



PHILIPPI • Pastor Craig Smith • July 12, 2020

On mission in Philippi...

After they had been severely flogged, they were thrown into prison, and the jailer was commanded to guard them carefully. Upon receiving such orders, he put them in the inner cell and fastened their feet in the stocks. **(Acts 16:23-24)** Have you ever seen a discrepancy between the purity of Christianity and a Christian leader's desire for economic gain? Please explain.

- **Prayer and songs in the night of suffering** – “About midnight Paul and Barnabas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the other prisoners were listening to them.” **(v. 25)**

How do I respond in times of undeserved distress? How do you answer this question? Which is your tendency?

- **Anger and bitterness?** – “A patient man has great understanding, but a quick-tempered man displays folly.” **(Proverbs 14:29)**
- **Despair and self-pity?** – “His wife said to him, ‘Are you still holding on to your integrity? Curse God and die!’” **(Job 2:9)**
- **Prayer and praise?** – “Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice!” **(Philippians 4:4)**

- **A seismic response and a new start** – “Suddenly there was such a violent earthquake that the foundations of the prison were shaken. At once all the prison doors flew open, and everybody's chains came loose.” **(v. 26)** What are your “chains” in life? When those “chains” shackle you up, have you ever considered using the following ways below to find joy. If not, how could you better use the ways below to find joy?

Philippians 1:18-19: Finding joy when you're chained in life through...

- **The prayers of others** – “...Yes, and I will continue to rejoice, for I know that through your prayers...”
- **The help of the Spirit** – “...and the help given by the Spirit of Jesus Christ...”
- **The hope of deliverance** – “...what has happened to me will turn out for my deliverance.”

- **An open heart and a transformed family** – “The jailer woke up, and when he saw the prison doors open, he drew his sword and was about to kill himself because he thought the prisoners had escaped. But Paul shouted, ‘Don't harm yourself! We are all here!’ The jailer called for lights, rushed in and fell trembling before Paul and Silas. He then brought them out and asked, ‘Sirs, what must I do to be saved?’ They replied, ‘Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved – you and your household.’... The jailer brought them into his house and set a meal before them; he was filled with joy because he had come to believe in God – he and his whole family.” **(vv. 27-31, 34)** Your witness in the things above will communicate the Gospel to those who need it, just like Paul's witness did for the Jailer. What area above needs the most work in your life? Or...Would you consider yourself a Christian? If not, what did it take for the Jailer in this story to become a Christian (vs 31). Have you and can you do that?

...I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation, whether well fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or want.

I can do everything through him who gives me strength.

(Philippians 4:12b-13)