

The Acts of the Risen Lord Jesus: The Jesus Formula

Pastor Chad Ellenburg

Acts 16:16-40 (CSB)

16 Once, as we were on our way to prayer, a slave girl met us who had a spirit by which she predicted the future. She made a large profit for her owners by fortune-telling. 17 As she followed Paul and us she cried out, "These men, who are proclaiming to you a way of salvation, are the servants of the Most High God." 18 She did this for many days. Paul was greatly annoyed. Turning to the spirit, he said, "I command you in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her!" And it came out right away. 19 When her owners realized that their hope of profit was gone, they seized Paul and Silas and dragged them into the marketplace to the authorities. 20 Bringing them before the chief magistrates, they said, "These men are seriously disturbing our city. They are Jews 21 and are promoting customs that are not legal for us as Romans to adopt or practice." 22 The crowd joined in the attack against them, and the chief magistrates stripped off their clothes and ordered them to be beaten with rods. 23 After they had severely flogged them, they threw them in jail, ordering the jailer to guard them carefully. 24 Receiving such an order, he put them into the inner prison and secured their feet in the stocks.

The Demon Girl

25 About midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the prisoners were listening to them. 26 Suddenly there was such a violent earthquake that the foundations of the jail were shaken, and immediately all the doors were opened, and everyone's chains came loose. 27 When the jailer woke up and saw the doors of the prison standing open, he drew his sword and was going to kill himself, since he thought the prisoners had escaped. 28 But Paul called out in a loud voice, "Don't harm yourself, because we're all here!" 29 The jailer called for lights, rushed in, and fell down trembling before Paul and Silas. 30 He escorted them out and said, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" 31 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 along with everyone in his house. 33 He took them the same hour of the night and washed their wounds. Right away he and all his family were baptized. 34 He brought them into his house, set a meal before them, and rejoiced because he had come to believe in God with his entire household.

The Jailer

35 When daylight came, the chief magistrates sent the police to say, "Release those men." 36 The jailer reported these words to Paul: "The magistrates have sent orders for you to be released. So come out now and go in peace." 37 But Paul said to them, "They beat us in public without a trial, although we are Roman citizens, and threw us in jail. And now are they going to send us away secretly? Certainly not! On the contrary, let them come themselves and escort us out." 38 The police reported these words to the magistrates. They were afraid when they heard that Paul and Silas were Roman citizens. 39 So they came to appease them, and escorting them from prison, they urged them to leave town. 40 After leaving the jail, they came to Lydia's

house, where they saw and encouraged the brothers and sisters, and departed.

The House Church

Spiritual Growth Prompts & Questions

The Bible has a way (through God's Spirit) of poking and prodding places in us that need healing, help, or transformation. Something may come to mind and your first instinct will be to disagree or try to talk yourself out of it. That's a good indication that Jesus is speaking. Did He highlight something for you today as you listened?

The Bible is also one huge story - written to lead you to Jesus. How did today's passage do that? How did the text make Jesus beautiful? Can you see Him? If so, how does He compare to the stuff of life? If not, what do you think might be blocking your vision?

Finally, the Bible's story line can get lodged in your heart and mind and mess with you. This is a good thing, but it can be uncomfortable. Jesus will use His story to ask you questions. Instead of you reading the text, it will begin to read you. He will ask things of you. Almost like a voice in your head, Jesus will be calling and compelling you to action. What is He doing in you today?