

WHO IS IN PRISON,
REALLY?!

ACTS 16:16-34

- ▶ In verses 16 ff. there is a woman who is a slave who has an evil spirit.
- ▶ We don't know if it is the evil spirit driving this woman to follow Paul and Silas around or if it is her own spirit desiring freedom
- ▶ But her continued persistence of nagging Paul, for many days, by crying out, "These men are bond servants of the most high God, who are proclaiming to you the way of salvation, " got to a point that Paul, with God's power, brought healing to the woman
- ▶ The question is, who was the prisoner, Paul or the woman?

Remember Ephesians 4:1-3

FIRST, THE SLAVE WOMAN

- ▶ By freeing this woman of the sin in her life, her managers could no longer make profits from her (Acts 16:16)
- ▶ There are people in this world who make their money and profits from the enslavement of others
- ▶ As long as there is big money in sex, drugs, and politics; people will profit from the enslavement of others (Epstein, e.g.)
- ▶ Pharmaceutical companies have misled doctors and the public on how addictive many pain killers are (Prince, Michael Jackson, e.g.)
- ▶ Paul and Silas found out about the consequences of offending the rich and powerful when resources dry up!

OBSERVATIONS

- ▶ After Paul and Silas were beaten, they were put into prison
- ▶ The Jailor was commanded to guard them securely, “HIS LIFE OR YOURS.” NOTHING COULD GO WRONG, OR A HEAVY PRICE WOULD BE PAID!
- ▶ So now, with that command, he puts them in the dungeon or “inner prison” and fastens chains on them to make it impossible for them to escape
- ▶ Here is a working-class man, who fed his family with his job. As long as he did everything right he and his family was safe until the unexpected happens: AN EARTHQUAKE IN THE MIDDLE OF THE NIGHT, Acts 16:26

THE NEXT IMPRISONED PERSON IS THE
JAILOR

- ▶ Once the Earthquake caused the prison bars to fall apart and the chains to brake, the jailor's immediate response was to kill himself hoping obviously to save his family from the fate intended for Paul and Silas
- ▶ Paul and Silas call out to the jailor that they hadn't run away. They were still in the cell.
- ▶ No wonder the jailor was so open to what Paul had to say, and ultimately asked the question, "*Sirs, what must I do to be saved?*"

OBSERVATIONS

- ▶ We are often like the jailor. We are going right along with our lives until something goes wrong and we wonder “Lord don’t you care? I am a prisoner of my own wrongdoing!” (or somebody else’s wrongdoing)
- ▶ And Jesus tells us what Paul told the jailor, “Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ (have faith in me in the problem you have and let that faith have action,) and thou shalt be saved!” Hebrews 11:6
- ▶ The Jailor’s actions showed that he obeyed God; will we?

OBSERVATIONS

- ▶ Paul and Silas were beaten, like Jesus was Acts 16:23
- ▶ They were put in cells with guards over them and fastened with chains, inside the cells
- ▶ But at midnight, they were praying and singing praises to the Lord, verse 25
- ▶ My point is that of all the ones imprisoned, Paul and Silas were not (their bodies were in lock-down but not their souls)
- ▶ Paul knew that nothing could separate him from Christ's love, Romans 8:35-39. Even without the earthquake they were o.k.

THIRDLY, THE IMPRISONMENT OF PAUL AND SILAS

Hear the Gospel

Acts 15:7

Believe the Gospel

Acts 15:7

Repent of Sins

Acts 17:30

Confess Christ

Acts 8:37

Be Baptized

Acts 8:38

THE PLAN OF SALVATION

