

## Power to Witness in Word and Deed – Part 2

*The Book of Acts*

**Acts 16:16–40**

### Read Acts 16:16–18.

1. While on their way “to the place of prayer” (v. 16) in Philippi, Paul and his companions meet a slave girl who is held captive by an evil spirit that empowers her to predict the future (v. 16a). How is she a benefit to her owners? (v. 16b)
2. In Jesus’ earthly ministry, evil spirits often spoke in recognition of Jesus and his work (e. g., Lk. 4:33–34, 40–41; 8:26–28). Similarly, what two-part truth does this evil spirit persistently proclaim through the slave girl as she follows Paul, Silas, Timothy, and Luke? (v. 17)

Why do you think this is so troubling to Paul?

3. Jesus had appointed Paul “to open [the] eyes [of both Jews and Gentiles] and turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God, so that they may receive forgiveness of sins and a place among those who are sanctified by faith in me” (26:17–18). What does this mean for the slave girl?

### Read Acts 16:19–24.

4. Concealing the true reason for their anger (v. 19), the slave girl’s owners contrive serious accusations against Paul and Silas. What are they? (vv. 20–21)
5. The punishment Paul and Silas receive is extreme, even if the charges had been true. Describe how they are treated. (vv. 22–24, 37)

### Read Acts 16:25–34.

6. Though in great pain and held captive in the darkness of maximum security, Paul and Silas are freely “praying and singing hymns to God” (v. 25) within earshot of other prisoners.
  - a. What does this reveal about Paul and Silas? (Mt. 5:11–12, Eph. 5:15–20; Col. 4:2–6)
  - b. What does their ability to rejoice in the midst of suffering reveal about God? (Ps. 46:1; 59:17; Rom. 8:26–28)

7. Why don't Paul and Silas escape when the opportunity arises? (vv. 26–28)
8. What do you think leads the Roman jailer to ask, "What must I do to be saved" (v. 30)?
9. With wounds still filthy, bleeding and sore, Paul and Silas's answer in verse 31 is simple, direct, and very personal. What do Paul and Silas do next? (v. 32)

How does this selfless and intentional ministry of the gospel encourage or challenge you?

10. The jailer and his family came to believe in Jesus that night and were baptized. What acts of mercy do they immediately perform for Paul and Silas? (vv. 33–34)
11. Once despairing for his life, what is the jailer's demeanor now that Jesus has set him free? (v. 34b)

**Read Acts 16:35–40.**

12. Given the treatment Paul and Silas received the previous day, the Philippian authorities unexpectedly give the order to release them.
  - a. How does Paul's Roman citizenship and refusal to accept their offer to leave in peace threaten the officials?
  - b. Why do you think the final arrangement will be important for future ministry in Philippi?
13. Upon their release, Paul and Silas go back to encourage the newly formed church which includes Lydia, a slave girl, and a Roman (Gentile) jailer. What is remarkable about the people God chooses to establish this church? (Gal. 3:26–29, Eph. 2:11–13, 19–22)
14. Read Luke 4:18–19 that describes Jesus' Spirit-filled mission.
  - a. How did the Holy Spirit powerfully continue this mission in Philippi?
  - b. How is the Holy Spirit powerfully continuing this mission today through us?