

## News Story Summary

In January 2020, Theophalis Wilson, 48, was set free from prison after serving 28 years in prison. As a teenager in 1989, he was charged with and later convicted for participating in the murders of three men. Wilson's release came after a witness recanted, saying he had provided false information in a plea deal to help him escape the death penalty and have the hope of being released someday. Also, in 2013, forensic specialists testified that the evidence they discovered contradicted the original accounts of the murders.

(For more on this story, search the Internet using the term "Man wrongfully convicted of murder set free after 28 years in prison.")

## Focus Attention

To replace the **FOCUS ATTENTION** suggestion, begin by asking the group to share feelings a person might have who is serving time in a prison. Discuss some possibilities such as depressing, fearful, boring, etc. Say: *Imagine what it would be like to suddenly be freed from that prison.*

Share the story of Theophalis Wilson. Say: *Wilson was in a physical prison.* Then, suggest what prisons of our own making that we might be in. Possibilities include addictions, pornography, gluttony, guilt, etc.

Say: *Today's lesson will show us how the gospel can give us freedom from sin and the guilt of sin.*

## Summarize and Challenge

To replace the Pray idea under Summarize and Challenge, remind the group of Theophalis Wilson's story. Remind the group of the joy of being released from prison. Note that while Mr. Wilson was innocent of that crime, all of us are guilty of some sin and are in bondage to sin and the guilt of sin. Emphasize that the only way to freedom is through faith in Jesus. Lead the group in a time of prayer, thanking God for the freedom found through faith in Jesus.