

Saturday, December 3, 2022 ▫ Read Acts 16:16–34

Questions from the Scripture text: Where were they going in v16? Who met them? What did she do for her masters? Now what did she do in v17? What was she crying out? For how long (v18)? How did Paul feel about this? To whom did he speak? How did he command it? What happened? When? Who saw what in v19? What did they do to whom? To whom did they bring Paul and Silas (v19b, 20a)? What did they call Paul and Silas? Of what did they accuse them generally? Of what did they accuse them, specifically (v21)? Who are apparently there and respond in what way in v22? After the multitudes response, who else respond in what way? How much do the magistrates do this in v23? What did they then do to them? Whom did they command to do what? How did he respond to this charge (v24)? When does v25 take place? What were Paul and Silas doing? What were the prisoners doing? What suddenly happens (v26)? What were shaken? What happened to which doors? What happened to whose chains? What does the jailer do in v27? What does he see? What does he assume? What is he about to do? Who calls in v28? In what kind of voice? Commanding what? Why not—who was still there? What does he call for (v29)? Where does he go at what speed? What does he do before Paul and Silas? What does he do to Paul and Silas in v30? What does he ask them? What do they command him to do (v31)? What result do they promise? To whom else do they give this command and this promise? To whom do they speak what in v32? And to whom else? How does he respond in v33? But who are baptized? Where does he bring them in v34? What does he set before them? What does he do? Who rejoice with him over his having believed (n.b. the prepositional phrase belongs to the indicative verb “rejoiced” not the participle “believed,” cp. YLT, ESV, NASB margin)?

How does the gospel advance in the face of demonic and worldly opposition? Acts 16:16–34 looks forward to the morning sermon on the coming Lord’s Day. In these nineteen verses of Holy Scripture, the Holy Spirit teaches us that **neither demonic nor worldly opposition can stop the advance of the gospel, because in almighty power, inscrutable wisdom, and determined love, God Himself is saving whomever He wills.**

Though this world with devils filled. The truth is always true, but it is not always effective. As we just saw in v14, even when the truth is on the lips of an apostle, it still requires the miraculous, gracious work of the Lord to open the heart of the hearer. So if we are paying attention, we’re not actually surprised at the apostle’s response in v18 to her statement in v17. What she said was true; they were servants of the Most High God, who proclaimed the way of salvation!

But she followed them for many days saying this. Day after day, they went to prayer (v16), evidently to the river where they had found some women praying on the Sabbath. But there is still only the report of Lydia’s conversion. Apparently—and consistently with how her “divining” was a for-profit operation for her masters (v16, cf. v19a)—Paul concludes that the Lord is not using this announcement to bring anyone to hear the gospel in a saving way.

That Word against all earthly powers. The word translated by the phrase “greatly annoyed” (v18) is built upon the root for “evil”; it isn’t apostolic petulance that we see but a proper response to evil. He sees that she is in a worse bondage than her earthly one, and he commands the spirit to come out.

So, we see the apostle in combat here with a demon. And then we see the apostle seized and dragged by the wealthy masters who want their profit back (or at least revenge for its loss, v19). And then we see the apostle before the magistrates (v20)—a spineless lot who are easily manipulated by the next group. For, once Paul and Silas are before the magistrates, the magistrates are manipulated by the multitude, who are also easily manipulated. All the slave-masters have to do is accuse them of being troublemaking Jews, and the gullible (and bigoted) multitude lose their minds (v20–21; no wonder there was no synagogue in the city)! At this point, there’s not even an attempt at justice, just politicians placating the noisy, violent crowd.

He must win the battle. Going back to the forbidding in v6 and the not-permitting in v7, this missionary journey has suffered one setback (humanly speaking) after another. Now, in v22b, Paul and Silas are stripped. Now, in v22c, they are beaten with rods. Now, in v23a, they have received many stripes. Now, in v23b, they are thrown into prison. Now, in v23c, they are regarded as max-security prisoners. Now, in v24a, they are put in the inner prison. Now, in v24b, their feet are fastened in the stocks.

Every new turn of events seems to bring them a little lower, but the Lord has them just where He wants them! They know this from the very Scriptures they are singing in v25. What better place than the Psalms to read about God’s purpose, power, wisdom, and goodness in our troubles? That, of course, is what is meant by “hymns” in v25.

It’s a Greek word found in the superscripts of Psalm 5, 53, 54, 60, 66, and 75. Mat 26:30 uses the word to refer (probably) to Psalms 115–118, which were commonly sung at the conclusion of the Passover meal. Even a quick survey of those Psalms reveals what a help they are for saints in the midst of affliction. But they are not just reading or remembering. They are *praying* these Scriptures. They are *singing* these Scriptures.

This, we expect from believers. Paul and Silas singing the Psalms in their chains isn’t a surprise. The surprise, especially after the way things have gone thus far in Philippi, is at the end of v25, “and the prisoners were listening to them.” *That’s why* the Spirit had them thrown in to the prison—because it was there that He “had many people” in the prison (cf. Ac 18:10). The Spirit knows what He is going to do (cf. 15:18, 2:23, 4:28) and whose hearts He is going to open (cf. v14) in order to save them. And He had gathered a prison full of those whom He had prepared to listen to Paul and Silas.

Though we do not here read of anyone but the jailer believing, we do see great effect from their hearing in v28. In v26, *all* the doors were opened and *everyone’s* chains were loosed. But in v28 *none* of the prisoners had left; *all* of them were still there. Given the opportunity of continued imprisonment but getting to continue to hear the words of eternal life, or newfound freedom but possibly not hearing those words, every single prisoner had stayed!

As for the jailer, he does believe. Perhaps he, too, has heard Paul and Silas. Perhaps he has been greatly affected by the effect that Paul and Silas have had upon the other prisoners. He brings them out of the prison and into his house. He asks about his own salvation (v30), but Paul and Silas assume that not only will he believe (v31a), but that his household also will (v31b).

Even though only the jailer’s repentance (v33a) and the jailer’s faith are described (v34, n.b. the prepositional phrase “with all his household” belongs to the indicative verb “rejoiced” not the participle “believed,” cp. YLT, ESV, NASB margin), they are all baptized as belonging to him, and they all rejoice with him. Why? Because it is God Who has put them in this man’s house, and God Who has brought their husband/father/master to faith. And it must be God Who opens the rest of their hearts and gives them faith. His providence and His sign are not meaningless. He must win the battle.

Why shouldn’t believers be afraid of demons? What is happening when the wealthy, the authorities, and the haters of God’s people seem to have the upper hand? Who will be saved? How?

Sample prayer: Lord, thank You for ruling and overruling all things for the salvation of all of those whom You have determined to redeem. Grant unto us to be confident and content, no matter what providence You bring us through. Make us be on the lookout for those whom You are saving. And grant that we would have good hope for the covenant children whom You have placed in believing households and whom You have made members of Your church. Bring them to faith and repentance, we ask, in Jesus’s Name, AMEN!

Suggested songs: ARP46 “God Is Our Refuge and Our Strength” or TPH244 “A Mighty Fortress Is Our God”

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Acts 16 verses 16 to 34. These are God's words. Now it happened is we went to prayer that a certain slave girl possessed with a spirit of divination, divination met us who brought her masters much profit by fortune telling. This girl, followed paul and us and cried out saying.

These men are the servants of the most high, god, who proclaimed to us the way of salvation. And this she did, for many days. But paul greatly annoyed turned and said to the spirit, I command you in the name of jesus christ to come out of her. And he came out that very hour.

But when her masters saw that, their hope of prophet was gone. They seized paul and silas and dragged them into the marketplace to the authorities. And they brought them to the magistrates and said, these men being Jews exceedingly trouble, our city and they teach customs which are not lawful for us being romance to receive or observe.

Then the multitude rose up together against them. And the magistrates to tore off their clothes and commanded them to be beaten with rods. And then they had laid many stripes on them. They threw them into prison. Commanding the jailer to keep them securely. Having received such a charge, he put them into the inner prison and fastened their feet in the stocks.

But at midnight paul and silas were praying. And singing hymns to god. And the prisoners were listening to them. Suddenly there was a great earthquake. So, that the foundations of the prison were shaken and immediately all the doors were opened and everyone's chains were loose. And the keepers of the prison awaking from sleep and seeing the prison doors open.

Supposing the prisoners had fled drew his sword and was about to kill himself. But paul called with a loud voice saying, do yourself no harm for we are all here. Then he called for a light ran in And fell down trembling before paul and silas. And he brought them out and said, Sirs.

What my story do to be saved. So they said believe the lord jesus christ and you will be saved. You and your household. Then they spoke the word of the lord to him. And to all who are in his house. And he took them the same hour of the night and washed their stripes and immediately, he and all his family were baptized. Now, when he had brought them into his house, he stood he sat food before then and he rejoiced having believed in god, With all his household.

So far the reading of god's inspired and denariant worked. Often the lord chooses for Uh, the most spectacular displays of his power and his mercy. Uh, the canvas Of difficult and puzzling providence. Uh, we saw the puzzling providence starting. From. The beginning of this chapter really, Uh, Verse 6, the forbidding of the holy spirit to go preach the word in asia minor.

Verse 7, the spirit, not permitting them to go. Preach the word in bithya. Then they get to fill up high. And there aren't enough people with. Knowledge of the old testament, not enough god, fearers or jews really needed, 12 Jews to have a synagogue, they come to our prayer is made and what they find is just women.

They evangelize there. They have one convert. Who believes and She and her household are baptized. Now, they are staying in her house. And they are going. Uh, to the river apparently every day. As we see in verse 18, this she did. For many days implying that they're going to prayer at the beginning of our passage.

Is something that they are now doing. Every day, they leave, lydia's house, maybe with Lydia, i don't know. Um, it doesn't say necessarily whether Lydia and her household were were with them, but every day, they leave Lydia's house. And they go back to the river, where, at least the god, fearers, the ones with some knowledge.

Um, Or some yearning for the one true god. Gather for prayers on the sabbaths. Uh, but they're going there every day. And, It's Very bleak and of course it's going to get bleaker Um, And we see some of the bleakness already. Because there is a demonic element that is active in the city of philippi.

Now. That's no problem for these masters that this poor girl is. Demon possessed because they're able to make money off of her. Uh, they don't really care one way or the other. If she's possessed or not except for that, they can make money. When the demons cast out, they're not upset that the demon has been cast out.

They're upset that their hope of for profit is gone and the way that they are introduced to us in verse 16 is that she brings her master's much profit. By fortune telling. And so we see a great difference between them and the apostle. The word for greatly annoyed here as a word that has at its root.

The word for evil. And a preposition attached to it. So the idea is Provoked by the evil, and The word greatly is just here, supplied in the english to try and give something of Um, Of the Since of this word, that is really not the normal word for annoyed.

But it means that Paul was having a strong response to the evil. That is occurring. He doesn't need. He and silas, and timothy and luke. They don't need a demon possessed girl, to announce that they are servants of the most high god. He doesn't need a demon possessed girl to announce that they are preaching the gospel.

After all god, who is the one who As enlisted them and employed them called them as a servants. God, whose gospel this is and god upon whom the response to the gospel. Depends. Is able by whatever means he chooses to bring to them. Whomever it is that he is going to say.

Remember, even when they went to the play, to the place that the river where there were people who were praying, It required. The work of god to open, Lydia's heart. In a couple of chapters when we're in chapter 18 and they're at Corinth, and they have some initial converts.

But there's also some initial resistance, The holy spirit is going to tell them. Uh, to remain in the city because he quote unquote has many people there. God knows whom he is going to say and he's able to say save them. Uh so uh so paul isn't the sort of christian or the sort of minister that That all of those of us who preach the gospel tempted to be, who are grateful for what publicity they can have.

Especially if it's someone telling people that we're faithful servants and that we're actually proclaiming The way of salvation. What the what the girl says is true.

Just like the demons, who said? I know who you are. The holy one of israel to jesus. We're telling the truth. Weren't they?

Uh, but the truth although it has always true, is not always effective. It's effective when the lord comes with his power and in his mercy, and in his grace, makes it effective. And so paul with this great confidence in god, who forbids him sometimes to go somewhere and preach the gospel and doesn't say, i'm gonna try anyway.

Why? Because it's God who has to make the gospel effective. And it's God's prerogative where, and to whom he will preach and with what effect? He will preach with what outcome. He will preach. So paul is much more affected by the evil. That is taking place upon this girl.

The bondage that he that he sees her in to this spirit So, although, from an earthly way of thinking you might think, well, he has something to gain from her being possessed, by a spirit, who is announcing that. He's a servant to the most high god, He has something to gain from this girl being possessed by a spirit, who's saying these people proclaimed you the way of salvation.

But he doesn't see what he has to gain. He sees a provoking evil. A girl. Who is under power and bondage to A demon. That's what his provoked by. He's not irritated. That she's following him and saying nice things about him. This isn't a petulant response of the flesh.

This is a contrast. To those slave masters.

This is a contrast to those slave masters. Who don't care? That there's a girl in bondage. They have her in bondage too. What do they care if a demon has her in bondage? What they care about is there's an opportunity for them to benefit. There's an opportunity for them to profit.

And that's the way this world is. People abusing one another. Not seeing one another as made in the image of god hating one another, why? While they break the second great commandment because they break the first great, commandment. They don't love god. They're acting as it were like demons, like satan.

Who the reason he hates us so much? Is because he hates god. So much. There's a spiritual battle. Between the mind of god and the mind of satan. That has displayed in how we treat people. And there are actual spiritual beings. That are hating and enjoying keeping people in bondage.

And the lord takes pleasure. And releasing people from that bondage. And so, this world is As. As we'll sing in a moment with devil's filled. And it threatens to undo us. But god has willed his truth to triumph through us, hasn't he? And so, Uh, the you notice Paul.

Commands, in the name of jesus christ, that the demon comes out. And it comes out that very Hour. And displays the power. Of the lord jesus christ over all. Of satan, and The demons. And even the people. To in a demonic mind, keep others in bondage and have a murderous heart towards others.

Um, so there's the power of Of the gospel over against that demonic power. And the great power of the gospel, then over against demonic power isn't just to deliver people from demonic possession. It's to deliver people from the fear of death. That's what the book of hebrews reminds us about the essence of the devil's power over us.

He tempted our first parents. And they sinned, and we send in them and they fell and we fell with them. And now we sin. And we deserve hell. And we die as a consequence of our sin. And the reason that that death is so terrifying is because we know what we deserve at the moment of death.

And jesus comes and he doesn't just deliver us. From demonic possession. If we are possessed. He delivers us from that power of the devil devil that comes through the fear of death. Because he makes us sure. That our hell has been taken away at his cross. And that our death instead of being the doorway, Uh, down into hell becomes the gate into glory for the believer.

And so, he destroys the work of the devil. He crushes. The serpent's head. And therefore, if the, if the lord is destroying the power of the devil, what power of the world. Can stand against us. Now we have three powers of the world. Well, actually, four if you include the jailer and well, we should here.

Uh, for powers of the world that are raised up against the gospel, in our passage, as a consequence of this decisive. Casting out of the demon, those powers are the wealthy. Um, the the civil authority. The masses. And then the The power of those who, Uh, have power by force.

Power by bondage, if if we think of the jailer in that way, Um, The wealthier used to getting their ways. Uh, they They know what to do. Uh, when their profit is gone, perhaps i think that if they clear paul and silas and Timothy and luke out of the way that the demon will come back into the girl, and they can resume their profit.

Perhaps just being wealthy people who are accustomed to getting the their way, they don't want these people to get away with having cut off, one of their revenue streams. And so, perhaps, it's just revenge But, Uh, they are accustomed to getting their way their accustomed to having more influence with the magistrates twisting things.

So that so that things go their way. This isn't the first Culture or government in the history of the world, where you have a government, that is formally in charge. But wealthy people who are really running the show by manipulating the people who are in authority, That has happened throughout the ages ever since the fall ever since.

There. Okay. Ever since the fall ever since there was human society, And so, they drag They see as pollen saw this, they drag them before the magistrates. And not only are they using? Now the the civil authority who actually have formal control but they know that part of the key to manipulating the civil authority.

Is the also easily manipulated masses. That all you do is hit a couple of triggers and get people worked up. And this isn't the only place we see it, remember You know, we're going to end up in emphasis where Where they scream for hours you know great as Artemis of the ephesians.

Uh, The masses just need a couple of triggers and they'll get themselves in an irrational, emotional. Uh, Fewer. And then the magistrates will do whatever they need to in order to placate the mass as in order to get order back in order to continue their illusion or reality to some extent.

Of. Of power of authority. And so you have the magistrates. Uh, You, you have the wealthy and you have the magistrates and then you have the masses, they bring them to the magistrates and they say these men being Jews. And now we know why there is going to be a synagogue when we get to the Thessalonica

and Berea.

Um, in the following passages but there isn't a synagogue in philippi. Uh partly because this is a roman soldier, retirement colony and some of the most irritating people to deal with. For Roman soldiers have been Jews, there's been a history of rebellions especially for the past hundred years. No one wants to go to uncivilized backwater palestine and deal with those Jews.

And, and so jews are are unwelcome. And and hate it. We racial prejudice and and bigotry like this makes people susceptible to manipulation it's hateful against god who made them in his image. It's hateful against the people who are in his image. If they are the covenant people of god as the Jews have been.

Very specifically up into this point, distinct from the nations. It's hateful of god even in a covenantal way, but it's also self-harming. Any prejudice or Emotionally. Uh, fueled bias. Makes us easily manipulated. It provides triggers by which we respond irrationally and unrighteously. And so these wealthy guys who know how to manipulate the magistrate, and they know how to manipulate the masses.

But they can use the word jews. And then, They play on the stereotype about juice. Paul and silas. Are ethnically jewish. Timothy is half jewish. Luke is not. As far as we know, Uh, but they say these men being jews. Exceedingly trouble, our city as a bad word, romans like peace and order and structure and power and authority.

Not chaos and trouble and troublemakers. These men being jews exceedingly trouble, our city, and they teach customs, which are not lawful for us being romans. Trigger number two. Now, it's not just Prejudice by which they're being manipulated, but Pride. Watch out for pride, national pride, it's good to be grateful to god.

For the nation, where he placed you because he chose that nation for you in his providence and all the more in a nation like ours. In which the roots of the nation are so closely connected to revival and reformation and times of the knowledge of god and the civil sphere that has been shaped by seasons of health in the church.

And then destroyed by the seasons of unhealth in the church. That came in with the second grade and snap and sleeping and Charles Finney and the romantic period of the 1800s with, its, you know, increased dances and romantic culture and you know people Living in their affections instead of In with, Minds and affections and wills that are enjoying god and serving god and all things and then industrial revolution.

And, And first wave feminism. And yeah, then the getting rid of biblical worship and the addition of man-made traditions, And we're in the season of the year now, in which our culture has much declined. So be grateful to god for what he has done. But don't let Gratitude to god and a proper allegiance to and submission.

To the The government that he's placed over us become a source of national pride, In which we can be manipulated into wrong thinking thinking You know, as Um, As conservative politicians if they can even be called that you know even 150 years ago dabney was recognizing that there was no such thing as a conservative politician.

There were just the progressive politicians who were obviously evil. And then there were the so-called conservative politicians who were more dangerously evil, because they were just, like, they were the shadows of the left a little bit behind them, but moving at the same pace so that they always look like the better option but are not actually any better.

They're just slower in destroying us. Okay, i say all this to to Show you and remind you just from the history of the church in our land and the history of our land. That this marriage of of, National pride. Or this marriage of politics to religion in which for a generation or more, The churches even the evangelical churches even to a large extent.

Sadly, the so-called reformed churches. Uh, were kind of married politically to a particular movement. And, That, that marriage came out of and unhealthy national pride. So that we would hear the word Americans, The way these people heard the word romans, And we're easily manipulated and the church has been easily.

Manipulated By wealthy people and by politicians who prayed upon national pride among even believers, Just to get their way. Just to increase and extend their power. Yeah, and they're still doing it. But you notice how? How clever? These wicked wealthy men are These men being Jews manipulate the masses by way of their prejudice.

Exceedingly trouble, our city. And they teach customs which are not lawful for us. Playing on the caricature to it, that's attached to that prejudice. Lawful for us being romance. Playing upon not just their prejudice but now they're pride. To receive or observe. Then the multitude rose up together against them.

They manipulated the masses. And wire the manipulating the masses. Because manipulating the masses. Is how to manipulate the magistrates. And the magistrates tore off their clothes. You know, suddenly the magistrate, see the way the masses have acted, and they try to get out in front. They hold the press conference.

Yeah, and yeah, there's Yeah. Uh, both the The. You know, the philippian first century equivalent of the the democrat politicians from the house and the senate, you know, one set of microphones and the republican politicians from the house in the senate at the At the other set of a microphones and they're tearing their clothes on.

On camera. Yeah, to show their anguish that such anti-Roman jewish stuff could be done in their city. And, They they make display to the masses, like this was their idea instead of the masses idea or really The wealthy idea who the idea of the wealthy who had manipulated the masses And the commanded them to be beaten with rods.

When they had laid many stripes on them. And that doesn't just, that's not just a Poetic way of saying had hit them many times. Because at the end of the passage, Uh, we're going to hear that the strikes have been washed. They threw them into prison commanding the jailer to keep them securely.

Having received such a charge. He put them in the inner person. He has actual physical. Uh, power over them. Puts them in the hardest place. The least hopeful place the place from which they are at least likely To escape and therefore also, The nastiest place. And fastened their feet.

In the stocks. So what will happen now? With the gospel and philippi. They got one convert lady. Her household has been baptized, maybe some. In her house have come to faith. The scripture doesn't tell us whether that's the case or not. And now, They are blooded. They've got many long, stripe welts.

Uh, That need to be washed so we can presume that they're open wounds And they are. Fastened in the inner prison with their feet in the stocks. What will come? Of their ministry of the gospel. Now, And the answer is. The founding of the church at philippi. Because also gathered.

Into that prison. Are those whom? The lord. Has planned to save. And the one who has just put them in the inner prison. And the inner part of the, the gel with their feet and stalks is one whom the lord has planned to save. And so, That word against all earthly powers.

We'll succeed. That's actually the theme of the entire book of Acts. And here we are near the midpoint a little past the midpoint to the book of Acts and acts is going to end with paul himself bound again. And yet he is going to be describing how the gospel.

Is not bound. But continuous. With success, even though he's in chains. That word against all earthly powers and we see that god must win the battle. Not just the He's the only one who can win the battle. That's true. And that's one of the things that he shows by bringing the advance of the gospel through circumstances like this.

But not just showing that, he's the only one who can win the battle but that it's impossible for him to not win. Not to win the battle. Don't split your infinitives. There's an impossible for god. Not to win the battle. He must. Win the battle. Paul and silos nervous.

How do they know this? Because they are praying and singing hymns to god, verse 25. Doesn't mean that. Uh, you know, they had had some Mid to late 18th century women, write a bunch of emotional songs. Um, so that they could sing their favorite fanny crosby. Um, The word hymnos here is The same as the word that's used of the hill.

All psalms. Uh, when At the last supper. Uh, they sang him and went out. On on their way to the garden. Of gethsemane with the lord jesus. And they're the, the The the saw psalms that were sung, Uh, that are called hymns there. Uh, were traditionally at the time most commonly psalm 115 to psalm 118.

Uh, psalms that follow. Uh, from affliction and the opposition of the world, to the The deliverance of god and the blessedness. Of those, whom he redeems unto himself, including the blessedness of christ in his resurrection. Uh, wonderful set of psalms for our lord jesus. Uh, to be singing on his way to his betrayal.

And with the cross before him, the next day, Um, But this word also appears in the super scripts, the hebrew scripture which has been Translated into greek in the psalms of those hebrews scriptures. They have they've translated that Hebrew super scripts. And the word hymnos appears in the superscript of psalm 5 and psalm 53 and psalm 54, and psalm 16 psalm 66 and Psalm 75 and we won't take the time now.

But if you go through and you read all of those psalms that god himself calls him us, which by the way, When he says psalms hymns and spiritual songs, he's using three different words. From. Uh, from the super scripts in the Greek translation of the hebrews altar your Colossian ephesians 5 colossians 3.

Don't say a lick of a word about man-made. Singing her man, man, composed songs, uh, in the public worship of god, the referring to him in the Salter, and psalms in the altar and spiritual songs from the psalter. Um, but these particular ones, Uh, 53 54, 60 66 75.

They're all ones that have to do with the greatness of the evil in the world and the greatness of the affliction of god's people. And yet god's faithfulness and god's power and the judgment over the evil and his deliverance of his people. So this is what paul and silas are praying and singing.

But they're praying and singing, as As believers as christians, who know that the psalm is psalms are all about jesus. And so, they're spraying and singing about how christ himself was afflicted and rejoicing in their union with him, in his affliction and christ has conquered and how certainly they will they will conquer with christ out of their affliction and praying and singing that that god is actually going to use their affliction to glorify himself and for the redemption of his people, And so here, they're praying and singing from the bible and singing is one thing.

But when they pray it from the bible, you know all of this application will come out as they lay. Hold of the word of god in christ. Now that we find surprising because we live in sad days, Where the psalms are hardly prayed or sung or known crystallogically? And as a result, Uh, We're surprised to hear about christians, who cling to faith.

Uh, so conscientiously and confidently, enjoyously, even in the midst of such trouble. But that's what we should expect from christians. If we read the bible, The times that the lord's, Faithful servants have done the best. In church, history has been when they're have been under the greatest fire. In part because this is the part of the word of god that he applies.

Uh, he applies to them. What is unexpected in verse 24. Especially, sorry. In verse 25, especially after the providence of god thus far, In. In philip. Hi, is that last part? And the prisoners were listening to them. They weren't scoffing and mocking. Scoffing out and mocking these jews. And their Christ who they think has risen from the dead.

And that their god is going to conquer and deliver. They were listening. To them. And they were listening to them in such a way. Than in a few moments. When the power of god is displayed. And we don't mean by that. The power of gods to work. Earthquakes is displayed.

Or the power of god to open all the doors as displayed or the power of god, to lose. All the chains is displayed. We mean. When the power of god is displayed. That these prisoners have the option. Of regaining, their earthly freedom. But departing from these men, from whom they have heard the words of eternal life.

Prayed and sung. That's option number one, but option number two is Stick around. Let the jailer. Put you back in your bonds. And close back up the doors. Of the prison. But continue to have your opportunity. To hear the words of eternal life. They're gonna choose to stay. It's unthinkable.

Especially unthinkable to the jailer. Who is life is going to be on the line if the prisoners have escaped. And he, Um, Makes what in some? Uh, greek philosophical and roman mindsets would have been considered a noble choice to take his own life. That's a wicked and demonic. Way of thinking.

God is the author of life. If we are to be justly executed, then those who to whom he's given that authority. Should justly execute us. This wouldn't have been

adjust, one of course. Um, suicide has never right. But in this case it was based on bad information. Unthinkable information.

Which is why paul calls out with a loud voice. And he doesn't say most of us are here. He says we're all here.

We don't know how many of the prisoners have been converted. The only one we know actually comes to faith. Is the jailer? He runs in. In. Uh, verse 29, he calls for a light obviously, so that he can see to verify that what paul has said is true, he runs in.

As apparently, true. Uh, which we know because he falls down. Trembling before pollen, silas. If he runs in and all, you know, and the head count is missing, somebody he doesn't fall down, trembling he accuses them of lying. But he runs in the head. Count is complete. And he falls down, trembling before them.

And, Than he gets up the falling down. Trembling is a collapse at the greatness. The spiritual greatness. Of what he has just seen. And he brings them out. He brings them out into his home. How do we know? Because suddenly, paul and silas are talking about his household. He brings them out.

And it's implied there to his home. Any he says sir is what must i do to be saved? But paul and silos, know the living god. And that when he saves a man, he brings the man's house into the church. And that when he does, so We are not to think of that as meaningless.

Uh, but to take that as an indication from god, that we are to hope. In the saving work that he intends to do in the house, And so, even though it's only the man. Whom the text tells us has believed. Uh, thus far. Uh, by the end of the passage, the apostles assume, and we should assume with them that god intends to save that entire household.

Just as When god saves one of us. We should assume that he intends to save our children. That our children whom he has brought into the church by saving us. Uh he is going to save through the means that he gives them in his church and in Our home.

And so the apostles based on this assumption. Uh, starch to address and they respond to his individual question with a household answer. So they said, believe on the lord jesus christ and you will be saved first, uh, you know, not first singular. So thus far, you say, it's still singular and your household.

So, you're not just going to be a christian man. You're going to be the christian head of a christian house. They speak the word of the lord to him and to all who were in his house. And he takes them the same hour of the night. And he washes, their stripes.

He washes off of them. What the world has done to them. Um, but immediately he and all his family were baptized, they wash. Off of him. What satan? And sin. Had done to him. Not with the water. Of course, the water being a sign and a seal of what the lord jesus has done.

Uh, through faith. Uh, but it is the word and the faith that the spirit gives That has done this. Uh, for him. And although he is the only one who has believed. We see that in verse 34. It's a little more difficult to see in some translations. Um, Now, when he had brought them into his house, He set food before them.

And then he rejoiced indicative having believed in god partiple. With all his household and the with all his household, the prepositional phrase, belongs to the indicative verb, in that case the rejoicing. And so the, the ESV And young's literal, and i think the footnote of the margin in the new american standard.

There are English translations that capture this pretty well. Um, He rejoiced with all his household. Having believed in god or having believed in god, he rejoiced With all his household. So the the rejoicing is what the whole household is doing. We don't know. How many of them had believed?

Or if any of them, Had been had believed what we do know that they rejoice. That in the master's joy. They had joy. And suddenly, it was a holiday in the jailer's house in Philippi. There was rejoicing in hospitality and feasting And, Enjoy had come to the house. And so, the lord must win the battle and he will win the battle.

Not only had he done, so in Philippi. Not only had he done so in the lives of those prisoners and how interesting it would be to hear all the conversions stories of those men. What the lord had done in each of their lives to get them into that prison.

And what kind of men they had been Before the lord made them to hear the gospel. And gave them to be saved. And what it was, what they were like after that. And then, of course, the jailer's life. Uh, not only had he won that battle. Uh but the rest of his household was baptized in the confidence that the lord who had brought them brought each one of those people into his house.

And brought them therefore as members of a covenant house into his church. Intended. Uh, to save them. As well. So he must you must win the battle. And he will. Uh, There's much ongoing battle in each of your lives as you have trusted in christ. But Uh, still Um hindered in many ways much remaining sin.

Vulnerable to being discouraged about it. The lord will win. There's battles this. Impossible, that he wouldn't. Uh, he's the only one who can. But it's also impossible. That he wouldn't. Praise god. Let's pray. Her father in heaven. We bless your name. For this portion of your word that we get to your preached.

On the coming lord's day. We asked Lord that you would help us, help me. Lord and the pulpit. Oh, forgive me so many times. I think that it was So much better in the family worship. Than the public. Uh, but o. Lord, your word teaches us to Um, have a special hope and Um, desire for Hope about and desire for.

Your word preached in the assembly. When christ addresses us from heaven, Uh, when he is doing that work of bringing us into his rest, Through the faith mixed with hearing. Um, Or the hearing mixed with faith. So we pray, lord that you would help me in the preaching that you would help us and the hearing That you would prepare hearts.

To be converted and pray, believing hearts to be strengthened. That you would be glorified in the proclamation of your word. And especially lord, we pray that you would make us to see that. In the face of Uh, demonic. Uh, oppression and opposition. And in the face of Uh, worldly oppression.

And opposition, and Even in the face. Of. Our sin. And our depravity and our fallenness, our spiritual death. Uh, you must win the battle. That you are the only one who can but that you surely will For all whom you are, determined in your love. To save. And so give us that confidence and that hope in you.

Both that we might live out of that hope and that when we minister to others, We might do so out of that hope. Knowing that you are saving many and bringing them to yourself. Perfecting them in christ. Granted all biasco god in his name. Amen.