

Acts 16:35-40

Finding Encouragement When We Should Be Discouraged

Paul and Silas are in jail. How will they get out? What is their attitude? Are they bitter? Let's see what the Bible tells us.

When it was daylight, the magistrates sent their officers to the jailer with the order: "Release those men." The jailer told Paul, "The magistrates have ordered that you and Silas be released. Now you can leave. Go in peace." But Paul said to the officers: "They beat us publicly without a trial, even though we are Roman citizens, and threw us into prison. And now do they want to get rid of us quietly? No! Let them come themselves and escort us out." The officers reported this to the magistrates, and when they heard that Paul and Silas were Roman citizens, they were alarmed. They came to appease them and escorted them from the prison, requesting them to leave the city. After Paul and Silas came out of the prison, they went to Lydia's house, where they met with the brothers and sisters and encouraged them. Then they left.



Photo: Barn in fall - Just as fall brings a close to summer, there are many signs of encouragement.

Every Day with God

Paul and Silas were jailed because they were preaching the word of God. Not only were they put in prison, they were beaten, which was against the law if you were a Roman citizen. Also, there had not been a trial. Realizing this, Paul does not leave prison until the people who put him in come to the jail and escort him out. Where do Paul and Silas now go? They go to the house of Lydia to meet with fellow Christians to encourage them. Life has not been easy for Paul, but rather than moan and complain, he spends his time encouraging others to not give up, to not lose sight of Jesus.

Isn't it easy to feel sorry for ourselves? Woe is me! Isn't this a sign of one that has little faith? We can learn from Paul that even in our darkest moments we need to do what Jesus would do—encourage others not to lose faith.

Prayer: Help me, Jesus, to not lose faith.