

Welcome to the Worship Celebration of



SIMPLY BIBLICAL | FAMILY INTEGRATED

Church – The Beginnings, Part 46
Prayer, The Python Demon, Prison, and Salvation
Acts 16:16-34





Review - Acts 16:1-15

1. Paul found and chose to **ADD Timothy** to his **Missionary Team**.
Paul circumcised Timothy (a Jew , with a Greek dad)
→ **RELEVANT** with the Gospel
2. Paul, Silas, along with Timothy – went throughout the region of **Phrygia and Galatia** and the surrounding region – to all of those churches – delivering copies of The Decree (see Acts 15) to the **Gentiles about how Gentiles who come to Christ do NOT** need to be circumcised and follow the Law of Moses, **etc. and STRENGTHENED the faith of those churches (EQUIPPING)**
(Acts 16:1-5)

Review - Acts 16:1-15

3. Paul and his Missionary Team experienced **CLOSED DOORS** in Mysia, Asia, and Bithynia ... led them to Prayer and they sought God for **OPEN Doors** ...
4. **OPEN DOORS** in Philippi - Macedonia – Lydia and her household (Jewish folks) ... met by the Riverside, not enough men to have a local synagogue → the First Converts to Christ in **EUROPE**

Prayer, The Python Demon, Prison, & Salvation - Acts 16:16-34

1. Paul, Silas, Timothy and Luke – Acts 16:16-18

Now it happened, as we went to prayer, that a certain slave girl possessed with a spirit of divination met us, who brought her masters much profit by fortune-telling. ¹⁷ This girl followed Paul and us, and cried out, saying, “These men are the servants of the Most High God, who proclaim to us the way of salvation.” ¹⁸ And this she did for many days.



This slave girl was possessed with the “spirit of Python” (πνεῦμα πύθωνα). The Python was the serpent or dragon that guarded the Delphic Oracle at Mt. Parnassus. Apollo was also the god most associated with prophecy in the Greek world, but particularly the priestesses who were associated with the Delphic Oracle.

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The team were on their way to the Riverside, to pray again – They encountered a demon-possessed slave girl. She was possessed with a demon or many demons – associated with the same demonic entities that related to the Oracle of Delphi – The Spirit of Python ... Apollo and his devotees along with Athena ... supposedly would tell the future – for a price ... **EXPLOITATION**

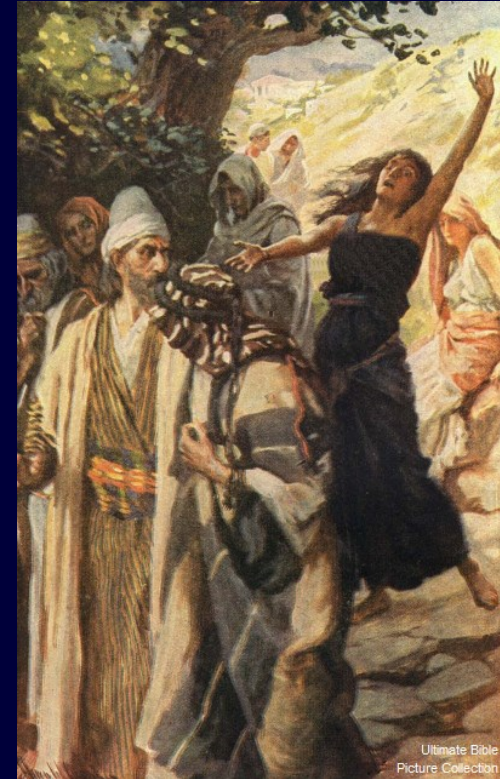
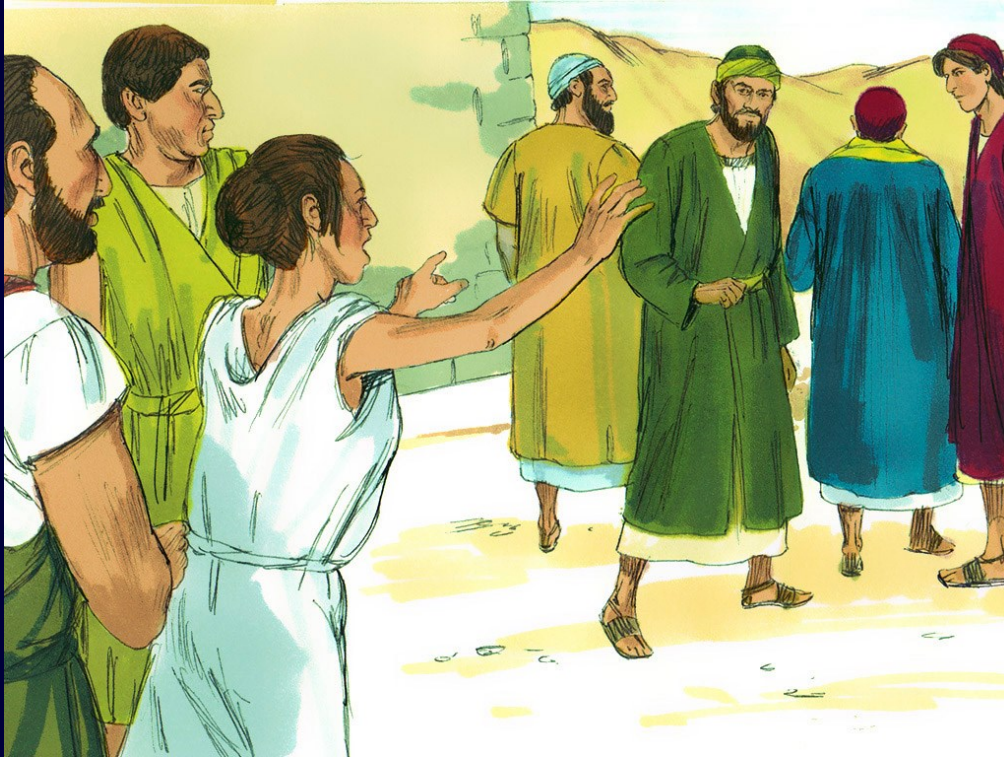
Demon Possession (possessed → spiritual slavery)

Physically Possession (possessed – owned → physical slavery)

Today → Slave Trafficking for Profit – Physical & Demon Slaves

Prayer, The Python Demon, Prison, & Salvation - Acts 16:16-34

2. Why did Paul's Team respond this way? – Acts 16:16-18



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Why did Paul wait so long? And why cast it out? Wasn't that girl saying the TRUTH? What was Paul's Motivation for doing this?

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Paul was Annoyed – but it seemed that he was very Patient.
Demon-Possessed People were NEVER Commissioned by Christ to Proclaim the Gospel, nor to Promote it. No Partnership with EVIL
→ Guilt by Association – Situation – everyone knew "the girl"
Remember, Simon the Magician, in Acts 8? Same thing

3. What was the consequence of the EXORCISM? – Acts 16:18-24

17 This girl followed Paul and us, and cried out, saying, “These men are the servants of the Most High God, who proclaim to us the way of salvation.” **18** And this she did for many days. But Paul, greatly ANNOYED, turned and said to the spirit (*of python*), “I command you in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her.” And he came out that very hour (i.e. “moment”). **19** But when her masters saw that their hope of profit was gone, they seized Paul and Silas and dragged them into the marketplace to the authorities. **20** And they brought them to the magistrates, and said, “These men, being Jews, exceedingly trouble our city; **21** and they teach customs which are not lawful for us, being Romans, to receive or observe.” **22** Then the multitude rose up together against them; and the magistrates tore off their clothes and commanded them to be beaten with rods. **23** And when they had laid many stripes on them, they threw them into prison, commanding the jailer to keep them securely. **24** Having received such a charge, he put them into the inner prison and fastened their feet in the stocks.

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Trumped up charges → They are JEWS – so → Foreign Customs → Loss of Profit → They must Go To Prison → They Ruined my Business → Jews → Appealed to Nationalism – Ethnocentric Pride – “How Dare They...”

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Stirred up the Whole Town – Towns Folk and the Owners → Pressure

This seems to be a Very Normal Pattern of those Offended by the Gospel
Use the STRONG ARM of GOVERNMENT to shut down Gospel Preaching

4. How did Paul and Silas Respond to being in Prison? – Acts 16:25

22 Then the multitude rose up together against them; and the magistrates tore off their clothes and commanded them to be beaten with rods. 23 And when they had laid many stripes on them, they threw them into prison, commanding the jailer to keep them securely. 24 Having received such a charge, he put them into the inner prison and fastened their feet in the stocks. 25 But at midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the prisoners were listening to them.

Paul & Silas – Responded with Prayer and Praise – Worship, Thanksgiving, Praise, Singing to God. Would we do the same?

Some might respond with rage, anger, bitterness, crying, depression, etc. feeling that our rights have been violated ... thrown into prison after being beating by MOB VIOLENCE – NO DUE PROCESS ... VIOLATED ...

That was True – but in their situation – they really couldn't do anything – so they Prayed to God and Sang Praises to God. Notice How it affected the other Prisoners ... instead mocking – they listened with quiet intensity.

5. Earthquake - The Jailer ready to commit suicide -? – Acts 16:25-30

25 But at midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the prisoners were listening to them. 26 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 loosed. 27 And the keeper 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. 28 But Paul called with a loud voice, saying, "Do yourself no harm, for we are all here." 29 Then he called for a light, ran in, and fell down trembling before Paul and Silas. 30 And he brought them out and said, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?"

**Why was the Warden of the Prison (the Jailer) ready to Commit Suicide?
Rome had ways to make folks obey them – Job Performance Motivations
If you watch, guard over prisoners or help with crucifixions, etc. – if the
prisoners escaped, you would suffer the prisoner's fate – whatever it was.
So, it was natural for this jailer to seek to take his own life. SUICIDE**

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Even though the Jailer did not probably fully understand Paul's next response – **God got that Jailer's attention.**

The Jailer was not Responding to a Gospel Presentation and an Altar Call. He was responding to the Earthquake & the possible Punishment for the Prisoners fleeing (which they did not flee, but stayed put). He was trembling

6. Jesus is the ANSWER to Life's Questions, always? – Acts 16:30-34

29 Then he called for a light, ran in, and fell down trembling before Paul and Silas. **30** And he brought them out and said, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" **31** So they (*Paul & Silas*) said, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you will be saved, you and your household." **32** Then they spoke the WORD of the Lord to him and to all who were in his house. **33** And he (*the jailer*) took them the same hour of the night and washed their stripes. And immediately he and all his family were baptized. **34** Now when he had brought them into his house, he set food before them; and he rejoiced, having believed in God with all his household.

SUICIDE PREVENTION BY the GOSPEL OF CHRIST which led to Salvation

Paul & Silas **SPOKE the WORD of GOD** to them (the whole household)

Creation, FALL, Judgment, Redemption → Crucifixion, Death, Burial and Resurrection of Christ → Implications of Salvation

→ Repentance of Sins and Personal Trust in Christ → the Gospel of Christ

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SUICIDE PREVENTION BY the GOSPEL OF CHRIST which led to Salvation

HOPE – Paul and Silas gave that suicidal jailer HOPE. Real HOPE in the One who is HOPE → Jesus Christ. **Personal TRUST in the RESCUER**

Jesus Christ was the one with whom Paul & Silas were pointing the Jailer to. Not to some religion or philosophy, but the **PERSON** of Jesus Christ Himself

There is NO Reason to LIVE if there is NO HOPE → SUICIDE

Hopelessness lead to death, so does FALSE HOPE. **Real Hope - Real LIFE**

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Real Hope - Real LIFE →

All of LIFE's Questions find their HOME and Answer in the Person and Mission of Jesus Christ and His Salvation.

When people are Humbled by Life's Circumstance – God is ready, always, to Give His Grace (God opposes the Proud, but He Give Grace to the Humble)

Let's be ready when LIFE hits people really hard, and be God's Instruments of His Good News and Grace.