Small Group/Sermon Notes based on "Miracles: Part 6"

Remember, small groups are primarily for growing closer relationships with other believers. We can learn wonderful things in this environment but keep relationships first.

- Make sure everyone knows each other's names. Have everyone share a little about themselves and how life is going right now.
- In this series we are going to look at categories of miracles so that we understand the sorts of things that God does. Then we will believe God to intervene in our lives!
- **Part Six: Saved from Circumstances**
- Ever been in a jam and needed God to bail you out?
    - What is the difference between trusting God in your circumstances vs bargaining with God?
- Let's look at a story from a couple of weeks ago when Paul and Silas were in Philippi.
    - **Acts 16:16-18.**
        - Why do you think Paul waited so long? He knew there would be a cost.
        - Ever hold off on doing something for Christ because of the cost?
    - Here is how it went: **Acts 16:19-24.**
        - Understand "severely flogged."
        - Isn't this about being saved from circumstances? Doesn't seem to be happening!!!!!!
        - How would you feel if this happened to you while you were serving God to the best of your ability???
            - How would you feel if this happened and you were just a passive believer?
    - Here is how Paul and Silas responded: **Acts 16:25.**
        - Notice that the other prisoners were listening. This was church with a captive audience!
        - What would it take for a person to respond in this way?
        - Do you have, or could you get, what it would take to respond like this?
            - What is the dumbest thing that has flipped you out?
    - I don't think God could take it anymore! **Acts 16:26.**
        - Not just Paul and Silas, everyone's chains fell off!!! Criminals! <u>That is the Gospel!!!!</u>
        - If you were in Paul's position, what would you think of the jailer?
    - This is a miracle too. **Acts 16:27-28.**
        - They all stayed? Why? (I think they all converted!)
        - The power of the testimony of a person who is suffering greatly but who is also totally faithful and completely loves God is profound. Have you seen that?
    - Keep going. **Acts 16:29-30.**
        - I don't think the jailer would have known to ask that question if Paul and Silas weren't sharing the Gospel. What, in your words, is the Gospel?
    - Here is the answer. **Acts 16:31-34.**
        - The jailer went from suicidal to saved and filled with joy! He was saved from circumstances too!
- Is this the "happily ever after" moment for Paul? No. His struggles continue.
    - Paul goes to prison again…never to get out. He will die at the executioners hand.
    - But, while in prison, Paul writes a letter to the church in Philippi, where this all happened.
    - Paul wrote to: thank them for their gift, reassure them that a friend was healthy, and to help them quit quarreling and having bad attitudes.
    - Paul explains his situation, **Philippians 1:12-14.**
    - Then he gives them a powerful charge. **Philippians 1:27-2:5.**
    - Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus (Phil 2:5).
        - Was Jesus saved from his circumstances? Some. But not the cross.
    - I believe that God will rescue you from certain things. Let's believe together for that.
    - Sometimes the miracle is the strength to continue on. Let's believe for that too.
- Pray for each other before you finish up!