



## DEEPER BIBLE

### If God Is Watching Over His Family, Why Do Bad Things Still Happen?

[15 min]

#### Supplies

- Bibles\*
- disposable cups (1 per small group)
- construction paper
- transparent tape
- ping-pong balls (1 per small group)
- index cards (1 per small group)

#### Introduce

Say: **We're learning that God is watching over his family. That sounds great, right? But if we look back at today's story, we see that some not-so-great things happened under God's watch. A mob formed, and Paul and Silas were beaten and unfairly imprisoned. Even the earthquake that set them free might have been scary at the time!**

**And you can look around our world and know bad things still happen to people in God's family.**

Ask: • **What are some bad things that have happened to you?** Have small-group leaders share first, and then invite kids to share in their small groups.

Say: **So...if God is watching over his family, why do bad things still happen? Let's dig in to that.**

#### Dig Deeper

Say: **Let's take another look at our Bible story to find one answer.**

Read Acts 16:29-34.

Ask: • **What good things happened in this part of the story?**

• **How did the bad things pave the way for the good things?**

Say: **Sometimes bad things happen because God has a plan to bring good about. And sometimes bad things happen for other reasons, but God *uses* those situations for good. In this case, a man and his whole family became friends with Jesus because of what Paul and Silas went through. Let's read a verse about this idea.**

Read Romans 8:28.

Say: **Notice that this verse doesn't promise everything will be good. It just says God will *use* everything for good for those who love him. And that's just what happened in today's Bible story.**

**That doesn't mean God caused Paul and Silas to get arrested.**

**Sometimes bad things happen because bad people choose to do them! God *could* stop those people, but he lets us all make choices—even bad ones.**

**So instead of stopping the people from hurting and arresting Paul and Silas, God came up with a plan to bring good out of the bad. Let's read a verse about his plans.**

Read Jeremiah 29:11. Then have small groups discuss this question:

Ask: • **What does this verse mean to you?**

Say: **This verse sounds really happy, doesn't it? God has good plans! And it's true. But here's something you should know about this verse. It was written to God's people right after they had been taken from their home country by enemies who brought them to another country. And God knew they would be in that other country for 70 years.**

**God absolutely had a plan for them. But it might not have been the plan they wanted, which was to go home right away. God's good plans for**

**us don't always look the way we expect or happen when we expect. But his plans are always good.**

**God is watching over his family. But that doesn't mean we can tell him how to take care of us. He already knows the best way to take care of us, and we can trust him.**

### **Do an Experiment**

Say: **Let's do an experiment to help us understand this idea a little more.**

Have each small group set an index card on top of a cup, with a rolled-up construction paper tube on the index card holding up a ping-pong ball.

Say: **I have a specific plan for you to get the ping-pong ball into the cup. Do you trust me?**

Tell kids your plan: They'll quickly yank the index card out, which should topple the tube and make the ball fall straight down into the cup. Let kids try and reset it so everyone gets a turn.

Have small groups discuss this question:

Ask: • **What did this experiment show you about God's plan?**

Say: **My plan might not have sounded like it would work. And it caused things to fall. It was a little messy. But in the end, you were able to get the ball where I wanted it to go! We can trust God and follow his plan because God is watching over his family.**