

Sermon Title: What Must I Do To Be Saved?
Scripture Text: Acts 16:19-40 (Acts #39)

Speaker: Jim Harris
Date: 4-21-24

If you will, please come with me to Acts Chapter 16—where today, Lord willing, we will finish this chapter.

We are into the Second Missionary Journey of the Apostle Paul. He took three such journeys; that was the backbone of his ministry. And then the fourth one was technically not his own journey; he went to Rome as a prisoner. But on this second journey, the Gospel has now gone to Greece; we have penetrated the continent of Europe. God led Paul and his team there in a very special way to the city of Philippi. And along the way, Paul and Silas added Timothy to their team. And then, now we see that in Philippi they have been joined by Luke as well.

When they got to the city of Philippi, Paul's first strategy was always, as it was: "Let's go to the Jews first (cf. Acts 13:45-46; Rom. 1:16). Let's go to the synagogue." There was no synagogue in Philippi. That is because there were not the requisite minimum of ten Jewish men to form a synagogue. And so, they did what was the Jewish custom when there was no synagogue: They would designate "a place of prayer" (Acts 16:13); it had to be by the seaside or the riverside—in this case, it was by the "riverside" in Philippi, and that is where they went.

The first convert on the continent of Europe was a Gentile woman named Lydia. She was there among a group of women at that "place of prayer." She had already turned from whatever pagan roots she had. God was already at work in her heart, even before the missionaries arrived. So we read about her in Verse 14 of Chapter 16—"A woman named Lydia, from the city of Thyatira, a seller of purple fabrics, a worshiper of God"—that is the designation of Gentiles who have not become full proselytes to Judaism, but they are worshipping with the Jews—she "was listening; and the Lord opened her heart to respond to the things spoken by Paul." (NASB-1995—and throughout, unless otherwise noted)

Lydia immediately believed. Lydia immediately saw that that whole message was shared with everyone in her entire household. They all followed suit, and she quickly "prevailed" upon Paul and his team to stay at her house (vs. 15), which became the headquarters for the time that they were ministering in Philippi. We don't know exactly how long that was, but it wasn't just a whistle stop; there were at least weeks involved.

Then came another woman to gain the attention of Paul and Silas and company, and she was quite a different story. It happened as they walked to and from the "place of prayer"—between there and Lydia's house—day by day. We read about her in Verses 16 through 18—"It happened that as we"—notice the "we"; that means Luke was there; he is sometimes in Acts with Paul. "It happened that as we were going to the place of prayer, a slave-girl having a spirit of divination met us, who was bringing her masters much profit by fortune-telling. Following after Paul and us, she kept crying out, saying, 'These men are bond-servants'—the literal word is "slaves"—"of the Most High God, who are proclaiming to you the way of salvation.' She continued doing this for many days. But Paul was greatly annoyed, and turned and said to the spirit"—notice, not to the girl but to the demon in her—Paul "said to the spirit, 'I command you in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her!' And it came out at that very moment."

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So this was a "slave-girl"—probably a teenager, maybe a young woman. She was of the slave class. She was particularly valuable to her owners, who used her; she was their way of making a living: charging people for this demon to be able to say through the mouth of this girl, supposedly what was the prediction of the future.

She was indwelt by a demon, called here in our passage "a spirit of divination." The Greek is literally "a python-spirit," and that is a term that comes from mythology. The "python spirit" was believed to be the serpent or the dragon that guarded the "Oracle of Delphi." Alright, so we are in the spiritual la-la land of mystical, occultic things here, but that is where the word comes from. That word came to be used for demons who enabled their hosts to be able to give the impression that they could tell the future.

What happened here in this situation was very much like what happened when Jesus was in the presence of demons. We have seen that in our daily Bible Studies in Mark recently. What the demon was saying was a hundred percent accurate. These were "bond-servants of the Most High God...proclaiming...the way of salvation"—that is *absolutely true!* When Jesus was around, the demons would say, "This is the Son of God!" (see Mk. 3:11) That was absolutely true.

But what was going on was: This was Satan's way of trying to gain credibility so that, in this case, this girl's masters could then ply the new market opening up to them among Jews and Christians, bring in this girl who would say, "These men are telling you the right way of salvation," and they could work their way in and confuse things and infiltrate and corrupt sound doctrine.

So he summarily cast the demon out. We saw that when Jesus was around people who were demon-possessed, even in the synagogues, the demons would freak out (e.g., Lk. 4:33-34). Normally, demons *do not* want the attention; they want to infiltrate, they want to work behind the scenes. But they would blow their cover, and Jesus would expose them and cast them out.

Now for that matter, I hope that we would be known in the spirit realm as "slaves of the Most High God who are proclaiming the way of salvation." That part of the description was *perfectly accurate* for Paul and his team. But the problem was the source, as I said.

She kept "doing this for many days," and "Paul was...annoyed by her," so he just cast out the demon and continued to preach the Gospel, not letting Satan have the opportunity to infiltrate the little band of believers in Philippi and bring confusion to them.

That brings us to our passage—which contains, I would say, the *most important question ever asked*. We are going to work our way from Verse 19 through Verse 40. Here is a little outline to help you track with the sequence of events here:

- Number 1: Locked In By God's Providence (vss. 19-24)
- Number 2: Let Out By God's Power (vss. 25-28)
- Number 3: Led By God's Preaching (vss. 29-34)
- Number 4: Living On With God's People (vss. 35-40)

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As the Gospel came to Philippi, things were different for the Apostle Paul. He had been one of those angry, self-righteous Pharisees who "persecuted" Christians (1 Cor. 15:9). Now he is a Christian. Now he is an Apostle. Now *he* has been persecuted by the arrogant Sadducees and the legalistic Pharisees who have been after him. But when it came to Philippi, the persecution *this time* came from a totally different source: people who could not have cared less about the Gospel; they only cared about their precious cash-cow slave-girl. That was all that they cared about.

So pick it up with me at Verse 19; I will read through Verse 21—"But when her masters saw that their hope of profit was gone, they seized Paul and Silas and dragged them into the market place before the authorities, and when they had brought them to the chief magistrates, they said, 'These men are throwing our city into confusion, being Jews, and are proclaiming customs which it is not lawful for us to accept or to observe, being Romans.' "

These masters who took advantage of this demon-possessed girl—they apparently did some kind of a "citizen's arrest." They weren't police; they did not have any authority to do that—they just did. They "seized" them "and dragged them into the market place"—the "Agora"—that was where there was some kind of public forum in the market place and before the multitudes.

And it quickly escalated to the two main guys in town; they are called "chief magistrates." There were two "chief magistrates" in each of these areas like Philippi. They were known as Roman colonies; that's where they had a little bit extra independence from Rome. Rome had placed these two "chief magistrates" there to enforce Roman law and to make sure that Roman taxes got paid. But as long as there was peace, and as long as there were no riots and the taxes kept flowing, they would have a little more freedom. That is like how it was in Israel, to a degree. So they get "brought" before "the chief magistrates." Their job: uphold Roman law. They did *no such thing*, as we will see.

The accusation was interesting. The first part is: "These men are throwing our city into confusion!" I think that was a bit of an overstatement. It was one girl, back and forth on one route, who was annoying one Apostle—and he cast out a demon. Hardly "throwing the city into confusion." But when you want to make a *splash*, you do a "cannonball"—you make the biggest ruckus that you possibly can. The real problem was: They got hit in the pocketbook—their loss of revenue from the young girl that they had been using and abusing. It was hardly causing "confusion" throughout the city. But the second part of this was *technically* true. You could not do other kinds of worship without the approval of Rome. Now, it's interesting: They were not *the least bit* upset about the Jews gathering down by the riverside to read the Torah and to pray—that did not bother them at all. But, taking away their *income*—that bothered them a lot.

And we know that Antisemitism *was* a real thing in the Roman Empire; it's just that there were not enough Jews in Philippi to really get persecuted. But we do know that right around this time, the Emperor "Claudius" had issued an edict to try to expel "all the Jews" from "Rome" (Acts 18:2). That actually plays a role in some of Paul's later ministry; we will see that later in the Book of Acts.

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So these people grabbed "Paul and Silas"—*only* "Paul and Silas," because they were both "Jews." Timothy was half-Jew; his father was a Gentile. Luke was a Gentile. So it was "Paul and Silas," and they were obviously the leaders as well. And the Romans were not about to be doing their homework to try to make what to them would be a very subtle distinction between Jews and Christians.

So it was technically true: Romans were supposed to worship *only* the Emperor, but that law was applied rather selectively throughout the empire. It was more like a law that you could invoke to get rid of people that you didn't like, and that is pretty much what they were doing here.

Obviously, the Romans *approved* of *some* religious customs, like: They did not seem to mind the temple prostitution in Ephesus. But preaching salvation in Christ alone—well, that was a different story, as was being Jewish.

They had a really simple trial, there in the public square, in that *there was no trial at all*. No evidence was presented. There was no courtroom. There was just a mob scene stirred up to try to do away with these foreigners whose spiritual power had caused financial hardship on the masters who took advantage of this troubled young woman.

As always with any narrative passage, you wonder about the things that are not here. One of the questions that came to my mind was: What about that slave-girl? It would not surprise me at all if we meet her in Heaven. Most of the time when Jesus cast out demons, the people believed. It was *probably* the case here; we don't know. Alright—put that on your list of things to ask when we get there. I am going to spend my first couple millennia just hunting down all the answers to the questions that I have had over the years.

But read on: Verses 22 through 24—"The crowd rose up together against them..." Okay, so a couple of guys are offended about this one situation—they caused a riot. "The crowd rose up together against them, and the chief magistrates tore their robes off them and proceeded to order them to be beaten with rods. When they had struck them with many blows, they threw them into prison, commanding the jailer to guard them securely; and he, having received such a command, threw them into the inner prison and fastened their feet in the stocks."

So the first thing the "chief magistrates" did was carefully research and find the truth, right? Wrong! They had them "beaten." That was an illegal act, and that is going to be significant. They gave that order based on their own immediate emotional, rash reaction to the mob that was incited by the owners of the slave-girl.

It says the "beating" was "with rods." They were sticks banded together into a bundle, and it was a *brutal* thing to be "beaten with rods."

By the way: We learn from Second Corinthians 11:25 that this was just one of three times that Paul was "beaten" in that way during his ministry.

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The order to beat Paul and Silas would have been given to the local enforcers—the local law enforcement henchmen. The Latin name for them is the "lictors"—or, "rod-bearers." Later in our text, it is going to be translated that they were called the "policemen" (vss. 35, 38). So, the "chief magistrates"—they didn't do their own dirty work; they gave the "order" to the lictors: "Beat these guys up and throw them in jail." Next step: "Throw them into prison, commanding the jailer to guard them securely." Still no hearing, still no due process, no listening to Paul and Silas—just a mob reaction, reinforced by the "chief magistrates," the local police, and then "the jailer."

We don't have this specifically in the text, but this makes a lot of sense: It is believed by many that it is most likely that "the jailer" would have been a veteran of the Roman army; not sent out into battle, but a guy trained at keeping people locked up and stuff like that. Surely, he would have had no qualms about inflicting pain, and he was definitely calloused against showing compassion toward those that he guarded.

And as we will soon see, he took his job very seriously. He knew that he would likely pay with his life if he ever let prisoners escape (see Acts 12:19)—*at least* from the "inner prison." He was a pro at guarding people in a prison. The "inner prison" was the maximum security section. You could be thrown into this guy's jail and you could at least be able to walk around within wherever the fenced area was, maybe interact with other prisoners. But the ones in the "inner prison" were physically restrained. It says they were placed "in the stocks." Literally, that just says "in the wood." It refers to wooden restraints with cutouts for the legs where you could be clamped in and the legs would be immobilized, and it kept the legs separated.

Now, even if you are *not* my age, if you want to find out a little bit about what this was like, skip the "beaten with rods" part; just sit on a cement or stone floor with your back against a cement wall—or maybe your back not against anything—with your legs locked in place, fully extended and separated. I promise you, there will be cramps involved. It was an *excruciating* place to be.

By God's providence, though, what is going on? Paul and Silas are exactly where God wanted them for a specific reason (cf. Gen. 50:20). That is why I said they were Locked In By God's Providence. But, secondly: They were Let Out By God's Power.

Paul and Silas never stopped "praying." And they were not just muttering prayers in their minds; they were speaking them out loud. And they were "singing hymns of praise to God," and the rest of "the prisoners" were hearing them. And I am sure that they did not *just* pray and *just* sing; they certainly talked as well. And we will know that the subject of salvation was *constantly* on their lips. Even the jailer, in what limited interaction he had while he locked them up, got the message that this was about salvation.

So, look on with me: Verses 25 and 26—"But about midnight..." This is going to be a *very* eventful night. They were on their way "to the place of prayer"—that would have probably been in the morning. They would have been "dragged" into the city square—that was probably noon, afternoon. They were probably locked up before sundown, for sure. "About midnight, Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns of praise to God,

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and the prisoners were listening to them." That verb "were listening" is in a tense that means it was going on and on; they didn't have any choice—they were hearing what they were saying. "And suddenly there came a great earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison house were shaken; and immediately all the doors were opened and everyone's chains were unfastened."

God sent a *very specialized* "great earthquake." I don't know if you have ever been through an earthquake—"great" or less than great. "Shaking the foundations" is one of the most unnerving things that can happen to you. Everything around you is safe, secure, it's anchored—it won't move. But then you start moving what it's anchored on!

"The foundations of the prison house were shaken; and immediately all the doors were opened." Now, that *could* have been by the shaking of the building and the earth moving; but this was a pinpoint localized happening, because as we see in the text, the implication is that no one else even in the city felt this "earthquake"—pinpoint in its accuracy.

And as we will see in a few minutes: Not only was no one injured, there is no description of property damage, unless the "doors" being "opened" counts as property damage. I suspect that an angel or two were involved on the scene as well, because I've lived through earthquakes; I have never heard of or experienced one that could have "unfastened" people's "chains"; and for that matter, "opening" all the "doors"—that is pretty cool, too.

The jailer's quarters may have been attached to the prison building, or no farther than next door. God could have let them out with a miracle or sending an angel to do that (e.g., Acts 12:7-10), but I think maybe the main reason for the "earthquake" was to get *his* attention. Otherwise, just *let them out*.

Well, the "jailer" realized that he is in big trouble. He did not want to face the consequences of all of his prisoners escaping—*especially* those two loudmouth guys in the maximum security part that he was assigned to keep locked up tightly.

So, look at Verses 27 and 28—"When the jailer awoke and saw the prison doors opened"—so he must have been right near the prison; he saw it right away—"he drew his sword"—that's the little *machaira*, the short sword; he was going to impale himself—"and was about to kill himself, supposing that the prisoners had escaped." And he would rather kill himself than face those "chief magistrates" and those henchmen who would have killed him much more brutally. "But Paul cried out with a loud voice, saying, 'Do not harm yourself, for we are all here!' "

They were Locked In By God's Providence. They were Let Out By God's Power.
Now, watch them Led By God's Preaching.

Right away, the "jailer" knew who to focus his attention on. He probably only had two guys in the "inner prison." And first, when we meet the "jailer" here after the "earthquake," he was scared to death. Minutes later, he was scared to eternal life.

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It seems that if there were any other prisoners in the jail—and there had to be, because we know they were hearing [Paul and Silas]—none of them left, either, because Paul said, "We are *all* here." Now, *that* is a compelling preacher, that can keep the attention of his captive audience, even when the doors have been flung open. But it is because there was something far more compelling than a jailbreak going on.

I would not be surprised to find out in Heaven that others—the unnamed ones in Lydia's household and that slave girl, and maybe some of the guys that were in jail in Philippi that night—are going to be there with Paul and Silas and us.

Well, that was when the "jailer" asked the most important question anyone can ever ask. My friend: If you have never asked this question—or, even if you have: If you don't know the *one and only correct answer* to it, *today* is the most important day of your life to deal with this question!

Look at Verses 29 and 30—"And he"—the jailer—"called for lights and rushed in, and trembling with fear he fell down before Paul and Silas, and after he brought them out, he said, 'Sirs, what must I do to be saved?' "

Paul and Silas went right to the crux of the matter. And by the way: God was at work in this guy's life! What did he do? Did he run in and start stabbing people? (see Acts 27:42) No. Re-arresting people? No. He "falls down" on his knees in front of "Paul and Silas."

And they offered no nuances, no breadth of opinion; they did not recommend checking out various religious thoughts on the subject. There is *only one right answer* to the question "What must I do to be saved?" and it is in Verse 31—"They said, 'Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved, you and your household.' "

"Believe" means "to put your trust in" (e.g., Ps. 31:5; 2 Tim. 1:12; 1 Pet. 4:19). It even means "to bind yourself in obedience to" (e.g., Jn. 14:15; 1 Jn. 2:3-6; 5:3). You come to Jesus Christ and you say, "I have *no other hope!* I trust *You*, because You died for my sins" (e.g., Gal. 1:4; 2:20; 3:13; Eph. 1:7; 5:2; 1 Pet. 2:24; 3:18; 1 Jn. 2:2; Rev. 1:5). So they gave the jailer the bottom line right away.

Then, he brought them to his house—probably next door, or just down the hallway—and Paul and Silas explained more thoroughly: Verse 32—"And they spoke the word of the Lord to him together with all who were in his house."

Some people get the idea that there is sort of a principle of spiritual coattails: that if the head of the house believes in the Lord, other people in the household are saved by his faith, or at least they get a lot closer to it. No, it doesn't mean that. Just like with Lydia, they spoke with the jailer *along with* all the rest who were in his house; they spoke to Lydia *and* all the rest who were in her house—and they all "believed" (vs. 34).

What did they tell them? Well, bear in mind: The New Testament had not been written yet, but we have a lot of good ideas of maybe things that formed the gist of what they spoke to that man and to his family that night, like maybe Jesus' words to Nicodemus in

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John 3:16—"For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life." *That* is who we want you to believe in! Jesus, who died so that you can live (Is. 53:5; 2 Cor. 5:21).

Or, maybe Paul said this to him: "If you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved" (Rom. 10:9). Later, as he wrote the Book of Romans, he probably thought, "Oh, yeah! I'm going to put in that thing that I said to that Philippian jailer, because that is true!" "Confess with your mouth *Jesus as Lord*"—"Master" (Jn. 15:20). *He* is the owner (1 Cor. 3:23a). *I* am the "slave" (Matt. 25:21; Eph. 6:6). I do what He says (Matt. 28:20; Heb. 5:9), *and that is my joy* (Ps. 40:8; Rom. 7:22) because it is for His "glory" (1 Cor. 10:31; cf. Col. 3:17). And you "believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead"—well, that is because He "gave His life" as atonement for your sin (Matt. 20:28; cf. Is. 53:10-11; Rom. 4:25). "Believe in Him! Trust in Him! Confess it with your mouth. You will be saved."

Or, perhaps they quoted what Peter had said in his second sermon in the Book of Acts: Acts 4:12—"And there is salvation in *no one else*; for there is no other name under heaven that has been given among men by which we must be saved." Are you tracking?

Now read on; we will see the kind of transformation that Jesus brings to those He saves, and we will circle back to that most important question. Look at Verses 33 and 34—"And he took them that very hour of the night"—so this happened between the "midnight earthquake" and sunrise—"and washed their wounds"—that implies that *no one* "washed their wounds" before they threw them in the "inner prison"—"and immediately he was baptized, he and all his household." Where were they baptized? It does not say. Get over it! There was water somewhere (cf. Jn. 3:23). They were all "baptized immediately." "And he brought them into his house and set food before them, and rejoiced greatly, having believed in God with his whole household." He gave them some decent food. Maybe he said something like, "I'm sorry about that slop they gave you last night when I locked you up." Or, maybe they *didn't* get any slop. He fed them. He took care of them.

And notice the contrast here: Do you realize that two "households" have now been saved in Philippi? Lydia had already been drawn by the Holy Spirit, and was ready to burst out in faith. They came and talked to Lydia, and they probably opened their mouths, and she said, "Yes! That's what I want! Now, what did you say?" She was *so* ready! For *this* guy, it took an earthquake, it took being on the brink of *suicide*—suicidal one minute, saved the next!

But whatever it takes on Earth, God did with them as He did with you: He brought them into the family of God by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ (Jn. 6:44-45), who "died for our sins" (1 Cor. 15:3).

And that leads us to the final point: Living On With God's People

Before we circle back to that crucial question, we need to take in just what Paul did to protect those new believers and to keep the door open for more ministry in Philippi.

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If you remember, I pointed out to you that when Timothy was added to the team, and again when Luke joined the team, I pointed out to you the significance that all of this team were Roman citizens. That was not the case on the First Missionary Journey with Paul and Barnabas. Timothy and Luke were not arrested, likely because it was clear—well, the leaders were Paul and Silas, and *they* were Jews, so that could help them make the accusation against the Jews. But watch how skillfully Paul uses this situation to the advantage of this new little band of Christians:

Verse 35—"Now when day came..." Okay, so *this all happened* in probably 12 hours or less, maybe 15 hours from the arrest to dawn the next day. "Now when day came, the chief magistrates sent their policemen, saying, 'Release those men.'" This is really interesting! *That* tells us: The "chief magistrates" and "their policemen" apparently did not know what happened during the night! I told you, that was a *really specific earthquake*.

I remember 1983, when the Mount Borah earthquake came rumbling through Boise. I happened to be outdoors at that time, and I was in a parking lot standing next to my car, which started *moving*—and *that* was kind of weird. And I looked, and I watched the power lines, and I watched a sine wave come down the powerlines. *The whole place was moving!*

On *this* earthquake (in Philippi), God just went *boop!* "Let's shake the foundation of *that one building* in that *one place* in that *one moment*—oh, and a couple of angels, go down and let those guys out, would you?" Nobody else knew about it. That is really interesting.

But, first thing in the morning they tipped their hand by ordering the release of Paul and Silas. These "chief magistrates"—they kind of make me think of the stereotypical backwoods country sheriff who believes that he is the local sole determiner of the law, and he is the judge and the jury in all matters. Apparently, these guys figured: "All we have to do is publicly humiliate these two Jewish yahoos, have them severely beaten, and they will go away." Ha, ha! *Didn't work!*

And by the way, notice: In the morning they sent to have them released, and they were still at the jail. *This was not about a jailbreak!* This was about the salvation of souls. Their first purpose *was not* to get out of jail. They are "ambassadors for Christ"! Paul would later write: "We are ambassadors for Christ," and as such, "We beg you [to] be reconciled to God" (2 Cor. 5:20).

So, before he leaves, Paul traps the magistrates by their own actions. Remember: It is *their job* to enforce Roman law—and they had not done that! Verses 36 and 37—"And the jailer reported these words to Paul." So, the "chief magistrates" say, "Let those guys out." They tell the policemen, "Go tell the jailer, 'Let those guys out.'" The jailer says, "The policemen told me to tell you that the chief magistrates said to let you go." Alright. "The chief magistrates have sent to release you. Therefore come out now and go in peace." And I'm sure the jailer was pretty happy about that. I mean, they did not say, "And kill the jailer"! "But Paul said to them, 'They have beaten us in public without trial,

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men who are Romans, and have thrown us into prison; and now are they sending us away secretly? No indeed!"—that's a Greek idiom that I don't think is anywhere else in the Bible, but it means: "No way! No indeed! Not going to do it!"—"But let them come themselves and bring us out.' "

This is sort of sanctified blackmail, but it is all *truthful!* And it is holding the "magistrates" to the law that *they* were sworn to uphold—and it got their attention! The high and mighty "chief magistrates" were reduced to *begging* Paul and Silas to take their team and get out of town! Remember: Keeping local peace and not getting in trouble with Rome—that was the tightrope that they had to walk (see Acts 19:40), and Paul's plan worked.

So, the "chief magistrates" said, "Now, you boys just up and get out of here, okay? Don't come back!" That was not how it played out. Verse 38—"The policemen reported these words to the chief magistrates." Can you see them coming back? Yesterday they were the big tough guys, *beating* on these missionaries! And today, they are coming back and saying [timidly], "Well, they said, 'No, we are not going to do it. We are Romans, and you are in trouble.'" So, "They were afraid when they heard that they were Romans, and they came and appealed to them." So, "they"—the "chief magistrates"—"came and appealed" to Paul and Silas, "and when they had brought them out, they kept begging them to leave the city" (vss. 38-39). Don't you like that?

You might be wondering, though: Why didn't Paul mention being Roman citizens *before* they were beaten (e.g., Acts 22:25), or as they were marched off to jail? Well, it's because it never was about their own comfort and their self-preservation. They were there to spread the Gospel, and he and Silas literally needed to have that captive audience for the entire night while they were in jail, where they could sing and pray as loud as they wanted to, and nobody could stop them. And I presume that they preached all they wanted, as well. You see, they entrusted themselves to God to do His work and to glorify Himself (see Phil. 1:12).

So they let the magistrates make fools of themselves, trying to get them to leave town. And then they went ahead and did exactly whatever they wanted to do when they were released.

And they were not done with ministering in Philippi yet, so they *did not* just slink out of town. Verse 40—"They went out of the prison and entered the house of Lydia, and when they saw the brethren, they encouraged them and departed."

And I think they did more than say, "Hey, Lydia, look: We're okay—bye! See ya, maybe next missionary journey." No, I think they stayed. I think they probably spent some days there, "they encouraged them," and they "departed."

So, suddenly, the church in Philippi had doubled from one household to two. Do you wonder how many family members there were, how many household slaves there may have been? Maybe there were others of those women who had been meeting with Lydia at the riverside—we don't know. Maybe there were some of those guys who had been in the jail that night—we don't know.

Sermon Title: What Must I Do To Be Saved?
Scripture Text: Acts 16:19-40 (Acts #39)

Speaker: Jim Harris
Date: 4-21-24

But here are the two men, Paul and Silas, yesterday *beaten severely*—now they are back in the house of Lydia, and who is doing the "encouraging"? Paul and Silas.

Wouldn't it be nice to hear how *they* told the story about their night in jail? Wouldn't it be nice to see that jailer and his family? I can't imagine that Paul and Silas left them there. I imagine they took them over to Lydia's house and said, "Hey, we have some people for you to meet! Look, the church just *doubled*! This is *cool*!" At least, on the next Lord's Day they would have come there.

Well, that is The Adventures In Philippi. Next stop on Missionary Journey #2 is Thessalonica. Ah, but that is for next time.

For now: It is imperative that you deal with that most important part of this passage. Have you asked, and do you know the answer to, the jailer's question? "What must I do to be saved?"

When he asked that, he realized that *he was "lost"* (Lk. 19:10). Do you realize that you are *lost* unless you are in Christ? There are *only two* eternal destinations: Heaven and Hell, saved and lost (Matt. 25:46; Jn. 3:18; 8:24; 2 Thess. 1:7-9; Rev. 20:15)—that's it! The default position for every person born on this planet is: *lost* (Eph. 2:3, 12), "dead" (Eph. 2:1) because of father "Adam" (1 Cor. 15:22). But "while we were yet enemies, Christ died for our sins" (Rom. 5:8, 10; 1 Cor. 15:3).

So, do you *want* to be saved? If you have *never* come to that day in your life when you say, "Oh, Lord, *I need to be saved!*"—today is the day! "Call" out to Him (Acts 2:21; Rom. 10:12-13).

Do you "believe in the Lord Jesus"?

Do you believe that *there is no other way to be saved*, other than through Him, as Jesus put it before He went to the Cross: John 14:6—"Jesus said to him"—that is, to Thomas—"I am *the way*"—singular—"and *the truth*"—singular—"and *the life*"—the *singular* way to eternal life—"no one comes to the Father but through Me." (cf. 1 Tim. 2:5)

And are you like Lydia? Are you like that jailer? Do you want your family to be saved? Parents, it's your *number one priority on the planet* to introduce your kids to Jesus Christ (Eph. 6:4; cf. Deut. 4:9; 6:7; 11:19; Ps. 78:4; Prov. 22:6; Is. 38:19; 2 Tim. 1:6; 3:15).

Grandparents, it is your *number one priority on the planet* to help your precious kids lead your precious grandchildren to Christ!

Is anybody else in your family not saved? Do you *want* them to be saved? Is that your recurring prayer? Is that your *fervent desire*—to help them know the Savior? (Rom. 10:1)

Do you say "Yes" to that invitation to find "rest for your soul" in Christ? Think of the way Jesus put it: "Come to Me, all who are weary and heavy-laden"—or, lost—"and I will give you rest...rest for your souls" (Matt. 11:28-29). Do you say "Yes" to that?

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If you do, is it showing in your life? Do you *care* about God's people? (1 Thess. 4:9-10; cf. Ps. 16:3; 119:63) The first thing Lydia wanted to do—open her home to the missionaries! The *first thing* the jailer wanted to do—clean up their wounds, give them some food, be with them, take care of them.

Are you transformed like that? (2 Cor. 5:17; cf. Ezek. 36:27; Rom. 7:22; Phil. 2:13)
Are *your* priorities *His* priorities? (2 Cor. 5:9)

We don't know what became of that jailer, but he could very well have lost his job.
Is Jesus more important to you than your job?

Oh, and by the way, did you notice: In both cases, when they "believed" they were "baptized" (Acts 8:12; 18:8). If you are saying, "I know what to do to be saved! Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and I will be saved!" If you have done that, have you been baptized? It's the next step! It's the way to publicly say: "I belong to my Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ!"

If you don't know the answer to that question, if you don't *believe* the answer to that question yet, you're in the very most important place you could *possibly* be today! "Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and you will be saved." I, along with Paul, "*beg you* on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God" (2 Cor. 5:20).

If you have never done that, even if you have been hanging out in a church for 50 years—if you have never done that, today is the day to do it! Don't leave here without talking to me or Scott or Scott or any of the people around here who know what it means to know the Savior!

Let's pray:

Father, thank You for recording this in Your Word, and thank You for supernaturally arranging that entire circumstance so that that question could be recorded for every generation to follow. Thank You for salvation which is ours in Christ. Please, Father, whatever the need of every heart is here, we know that it is Your desire to meet it by Your Spirit. May we be responsive, we pray. And may we take the message of salvation with us wherever we go. In Jesus' name. Amen.