

Discussion Guide (Participant Guide)

Acts 16 Part 2

Note: Please refer to the *How To Study The Bible Handbook* while discussing this passage.

Breaking the Ice:

- A business owner who has a small team of employees, all with the same job position and the same pay asks: "Is it unfair that I give my best employees more work?" What do you think?

Practicing What Was Preached:

- Many of us saw the video of Will Smith slapping Chris Rock at the Oscars. Do you think Chris Rock responded to the slap in the right way? Why or why not?
- Brandon encouraged us to respond to the "Chris Rock" moments of life by responding like Jesus did. What things in your life feel like they're slapping you across the face right now? Are you responding in a Christ-like way or not?

Taking a Deeper Look at the Text:

Passage: Acts 16:25-30

Pray: Ask God for eyes to see, a mind to understand, and a heart to apply.

Observation

Who:

Main Characters – Paul & Silas

Secondary Characters – the jailer & the other prisoners ("we are all...")

What:

One sentence summary – Paul and Silas are unjustly put in prison, so they respond by praising God in the middle of the prison. That leads to a miraculous earthquake - the prison doors are opened and the prisoner's chains falling off. Paul, Silas and the rest of the prisoners stay in the prison which results in the jailer wanting to be saved.

When:

The Chronological Significance – see the below diagram of the timeline of Acts. Acts 16 covers the beginning of Paul's second missionary journey.

| BOOK OF ACTS | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|-----------------|--------------------------|----------------------|----------------------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------------------|----------------|----------------------|--|--|
| Author | Luke, the Doctor | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Time | 2 yrs - 33-35 AD ca. | | | 14 yrs - 35-48 AD ca. | | | | 17 or 19 yrs - 48-65 or 67 AD ca. | | | | |
| | FOUNDATION OF THE CHURCH | | | | | | FOUNDER OF CHURCHES | | | | | |
| Sections | Spirit of the Church | Growth of the Church | Persecution of the Church | Expansion of the Church | First Journey of Paul | Second Journey of Paul | Third Journey of Paul | Arrest of Paul | Trials of Paul | Imprisonment of Paul | | |
| Chapters | 1 | 4 5 7 | 8 9 10 12 | | 13 15 16 18 | 19 20 | 21 23 24 | 26 27 | 28 | | | |
| Topics | Peter | | Peter & Philip | | | Paul | | | | | | |
| | To the Jews | | To the Gentiles in/around Israel | | | To the Gentiles outside Israel | | | | | | |
| Place | Jerusalem | | Judea & Samaria | | | Uttermost Parts of the Roman Empire | | | | | | |

ConformingToJesus.com

Where:

Setting – Check the map below to see where Paul and the missionary team traveled. Philippi is famous in classical history as the place where the world's future was determined as Octavius met Brutus and Cassias in a terrible conflict. Because of this, many Roman soldiers retired in the area and Philippi was proud of its Roman connection.



Why:

Significance – “Life is 10% what happens and 90% how you react to it.”
 - Charles Swindoll

How:

Even though God did something miraculous to free Paul & Silas from prison, their response ended up leading to the jailer being freed from so much more!

Interpretation

- Content: How would you describe what this passage is about in your own words?
- Context & Culture: Had Paul & Silas escaped the prison, the jailer would have been executed. This is why the jailer was about to kill himself. David Guzik makes this interpretation: “The circumstances said, ‘escape.’ But

love said, 'Stay for the sake of this one soul.' They were not guided merely by circumstances, but by what love compelled."

- Consultation: Is there anything about the passage that you still don't understand? What kind of resource(s) could you use to gain more understanding?

Application

Know Yourself

- If your circumstances could speak, what would they be saying right now? Are they saying, "life is good," "life is hard" or maybe even, "escape"? Would they be saying something else?
- Paul & Silas are in prison unjustly. They did nothing wrong. Have you ever felt like you were being punished or hurt unjustly? What was the situation like?
- When you or someone you love is being treated unfairly, how do you usually respond?
- Put yourself in Paul & Silas' shoes for a moment. If you were in a foreign country, were unjustly put in prison and most likely going to be executed and God somehow made a miraculous way for you to escape, do you think it would be wrong for you to leave? Why or why not?
- Do you think Christians are treated unfairly in our current culture? How so?

Relate

- If there is an area in your life where you're being treated unfairly, what has your response been? Do you feel like you're responding in the right way? Why or why not?

- If you identified ways that Christians are treated unfairly, how do you think Christians should be responding? Do you think the majority of Christians are responding in the right way or the wrong way? Do you think you are personally responding in the right way or wrong way?

Meditate & Practice

- I think we would all agree that prayer is a good response to every circumstance. Spend some time praying together for discernment and compassion in the middle of the circumstances that you and those in your groups are facing.