



new life fellowship

Sermon Title: Look to the Liberator

Speaker: Shauna Rushing - Pastor of Small Groups & Communities

Scriptures: Acts 16:22-36

22 The crowd joined in the attack against Paul and Silas, and the magistrates ordered them to be stripped and beaten with rods. 23 After they had been severely flogged, they were thrown into prison, and the jailer was commanded to guard them carefully. 24 When he received these orders, he put them in the inner cell and fastened their feet in the stocks.

25 About midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the other prisoners were listening to them. 26 Suddenly there was such a violent earthquake that the foundations of the prison were shaken. At once all the prison doors flew open, and everyone's chains came loose. 27 The jailer woke up, and when he saw the prison doors open, he drew his sword and was about to kill himself because he thought the prisoners had escaped. 28 But Paul shouted, "Don't harm yourself! We are all here!"

29 The jailer called for lights, rushed in and fell trembling before Paul and Silas. 30 He then brought them out and asked, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?"

31 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. 33 At that hour of the night the jailer took them and washed their wounds; then immediately he and all his household were baptized. 34 The jailer brought them into his house and set a meal before them; he was filled with joy because he had come to believe in God—he and his whole household.

35 When it was daylight, the magistrates sent their officers to the jailer with the order: "Release those men." 36 The jailer told Paul, "The magistrates have ordered that you and Silas be released. Now you can leave. Go in peace."

Sermon Summary:

What can we do when we are facing an impossible situation or a mess we don't know how to get out of in our lives? As we continue our series, *Joining God on Mission*, through the book of Acts this Sunday, we'll explore what Paul and Silas teach us about responding when the odds are stacked against us.

Sermon Questions:

1. Are you a fan of roller coasters? Why or why not?
2. A wise bishop interpreted the jailer's plea to be saved as, "Gentlemen, will you please tell me how to get out of this mess?" What is a mess that you or someone close to you needs God's intervention in right now?
3. Read Luke 4:14-20. What stands out to you about Jesus proclaiming who he is and what he came to do? Have you thought about this being Jesus' mission before?

4. Pastor Shauna shared the two questions she asks God in challenging situations: "What's your part?" and "What's my part with you?" In what ways are you encouraged or challenged by those questions?
5. How have you noticed prayer and praise making a difference in your life?
6. Take time to pray and thank Jesus, the Liberator, for meeting you in the mess of your life and circumstances.