

## The Good News of Jesus is Powerful News

### Acts 16:16-39

Three things that actively resist the advancement of God's kingdom.

1. Flesh -> human selfishness
2. The World -> the propensity to seek and hold power
3. The Enemy -> the schemes of the devil, spiritual forces in the heavens (Ephesians 6:11-12).

**vs. 16-17**, Slave girl

- Had a spirit by which she predicted the future.
- Made a large profit for her owners by fortune telling.
- Followed Paul & Co.
- Shouting, "These men are proclaiming a way of salvation, are the servants (slaves) of the Most High God."

Philippi had a worldview.

God Most High -> not the God of Abraham, rather Zeus or whoever the people had labeled the top god of the local pantheon.

Salvation -> not embracing Jesus for the forgiveness of sin, rather health and prosperity or rescue from imminent danger.

**vs. 18**, With clarity and power Paul commands the spirit to leave.

There is complete power in the name of Jesus

**Philippians 2:9-11** God highly exalted him and gave him the name that is above every name, **10** so that at the name of Jesus every knee will bow—in heaven and on earth and under the earth—**11** and every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Side Note:

**Luke 10:18-20** He said to them, "I watched Satan fall from heaven like lightning. **19** Look, I have given you the authority to trample on snakes and scorpions and over all the power of the enemy; nothing at all will harm you. **20** However, don't rejoice that the spirits submit to you, but rejoice that your names are written in heaven."

**10:3** Now go; I'm sending you out like lambs among wolves.

Right now as we live our lives as we breath the air, we too can experience the beauty and power of the kingdom.

**vs. 19**, No more money.

**vs. 20-21**, These men are anti-Roman! They are trying to change our customs, lifestyle, comfort, etc. (classic xenophobia)

All **3** forces have turned against the advancement of God's kingdom.

Paul and Co. pay the price.

They are stripped, beaten (rods & flogging), and thrown in jail.

Human self interest

The desire to maintain control and power

Fueled by the enemy.

The powers of the world (earth) often seem to have the upper hand!

Paul and Silas refuse to be overwhelmed by the powers of this world.

**vs. 25**, They are praying and singing hymns to God.

Making the decision to shift perspectives

**Question:** How might the Holy Spirit be prompting you to shift perspectives? Why does Jesus give us the pattern of prayer, “Your kingdom come. Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.” (Matthew 6:10)? Have you surrounded yourself with those who will encourage and remind you of the way of Jesus? Who are they? Take the time to thank God for them this week.

**vs. 27,** The Jailer is panicked, overwhelmed, and afraid.

**vs. 30,** Philippi worldview. The Jailer is asking to be rescued. How do I get out of this situation? How do I see a different future?

**vs. 31,** Paul uses his question to talk about the kingdom.

**vs. 32-34,** Another household. Another story of metanoia.

\*\*The trajectory of a person's life can, in fact, change!

**Question:** Do you believe that a person can change? Do you believe the good news of Jesus is a valid source of change? How are these beliefs demonstrated in your everyday life? When is the last time you witnessed this type of change? Pray and ask God to give you an opportunity to experience and celebrate life change?

Jesus is Lord!

**Romans 10:9** If you confess with your mouth, “Jesus is Lord,” and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.

Remember the words of Paul in **Acts 14:22** strengthening the disciples by encouraging them to continue in the faith and by telling them, “It is necessary to go through many hardships to enter the kingdom of God.”

“The crown doesn’t happen without the cross.” ~ NT Wright

**Question:** Have you accepted the truth that suffering is normal and expected in the life of a follower of Jesus? Are you too busy arranging your life to be free from pain that you are missing the mission of Jesus? What shift in priorities do you need to make?

**vs. 35-39,** Not so fast, we are Roman citizens.

God will use every part of who you are for the continued proclamation of the good news of Jesus.

Culturally and situationally Paul is using the circumstances to foster the best opportunity for gospel growth.

**Question:** In all of your life experience, personality, interests, and gifts how are you willingly and joyfully engaged in fostering the best opportunity for gospel growth in yourself and others?