

The Philippian Jailer

Introduction

Acts 16:16-24

1. Paul and his companion Silas were confined to a Philippian jail, made prisoners for preaching the gospel of freedom and for liberating a slave-girl from a “spirit of divination.”

2. Let's pick up the rest of the story beginning at midnight in the Philippian jail.

Acts 16:25-30

A. Paul and Silas, even in prison are staying true to God as they sing and pray.

B. The jailer was ready to kill himself because he thought the prisoners would have taken the opportunity to escape.

C. Paul stopped him short of killing himself and the jailer, trembling asked “What must I do to be saved?”

3. Incredible! A pagan soldier, who moments before was unaware of his need to be saved, now was eager to know the truth and how he could be saved.

The Jailer and You

1. Do we realize that we are in the very same situation?

A. We live perched on the edge of forever every day!

1) Notice what James says:

James 4:14 whereas you do not know what will happen tomorrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapor that appears for a little time and **then vanishes away.**

2. Realizing this, could it be that we continue to live as though we are CERTAIN that we'll still be alive tomorrow?

Hebrews 9:27 And as it is appointed for men to die once, but after this the judgment,

3. Do we continue to conduct our life as though we will never have to stand before our God and answer for our deeds? We WILL!

2 Corinthians 5:10 For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive the things done in the body, **according to what he has done, whether good or bad.**

4. Could it be that we continue in rebellion to Almighty God as though He will overlook it? He WON'T!

Revelation 21:8 But the cowardly, unbelieving, abominable, murderers, sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars shall have their part in **the lake which burns with fire and brimstone,** which is the second death.

Paul's Answer

1. How does Paul answer this most important question, "What Must I Do To Be Saved?"

A. If Paul were a student of many of today's modern religionists, he might have told this jailer that it really didn't matter what he did, because God's grace would cover him (after all, a truly loving God couldn't send anyone to hell, could he?).

Matthew 23:33 Serpents, brood of vipers! How can you escape the condemnation of hell?

2. Fortunately for the jailer (and for us!) Paul wasn't a disciple of any religion except that of Jesus Christ.

A. He spoke the word of the Lord to Him.
Acts 16:31-32

3. God's word is able to take away guilt and remove the barrier of sin that separates us from God.

Isaiah 59:1-2 Behold, the LORD's hand is not shortened, That it cannot save; Nor His ear heavy, That it cannot hear. But your iniquities have separated you from your God; And your sins have hidden His face from you, So that He will not hear.

Romans 1:16 For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek.

A. No matter how smart we may get (in our own eyes), or how advanced in our theories and thoughts, let us remember it is God that directs our steps.
Jeremiah 10:23

The “Word of the Lord”

1. What did the word of the Lord tell this jailer to do to be saved?
 - A. In verse 31 Paul commands him to believe; without belief, we can never please God.
Hebrews 11:6
 - B. But is that all?
 - 1) Does God only require simply that we believe in Him to be saved? If so, prepare to spend eternity in heaven with a lot of demons, because James says:

James 2:19-20 You believe that there is one God. You do well. **Even the demons believe—and tremble!** But do you want to know, O foolish man, that faith without works is dead?

- 2) **Do not be deceived! Man is justified by works and not by faith alone!**

James 2:24 You see then that a man is justified by works, and not by faith only.

His Faith Was Not Dead

1. In verses 33-34 we see that the Jailer’s faith was not a dead, inactive faith, but a living, obeying, saving faith.
Acts 16:33-34
 - A. He was baptized for the remission of his sins.
 - B. The burden of his guilt was removed and he received God’s gift of salvation.
Ephesians 2:8

The Jailer Did Not Wait

1. The Jailer did not wait – he obeyed the gospel of Christ immediately!

2. If you have not been baptized into Christ for the forgiveness of your sins – Why are you waiting? If your life is not right with God, don't hesitate to make it right!
 - A. Whether you are already God's child, and the allurements of the world have drawn you away from him; or if you have never put on Christ in baptism (Galatians 3:26-27) - follow the example of the Philippian jailer.

 - B. Restore your broken relationship with God this very hour!
Acts 16:33

3. What are you waiting for? It's one thing to put off various tasks of daily life, but it is quite another thing to put off a chance for eternal salvation.
 - A. Won't you make your life right with God?
 - 1) He loves you so much that He sent Jesus to die for you?
John 3:16

