

This week, we consider how to decisively empower our next generation to know Jesus and make Him known to the world. As we examine the story of Paul and Silas' jailer and his household, we see how the Gospel is shared with the family and the younger generation. When faith is passed down, future generations can rise up to love and serve the Lord.

# SESSION 5

## Our Next Generation

“One generation commends your works to another; they tell of your mighty acts.”

—PSALM 145:4



# ACTS 16:25–40

Read Aloud in Your Group

<sup>25</sup> About midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the other prisoners were listening to them. <sup>26</sup> Suddenly there was such a violent earthquake that the foundations of the prison were shaken. At once all the prison doors flew open, and everyone’s chains came loose. <sup>27</sup> The jailer woke up, and when he saw the prison doors open, he drew his sword and was about to kill himself because he thought the prisoners had escaped. <sup>28</sup> But Paul shouted, “Don’t harm yourself! We are all here!”

<sup>29</sup> The jailer called for lights, rushed in and fell trembling before Paul and Silas.

<sup>30</sup> He then brought them out and asked, “Sirs, what must I do to be saved?”

<sup>31</sup> They replied, “Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved—you and your household.” <sup>32</sup> Then they spoke the word of the Lord to him and to all the others in his house. <sup>33</sup> At that hour of the night the jailer took them and washed their wounds; then immediately he and all his household were baptized. <sup>34</sup> The jailer brought them into his house and set a meal before them; he was filled with joy because he had come to believe in God—he and his whole household.

<sup>35</sup> When it was daylight, the magistrates sent their officers to the jailer with the order: “Release those men.” <sup>36</sup> The jailer told Paul, “The magistrates have ordered that you and Silas be released. Now you can leave. Go in peace.”

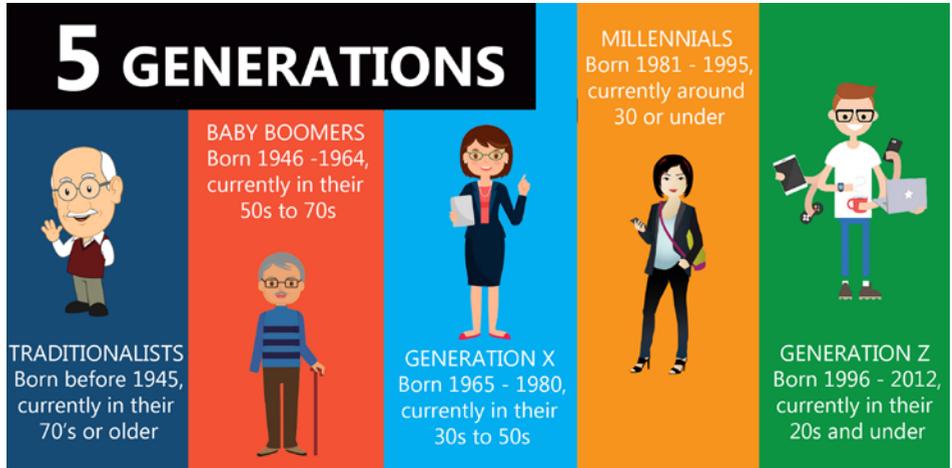
<sup>37</sup> But Paul said to the officers: “They beat us publicly without a trial, even though we are Roman citizens, and threw us into prison. And now do they want to get rid of us quietly? No! Let them come themselves and escort us out.”

<sup>38</sup> The officers reported this to the magistrates, and when they heard that Paul and Silas were Roman citizens, they were alarmed. <sup>39</sup> They came to appease them and escorted them from the prison, requesting them to leave the city. <sup>40</sup> After Paul and Silas came out of the prison, they went to Lydia’s house, where they met with the brothers and sisters and encouraged them. Then they left.



**INTRODUCTORY QUESTION:** What character trait have you inherited from one of your parents? And, if you are a parent, what trait have you passed on to your children?

1. How did Paul and Silas impact this jailer and his family?
2. When you were younger, was there a Christian mentor, teacher, or leader who had a spiritual influence in your life? Share how you were impacted by that person.
3. Often like the jailer in this story, when one family member becomes a Christ follower, they can influence others in their family to come to faith.
  - Have you witnessed this wonderful dynamic happen in your family?
  - If you are a first-generation Christian, what are some unique challenges you have experienced in witnessing to family members and others closest to you?
  - Pray for the salvation of family members together!
4. Read Psalm 78:1-7. What are some things that the Israelites are commanded to share with the next generation?
5. What are some fears we might have and obstacles we may face when thinking about spiritually influencing the younger generations? How might we overcome them?
6. Which generation do you belong to? What are some general descriptions of your generation that fit you as well?



7. Pastor Shawn talked about the family pattern in the Old Testament with the three generations. The first generation embraces their identity as God's children, loves God passionately, and embraces the beliefs. The second generation holds some of the beliefs and keeps the identity but has lost the passion. Finally, the third generation retains only the identity label with neither the passion for God nor the beliefs to follow Him. Have you noticed this pattern in you, your family, or in the present Christian culture?
8. As a church, Calvary has always had an emphasis on reaching the next generation for Christ and we are continuing that focus into Vision 2030. What are you doing currently to serve and invest in the next generation?



# TAKE 5

## “TO REALLY LIVE...”

Gina Spivey, Family Ministries Pastor

### ACTS 16:29-30

*The jailer called for lights, rushed in and fell trembling before Paul and Silas. He then brought them out and asked, “Sirs, what must I do to be saved?”*

This is one of my favorite stories in all of Scripture. There is something so profound and yet simple about the sweet jailer and his desire to know the Lord. The Message paraphrase says “What must I do to be saved ... to really live?” That is the most important question anyone can ask of a follower of Jesus.

What does it mean to really live? Those of us who have our faith in Jesus know that real living only exists when we abide in the love and grace of Jesus Christ. When we attempt a life without that firm foundation, we will always fall short of the “real living” God designed and desired for us.



This week, we focus on the Next Generation and God’s design for generational impact as well as Calvary’s heart to see the future generations raised up in power to lead the world to Jesus. We have all seen the effects of the world’s sin and its destructive impact, especially in the younger generations. Join me as we focus on how we can be sure to raise up the next generation for the Lord!

*Final Thought: The Next Generation needs us now more than ever!*



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