

All the Prison Doors Flew Open!

Acts 16:13-40

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May 25, 2008

A repeated theme of bondage and deliverance

A front row seat to the power of the gospel

1. The gospel is the power of God to open hearts (16:13-15)

Salvation is the Lord's work, not ours!

deliverance = the action of being rescued or set free

- **Romans 1:16-17**
- **Colossians 1:13-14**

2. The gospel is the power of God to open prison door of demonic bondage (16:16-22)

- **Verses 17-19**

A clear deliverance takes place

Demonic persuasion and influence in our day

3. The gospel is the power of God to *open mouths to sing praise* in the darkest of hours (16:23-25)

The temptation to distance ourselves

A New Testament example of Daniel-like faith

- **Verse 25**

One author writes, “they resorted to a time-tested method of responding to suffering...singing helps us focus on the glorious eternal realities that may be clouded by the gloomy temporal realities. It helps us especially because, when we cannot produce words of our own, we can use words of others....the objective truths we get from biblical songs challenge our subjective feelings; our theology addresses our experience.”

They were singing to God alone but not for God alone

We have an audience

4. The gospel is the power of God to open the prison door of sin and unbelief (16:26-34)

The irony is that the one who held Paul and Silas as prisoners was imprisoned himself. He needed a deliverance from the cell of unbelief.

- **Then verse 26 happened!**

How would you answer that question?

5. Evidence that nothing and no one can close the door on the gospel (16:35-40)

Paul has the church in mind in all he does

Os Guinness: ***“By the preaching of the Gospel, we are not talking about an individualistic, narrow, subjective, pietistic thing. The Gospel affects the heart and the whole of life. It touches a heart, changes a family, changes a neighborhood, changes a workplace and eventually touches the whole of life as a salt and light penetrating influence. There is nothing more powerful for taking on evil and unbelief than the Gospel itself.”***

Drawing Lines

Making the connection between what we “know” about the Gospel and how we think and live.

- What does Acts 16 teach us about God? Can you find one thing in particular that stood out to you regarding God’s character?
- What is the gospel? In other words, can you answer the jailer’s question in verse 30? Can you describe the gospel message in three minutes or less? If not, what passages of scripture can you turn to for assistance? What words did you use that may need defining?
- What did everyone in Acts 16 have in common? How does the gospel transform each situation? Does this give you hope?
- How do the truths of Acts 16 help us evangelize? What kind of confidence should we have when sharing our faith?
- Why is the “silent call to live by faith” not so silent?
- Can you share a time when the outcome of a circumstance was uncertain and yet God opened your mouth to sing praise in the midst of it?
- What does the author who said, “our theology addresses our experience” mean? How does singing Bible saturated songs and praying Bible saturated prayers help us in this?
- What is the evidence that nothing and no one can “close the door” on the gospel?