



2016: Week 37

Sunday, September 11th 2016

"Unshakable Faith"

Acts 16:23, 25

"²³When they had struck them with many blows, they threw them into prison, commanding the jailer to guard them securely... ²⁵But about midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns of praise to God, and the prisoners were listening to them" (NASB).

On Sunday John began a new Sunday morning sermon series on the **Book of Philippians**. However, instead of jumping right into the book, he preached from **Acts 16** to present a context of how the church was started in the city of Philippi. The way the church in Philippi started might surprise you, and it serves an excellent reminder of the mysterious workings of the Lord. Oftentimes God chooses to use and reach people many wouldn't choose. He sometimes takes His people to places where they don't want to go. He allows them to experience trials that often don't make any sense. And yet, as Paul reminds us in Romans 8:28, "God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose" (NASB). God's role is to work everything out according to His master plan; our role is to trust Him in the process.

1. **READ Acts 16:6–15**

- Why do you think the Lord wanted Paul and his group to press on towards Macedonia as opposed to remaining and ministering in Asia? Didn't the folks in Asia and Bithynia need to hear the Gospel message too?
- How might the Lord change the course of your ministry? Why might He do so?
- What does the Lord expect of you as you follow Him?

2. **READ Acts 16:16–24**

- Paul, Silas, Timothy, and Luke were ministering in the place where God had called them to minister. Why then did they (at least Paul and Silas) get imprisoned for ministering on the Lord's behalf in Philippi?
- Why does the Lord allow us to experience trials, even trials encountered as a result of our obedience to Him?

3. **READ Acts 16:25–40**

- What stands out to you about Paul and Silas' response to their trials?
- How did Paul and Silas use this circumstance as an opportunity for sharing the Gospel? How might you be able to use difficult circumstances as an opportunity to share your faith in the Lord?
- When asked by the jailer what he must *do* in order to be saved (v.30), Paul and Silas responded, "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved..." (v.31). What does "believe in the Lord Jesus" mean?
- Based on Paul and Silas' answer in v.31, on what basis can a person receive assurance of his or her salvation?

Food for Thought:

John concluded his sermon by sharing timeless principles regarding faith:

Faith pleases God (Heb. 11:6).

Faith produces works and fruit (2 Cor. 4:13).

Faith comes from God and His Word (Phil. 1:29; Rom. 10:17). Faith can love enemies (Matt. 5:44–46).

Faith will encounter trials and tribulations (James 1:2–4; Acts 14:22).

Faith can overcome the "shakings" of the world (1 John 5:4, Heb. 11:9–10).

Faith is the condition of salvation (Acts 16:31).

FAMILY PRAYER: If you have trusted in the Lord Jesus Christ as your Savior, thank Him for your salvation and for allowing you to trust Him. Ask the Lord to strengthen your faith. Ask the Lord to grow you so that your faith produces works and fruit glorifying to Him.