

WORSHIP SETS YOU FREE!

MAY 5, 2024

WORSHIP

For Who You Are, We Praise You, Never Once, Build My Life, Praise You In The Storm

WELCOME

What “enslaves” or “imprisons” you today?

WORD

ACTS 16:25-31

(READ THE ENTIRE CHAPTER 16 FOR CONTEXT)

²⁵ Now about midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns of praise to God, and the prisoners were listening to them; ²⁶ and 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 unfastened. ²⁷ When the jailer awoke and saw the prison doors opened, he drew his sword and was about to kill himself, thinking that the prisoners had escaped. ²⁸ But Paul called out with a loud voice, saying, “Do not harm yourself, for we are all here!” ²⁹ And the jailer asked for lights and rushed in, and trembling with fear, he fell down before Paul and Silas; ³⁰ and after he brought them out, he 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.”

HEBREWS 13:15

Through Him then, let us continually offer up a sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of lips that give thanks to His name.

It is important that we have a high and proper view of God when we worship. We need to know who God is through what He has revealed in His love letter to us, the Bible. If we don't have a proper view of who He is, we will become prisoners of the wrong view of God. We will be viewing God through the lens of our circumstances instead of viewing our circumstances through the lens of who God is. We become shackled by a wrong perspective of God. Worship sets us free!

In **Hebrews 13:15**, we learn that: Worship is a lifestyle (“continually”). God is honored when we praise Him in every situation (“sacrifice of praise”). Gratitude is worship (“give thanks”). God's names tell us His character (“His name”).

One example of how coming to God in a worshipful attitude can help turn around a heart that's weighed down by disappointment and confusion is Asaph, Israel's worship leader. He had a dilemma—why is there injustice and why others were more blessed (**Psalms 73:2-3**). It was when he brought himself before God that turned around his perspective (**Psalms 73:16-17**). He gained the perspective of God. God reminded him to count his blessings, one of them is his personal relationship with God. That made him like a different person in **Psalms 73:25-26**.

I. ALWAYS OBEY GOD (Acts 16:13-21)

It is important to obey God because a life of obedience is a life of worship. Obeying God also saves us from having to deal with the consequences of disobedience.

Paul and Silas are on a missionary journey and were in Philippi, a Roman colony. On the Sabbath day, Paul shared the gospel to a group of women. God was already working in the heart of one lady, Lydia, and yet she needed to hear the gospel (**Acts 16:13-14**). That day, Lydia and her entire household heard the gospel, gave their lives to Jesus, and were baptized (**v.15**). Paul and Silas were obeying God and doing the right thing.

They also met a slave-girl (**vv.16-17**). This girl was a slave in two ways. She was a slave physically—being exploited by her Roman masters to make money. She was a slave spiritually—having a spirit of divination. She had a demon that was running her life. Paul casted out the demon from the slave-girl and she became free! As a result, she no longer had the spirit of divination. She could no longer tell fortunes so there was no money to be made from her. Her masters couldn't use her anymore. She was also set free spiritually. However, the problem begins for Paul and Silas who were arrested and brought before the chief magistrates (**vv.19-21**).

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II. WORSHIP GOD IN ALL SITUATIONS (Acts 16:22-25)

Complete injustice was happening to Paul and Silas (v.22). There was no investigation, no chance for them to defend themselves, and no crime that they were formally convicted of. They were thrown into the inner prison and their feet were fastened in stocks (vv.23-24). It's not just an added security measure. It's meant to inflict pain.

Paul and Silas may have been physically in prison but because of their perspective of God, they were free in their heart and their spirit. They were singing hymns of praise (v.25)—that's worship in all situations! The prisoners were listening to them. This reminds us followers of Jesus that when bad things happen to us, people around us are listening and watching how we will respond. Our response will either point them to or away from Jesus. People are watching us seeing how we respond to difficult times even while we're doing what God wants us to do.

III. EXPERIENCE GOD'S POWER (Acts 16:26-34)

Guaranteed, we will experience the power of God. It does not mean the situation may change. It may or it may not. We will experience the power of God in our inner being when our perspective changes even if the situation changes or not.

There was an earthquake on the night that Paul and Silas were in prison (v.26). All the doors were opened and everyone's chains were unfastened! But it was not only Paul, Silas, and the prisoners experienced the power of God. There was the jailer also who had awoken from his sleep (v.27). He was a Roman soldier who cannot bear the shame and the penalty of failure that he would rather kill himself. Paul cried out to him that they were all there and the jailer rushed in and trembling with fear asked "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" (vv.28-30). Paul and Silas answered him "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved, you and your household." and that was what exactly happened to the jailer and his household (vv.31-34). They all experienced God's power!

Worship setting us free does not always mean that God will remove our difficult circumstances. But it surely means that He will be transforming our character to trust Him, obey Him, and keep worshipping Him all our lives.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

(Leaders: Please choose questions that are appropriate to the level of spiritual maturity of your members)

1. Self-Check.

What is/are the most important area/s of your life today where you need to obey God more?

2. Setting It Right.

What difficult situation/s are you facing today? How can you worship God despite these challenges??

3. Living It Out.

How have you experienced God's power as you trusted Him in difficult times? Encourage others in your group with your experience.

WORKS

PRAY CARE SHARE IN ACTION

Pray for people around you to become true worshippers of the Lord Jesus Christ in every and all situations. Worship God through giving of your time, talent, and treasure to Him and other people. Share your testimony and the gospel of how God sets people free.

WEEKLY PRAYER POINTS

I. Thanksgiving

- Worship God for who He is, what He has done, and what He will do in our lives.

II. Country and the World

- Upright and moral governance of public servants; repentance and salvation for government leaders and citizens for a Christ-centered Philippines.
- God's help and comfort, salvation for Israel, wisdom for their leaders in government, military and their soldiers as they defend themselves against terrorists' attacks. PRAISE GOD for the release of hostages so far! Continue to pray for the release of the remaining ones.
- War in Ukraine to end, loss of lives prevented.

III. Church

- That CCF Members would honor and love God and make disciples.
- Elders, pastors, dleaders, and families (holy, humble, harmonious, happy, heart-working).
- Ministries and churches expansion worldwide.

IV. CCF Facilities

- Worship and Training Center
- Prayer Mountain

V. Personal Concerns

- Deeper intimate relationship with God.
- Righteous living.
- Salvation of family and friends..

MEMORY VERSE

HEBREWS 13:15

Through Him then, let us continually offer up a sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of lips that give thanks to His name.