

Sermon Notes, May 16, 2010

Songs for the Night

Acts 16:16-34

You Know It's Going to Be a Bad Day When . . . _____

FOUR LESSONS ON TRIALS

1. Don't Be Lulled Into Spiritual Complacency By a Season of _____ Over Evil (Acts 16:6-18). _____

(Acts 16:9 NIV) *During the night Paul had a vision of a man of Macedonia standing and begging him, "Come over to Macedonia and help us."*

(Acts 16:14 NIV) *One of those listening was a woman named Lydia, a dealer in purple cloth from the city of Thyatira, who was a worshiper of God. The Lord opened her heart to respond to Paul's message.*

(Acts 16:18 NIV) . . . *Finally Paul became so troubled that he turned around and said to the spirit, "In the name of Jesus Christ I command you to come out of her!" At that moment the spirit left her.*

2. Expect _____ as a Follower of Christ (Acts 16:19-24).

(Acts 16:23 NIV) *After they had been severely flogged, they were thrown into prison, and the jailer was commanded to guard them carefully.*

3. Be Prepared to Respond to _____ with "Songs for the Night" (Acts 16:25). _____

(Acts 16:25 NIV) *About midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the other prisoners were listening to them.*

4. Use Your "Darkest Night" as an Opportunity for Pointing People to _____ (Acts 16:26-34). _____

(Acts 16:31-32 NIV) *They replied, "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved--you and your household." {32} Then they spoke the word of the Lord to him and to all the others in his house.*

Will all of us see an earthquake? _____

Will all of us have other watching us? _____

Participation in Christ's Suffering. _____

(1 Pet 4:12-13 NIV) *Dear friends, do not be surprised at the painful trial you are suffering, as though something strange were happening to you. {13} But rejoice that you participate in the sufferings of Christ, so that you may be overjoyed when his glory is revealed.*

Sermon-based Small Group Discussion Guide

Week of May 16, 2010

Acts 16:16-40

Icebreaker: What type of music lifts your spirit?

1. Silas discovered that serving Jesus Christ was anything but boring when Paul asked him to go with him on a missionary journey (Acts 15:30). It was both exciting and dangerous. What would you say if Paul asked you to go with him?
2. The demonized slave-girl kept broadcasting Paul and Silas as servants of the Most High God who are telling you how to be saved (vs.17, 18). Why did the demon announce the truth about Paul and Silas, and why do you think Paul was annoyed?
3. Paul and Silas were doing a good thing for Philippi by preaching good news. How is it possible that just a couple of business people could turn the city (vs. 22) against Paul and Silas?
4. The economy (income) often trumps matters of liberty and principle because money is so integral to who we are. And we need money to live. Do you agree? Why? Can you think of present day examples of unruly human behavior in the midst of economic crisis?
5. When do you think economic well being can become an idol? How much time do you worry / think about making money?
6. Was it wrong for Paul and Silas to preach in such a way as to provoke the entire city to anger? Why?
7. Are beatings and jail time something a believer should expect when following Christ?
8. Do you think there are times to speak up for Christ and the gospel when it may be personally costly? When?
9. Describe a time when you were praying and singing like Paul and Silas (vs.25) when the chips were down. What does this story say to you about dealing with hard times?
10. What have you learned from watching someone else go through trials? What have others learned from watching you go through trials?
11. The Philippian jailer blurted out, "What must I do to be saved?" What does that tell you about the reputation and message of Paul and Silas?
12. What evidence do you see in the life of the Philippian jailer that he was genuinely saved (vs. 31ff.)? How do you feel when there is evidence of transformation in the life of a new believer?
13. Paul refused to take his freedom and run. What do you think motivated him to challenge the city leaders (vs. 37)?
14. How can a person overcome the temptation of self-pity and bless others like Paul and Silas did (see vs. 40)? Do you feel freedom to encourage others?

Prayer:

Pray for joy in face of hardship.

Pray for the salvation of family members.

Pray for one another's needs.