



Surprise!

August 9, 2020 Message Notes

ACTS 16:1-34

Do you love surprises? In this season of quarantine, maybe you've been surprised by God in some way. As we start our new series, Infinite Hope, we open taking a look at a story in Acts 16 that is full of surprises— some are puzzling and other times bewildering, but this chapter helps us see how to follow God and remain faithful.

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NOTES

"I thought _____, but then God surprised me when _____."

"Paul wanted to take him along on the journey so he circumcised him because of Jews who lived in the area..."

ACTS 16:3

"So the churches were strengthened in the faith and grew daily in numbers."

ACTS 16:5

"Paul and his companions traveled throughout the region of Phrygia and Galatia, having been kept by the Holy Spirit from preaching the Word in the province of Asia."

ACTS 16:6

Has God ever surprised you with a closed door? What do you do?

You keep on trusting and you keep moving forward.

Don't argue with the 'No'. Just keep on the 'Go'!

What do you do when God says 'no' but doesn't tell you when your next step is?

Go to His Word.

"Do not be like the horse or mule, which have no understanding but must be controlled by bit and bridle or they will not come to you."

PSALM 32:9

How do you find God's will without being directly led?

Do what you already know.

"This man is my chosen instrument to proclaim my name to the Gentiles."

ACTS 9:15

Follow the light you have. When you hit a closed door, go back to the place where you heard God's word clearly in your life.

"When they came to the border of Mysia, they tried to enter Bithynia, but the Spirit of Jesus would not allow them to."

ACTS 16:7

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“They passed by Mysia and went down to Troas.”

ACTS 16:8

Stay faithful and stay focused on the mission.

“It is required of stewards that they be found faithful.”

1 CORINTHIANS 4:2

God has to give you the opportunity to build faithfulness.

“Every strike brings me closer to the next home run.” – Babe Ruth

What looks like failure can lead to fantastic faithfulness.

God answers prayer in one of four ways:

Sometimes God says–

NO when the request isn't right.

SLOW when the time is not right.

GROW when you're not right, when you need to develop more in your faithfulness.

GO when everything is right at the time.

“During the night Paul had a vision of a man of Macedonia, standing and begging him, ‘Come over to Macedonia and help us’.”

ACTS 16:9

Follow the light you have; God will give you more. Keep moving by faith and the door will open in God's time.

“On the Sabbath we went outside the city gate to the river... to find a place of prayer... and began to speak to the women who had gathered there.”

ACTS 16:13

Paul and Silas are beaten and thrown into a prison cell. In the middle of the night, they are praying and singing hymns to God.

“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.”

ACTS 16:26

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“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.”

ACTS 16:27

“But Paul shouted, ‘Don’t harm yourself! We’re all here!’”

ACTS 16:28

“Believe (trust) in the Lord Jesus and you will be saved – you and your household.”

ACTS 16:31

“...filled with joy because he had come to believe in God – he and his whole family.”

ACTS 16:34

Failure can be faced and overcome by faithfulness.

God shows up when we give voice to our faith in praise.

“Without faith it is impossible to please God...but he rewards those who earnestly seek him.”

HEBREWS 11:6

“Let everything that has breath praise the Lord.”

PSALM 150:6

The will of God is more like a dance of faith than a march. We learn how to listen for the still, small voice of God’s whisper through the Spirit. Then we follow His lead.

“You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart.”

JEREMIAH 29:13

Your place of hardship can become a place of fellowship with God.

“Surely the Lord was in this place and I knew it not.”

GENESIS 28:16 KJV

None of us can choose our circumstances, but each one of us can still choose our songs.

Praise says: God is on the throne. God is still at work. God’s got this and we are trusting Him. Praise can set the captive free. Praise can open the closed door. Praise can break the captive’s chains. Praise makes the difference.

When we choose to voice our faith, others are listening and it can help them get free.



If you're in a dark, hard place and God turns the light on for you, be sure and look around before you get out of there and see if there's anybody that God wants you to bring with you.



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