

“Suffering to Salvation”

Acts 16:16-40

January 18, 2026

Acts 16.16-40

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.

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.

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.

Main Idea: the mission of the savior is the mission of the church.

How do we trust God in the midst of suffering, and how does that suffering continue to grow the church?

Despite suffering, Paul and Silas praise Jesus!

Hebrews 4:14-16

14 Therefore, since we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens — Jesus the Son of God — let us hold fast to our confession. **15** For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who has been tempted in every way as we are, yet without sin. **16** Therefore, let us approach the throne of grace with boldness, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in time of need.

But Paul recognizes this life isn't just about how Christ identifies with us, but how we get to identify with him.

Philippians 3:7-11

7 But everything that was a gain to me, I have considered to be a loss because of Christ. **8** More than that, I also consider everything to be a loss in view of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. Because of him I have suffered the loss of all things and consider them as dung, so that I may gain Christ **9** and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own from the law, but one that is through faith in Christ — the righteousness from God based on faith. **10** My goal is to know him and the power of his resurrection and the fellowship of his sufferings, being conformed to his death, **11** assuming that I will somehow reach the resurrection from among the dead.

From death salvation comes.

Paul continued the mission of his savior, and we are called to do the same!

Life Group Discussion Questions

- What did God say to you through the Scripture during our Sunday gathering?
- As we reflect on what happens with Lydia, the slave girl, Paul and Silas, and the jailer, what does freedom in Christ look like?
- What sin or material thing is the hardest for you to give up for Christ?
- Paul and Silas praise Jesus while in prison. How do you typically respond when obedience to Christ leads to discomfort or loss? What can we glean from the response of Paul and Silas in the midst of challenges?
- How can our response to hardship serve as a witness to those who are watching us?
- What stands out to you about the simplicity of Paul and Silas's invitation to salvation in verse 31? What strikes you about how the jailer responds?
- The jailer went from harsh treatment to kindness. How has the gospel changed you?
- How does death produce salvation?
- What does freedom in Christ look like for you now and moving forward?
- From your Life Group time, what is an idea or two from your discussion that you can work to apply this week?