

## Unstoppable Kingdom

### Globally: Elements of a Kingdom Church

Acts 16:16-40

What is a church? To some it's a weekly event to attend, for others it's a building to recognize, for others it's a series of programs for the membership and community, for others it's a community to which they belong, for others it's a charitable organization for the disadvantaged, etc.

The new covenant people of God that exists in a universal sense (all disciples of Jesus worldwide throughout history) and a local sense (gathering of disciples of Jesus in a specific place, at specific times, and with specific ecclesiastical convictions). You have not come to church; you are the church.

*"The local church has always been a temporary tool to build God's eternal Kingdom."* **Vance Pitman**

Today, I want to answer: What are the Elements of a Kingdom Church?

**Main Idea:** The Unstoppable Kingdom Advances through Kingdom Churches

*"As we were going to the place of prayer, we were met by a slave girl who had a spirit of divination and brought her owners much gain by fortune-telling. 17 She followed Paul and us, crying out, 'These men are servants of the Most High God, who proclaim to you the way of salvation.' 18 And this she kept doing for many days. Paul, having become greatly annoyed, turned and said to the spirit, 'I command you in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her.' And it came out that very hour. 19 But when her owners saw that their hope of gain was gone, they seized Paul and Silas and dragged them into the marketplace before the rulers. 20 And when they had brought them to the magistrates, they said, 'These men are Jews, and they are disturbing our city. 21 They advocate customs that are not lawful for us as Romans to accept or practice.' 22 The crowd joined in attacking them, and the magistrates tore the garments off them and gave orders to beat them with rods. 23 And when they had inflicted many blows upon them, they threw them into prison, ordering the jailer to keep them safely. 24 Having received this order, he put them into the inner prison and fastened their feet in the stocks. 25 About midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the prisoners were listening to them, 26 and suddenly there was a great earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison were shaken. And immediately all the doors were opened, and everyone's bonds were unfastened. 27 When the jailer woke and saw that the prison doors were open, he drew his sword and was about to kill himself, supposing that the prisoners had escaped. 28 But Paul cried with a loud voice, 'Do not harm yourself, for we are all here.' 29 And the jailer called for lights and rushed in, and trembling with fear he fell down before Paul and Silas. 30 Then he brought them out and said, 'Sirs, what must I do to be saved?' 31 And they said, 'Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved, you and your household.' 32 And they spoke the word of the Lord to him and to all who were in his house. 33 And he took them the same hour of the night and washed their wounds; and he was baptized at once, he and all his family. 34 Then he brought them up into his house and set food before them. And he rejoiced along with his entire household that he had believed in God. 35 But when it was day, the magistrates sent the police, saying, 'Let those men go.' 36 And the jailer reported these words to Paul, saying, 'The magistrates have sent to let you go. Therefore come out now and go in*

*peace.' 37 But Paul said to them, 'They have beaten us publicly, uncondemned, men who are Roman citizens, and have thrown us into prison; and do they now throw us out secretly? No! Let them come themselves and take us out.' 38 The police reported these words to the magistrates, and they were afraid when they heard that they were Roman citizens. 39 So they came and apologized to them. And they took them out and asked them to leave the city. 40 So they went out of the prison and visited Lydia. And when they had seen the brothers, they encouraged them and departed." Acts 16:16-40*

### Four Elements of Kingdom Churches from Acts 16:16-40

#### I. Place To Impact with the Gospel

A kingdom church does not always have a building or property, in fact most do not. But, it always has a place or a community it desires to impact with the gospel of Jesus Christ. In Acts 16, the place was Philippi!

*"So, setting sail from Troas, we made a direct voyage to Samothrace, and the following day to Neapolis, and from there to Philippi, which is a leading city of the district of Macedonia and a Roman colony. We remained in this city some days." Acts 16:11-12*

Philippi was named after its founder, Phillip II of Macedonia (356 BC), father of Alexander the Great. Immortalized forever in Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar* during the battle of Philippi in 42 BC, it was a Roman Colony in the time of the events in the book of Acts. Its nickname was "Little Rome".

*"Only let your manner of life be worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that whether I come and see you or am absent, I may hear of you that you are standing firm in one spirit, with one mind striving side by side for the faith of the gospel."* **Philippians 1:27 - 10 Years Later, Paul reminds them of their calling!**

We are a kingdom church and God has given us a place. It's not 634 Clove Road, nor AMC Theater in the Staten Island mall. That just happens to be our gathering spots. Our "Place to impact with the gospel" is the north shore and mid-island regions respectively. Our place is the community, the families, businesses, schools, and neighborhoods that need Jesus!

#### ii. People to Make Disciples of Jesus

Paul & Silas engaged their place with the gospel, people were saved.

- **Lydia:** Wealthy business lady who trusted Christ as Paul preached.
- **Slave Girl:** Impoverished, enslaved, & demon possessed who trusted Christ after being delivered by Paul and Silas.
- **Jailer:** Middle-class, retired soldier who trusted Christ after Paul and Silas refused to escape the jail following an earthquake.

*"It would be hard to imagine a more disparate group than the businesswoman, the slave girl, and the jailer. Racially, socially, and psychologically they were worlds apart. Yet all three were changed by the same gospel and were welcomed into the same church." John Stott - Jesus is for EVERYONE!*

*"I thank my God in all my remembrance of you, always in every prayer of mine for you all making my prayer with joy, because of your partnership in the*

*gospel from the first day until now. And I am sure of this, that he who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ.*"

### **Philippians 1:3-6 - 10-Years-Later, the Discipleship was Proven!**

Our mission at Salem Church is to make disciples & multiply churches!

#### **iii. Power from the Holy Spirit to Change Lives**

Supernatural power is on display in the Kingdom Church in Philippi!

*"Paul, having become greatly annoyed, turned and said to the spirit, 'I command you in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her.' And it came out that very hour."* **Acts 16:18b - Deliverance only God can bring!**

*"About midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the prisoners were listening to them, and suddenly there was a great earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison were shaken. And immediately all the doors were opened, and everyone's bonds were unfastened... But Paul cried with a loud voice, 'Do not harm yourself, for we are all here.'" **Acts 16:25-26, 28 - Singing, Earthquake, Everyone stays***

*"So they came and apologized to them..." **Acts 16:39a-Government Apology***

So many of the items we use every day are completely useless without being plugged into a power source. That's a church without the Holy Spirit!

*"But our citizenship is in heaven, and from it we await a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, who will transform our lowly body to be like his glorious body, by the power that enables him even to subject all things to himself."* **Phil 3:20-21**

We are powerless at Salem Church without the Holy Spirit!

#### **iv. Purpose of Sending Members to Advance the Kingdom**

Paul and Silas only spent about four months in Philippi. Incredible!

*"So they went out of the prison and visited Lydia. And when they had seen the brothers, they encouraged them and departed."* **Acts 16:40 - A Send Culture**

Most churches want to grow, but very few are eager to send. Are we more interested in growing our church, or advancing God's kingdom? If it's the latter, then we must be a church that sends our best to the neighborhoods and nations with the gospel of Jesus Christ! It's that simple.

*"And you Philippians yourselves know that in the beginning of the gospel, when I left Macedonia, no church entered into partnership with me in giving and receiving except you only. Even in Thessalonica you sent me help for my needs once and again. Not that I seek the gift, but I seek the fruit that increases to your credit. I have received full payment, and more. I am well supplied, having received from Epaphroditus the gifts you sent, a fragrant offering, a sacrifice acceptable and pleasing to God. And my God will supply every need of yours according to his riches in glory in Christ Jesus. To our God and Father be glory forever and ever. Amen."* **Philippians 4:15-20**

What is a church? It's a local gathering of disciples of Jesus that exists as a temporary tool to advance the eternal kingdom of Jesus. The church in

Philippi didn't have a building (they met in Lydia's house). They didn't have seminary trained pastors (planting pastor only stayed 4 months). They didn't have tax exempt status (local authorities hated them). But they did have...

**Main Idea:** The Unstoppable Kingdom Advances through Kingdom Churches

Join us. Consider letting us send you to the neighborhoods or nations!

#### **Sources and Further Reading Opportunities:**

- *CSB Study Bible* – Trevin Wax, General Editor (2021)
- *The Bible Exposition Commentary* – Warren Wiersbe (1996)
- *Word Pictures in the New Testament* – A.T. Robertson (1933)
- *The New American Commentary: Acts* – John B. Polhill (1992)
- *Acts: Bible Study Commentary* – F.F. Bruce (2017)
- *Acts for Everyone* – N.T. Wright (2008)
- *Acts: The Church Afire* – Kent Hughes (1996)
- *Acts* – K.O. Gangle (1998)
- *The Kingdom of God* – Martyn Lloyd-Jones (1992)
- *The Message of Acts* – John Stott (1994)
- *Kingdom First* – Jeff Christopherson (2015)
- *The Kingdom Agenda* – Tony Evans (1999)
- *Gaining by Losing* – JD Greear (2015)