bother you, but offend other people?
- How important is it to maintain church harmony by surrendering a majority decision—which is made in the freedom God has given—in order to avoid offending a minority of members?
- When would it be harmful or even wrong to give in to the demands of an individual or minority?

**I'm Staying in Jail**
When Paul was imprisoned for preaching, God caused an earthquake to break open the prison. Paul and his companions were free to run to the hills, but they didn't. Instead of thinking of what would be best for them, perhaps they were thinking of their jailor. Roman law did not look kindly on jailors or guards who let their prisoner escape—no matter what the cause. Back in Episode 152 when the angel brought Peter out of jail and saved him from Herod's plans, the jailors who had been guarding him were executed for dereliction of duty (see Acts 12:18-19).

- Why do you think Paul, his companions, and all the other prisoners passed up the freedom they were offered and remained behind?
- What effect do you think the confident, peaceful, joyous attitude of Paul and Silas had on the jailors and other prisoners, as they praised God and sang hymns after being beaten and thrown in prison?
- Name a person who has a strong, positive impact on you?
- Describe a time you gave up a favorable opportunity to stay and befriend someone.

**An Unknown God**
In Athens Paul came across a city of philosophers and people who worshiped a great number of false gods. He could have laid into them for their idolatry. Instead, he saw that they shared with him a deeply religious nature. Using this opportunity he built on their respect for an unknown god to teach them about the one true God. He told them about a God who created all things, who sent His Son to save mankind by dying for their sins, and who rose from the dead to give eternal life to all who believe in Him.

- Describe a person in your community, at work, or in school who is really different from you.
- What are some qualities you possess you could build upon as you establish a friendship in which you can witness?

**Sin City**
If Paul had been the average, strict Pharisee, he would have avoided blatant sinners like the plague. But now we see him in the sin-filled city of Corinth, witnessing to Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior.

- How would you rate the morality of the place in which you live?
- If you lived in a sin-filled place like Corinth, where would you get opportunities to share God's love in Jesus Christ?
- How can you protect yourself and your family from the evil influences around you, while reaching out to people in need of the Savior?