



## Repentance Tabernacle Church

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### No Matter What!

**Focus Verses:** Acts 16:32-33 - <sup>32</sup> And they spake unto him the word of the Lord, and to all that were in his house. <sup>33</sup> And he took them the same hour of the night, and washed their stripes; and was baptized, he and all his, straightway.

**Lesson Text:** Acts 16:19-34

**Truth About God:** God is faithful to those who serve Him faithfully.

**Truth For My Life:** I will praise God, no matter what I am going through.

God's plan does not always make sense. When Paul and Silas arrived in the city of Philippi in Macedonia, they met a lady named Lydia at a ladies' prayer meeting by the river. They preached the gospel of Jesus to her, and she and her family were baptized. Besides Lydia, Paul also met a young enslaved girl who made her masters money through fortune telling. He turned to the fortune teller and cast the devils out of her. Immediately, she was delivered.

When her masters saw their money maker was no longer making them any money, they had these two itinerant preachers arrested, publicly flogged, and thrown into an inner prison. Paul certainly faced plenty of hardship and trouble throughout his ministry, but he also saw God provide and deliver in miraculous ways. Consequently, he became a man of great faith. Paul and Silas were in a predicament, but they responded in an unexpected way (Acts 16:25-26).

Paul and Silas's unjust imprisonment turned into an opportunity to reach an entire family with the message of Jesus. The jailer was shaken by their unexpected kindness; he was eager to hear their message. Falling at Paul and Silas's feet, the jailer asked, "*Sirs, what must I do to be saved?*" (Acts 16:30). In an unexpected plot twist, the jailer washed Paul and Silas' stripes, and God washed away the jailer's sins when he and everyone in his household were baptized.

God will use your trial for good. Paul wrote: "*And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are called according to his purpose*" (Romans 8:28). He turned mistreatment and injustice into a ministry opportunity. God is faithful, but His faithfulness does not mean He is obligated to rescue us from every crisis.

By reading Acts 16, believers from all backgrounds have been inspired to respond to problems with prayer and praise. Many have received deliverance and seen God work in miracles. While we certainly believe God can deliver, we know He does not always send an earthquake to free us from our problems. The same God who delivered the apostle Peter from prison in Acts 12:3-11 chose not to intervene when Herod decided to execute James, one of Jesus' closest followers (Acts 12:1-2). Hebrews 11 has been called "Faith's Hall of Fame," and it includes many notable examples of individuals who "obtained a good report through faith" (Hebrews 11:34-39). Paul's words in Romans 8:35-39 resonate with readers because of his firsthand experience and he offered them this hope: "*In all these things we are more than conquerors through that loved us*" (Romans 8:37).

No matter the setting, the message of the Cross and the name of Jesus bring believers into conflict with the forces of darkness and the societies and systems controlled by those powers. God's people of all ages have wrestled with the question of why the Almighty allows godly people to endure trouble while ungodly people appear to triumph, at least in the short term. The prophet Habakkuk asked God this question and received this reply: "*The just shall live by his faith*" (Habakkuk 2:4). When life doesn't make sense, we can turn to God and find strength and direction. The Bible repeatedly reminds us God is our Father, and He loves us and wants the best for us. But what is best for us and what is easiest for us are usually not the same.

What about you? Will you trust God to use your trial for good? He may not respond exactly as you would prefer, but He will show up, perhaps to sit beside you in your moment of need and remind you He loves you and is using the moment to shape you into the person He wants you to become. Most of us will be called upon to face the executioner for our faith in Christ. However, we will all face trials and troubles. We can meet them with a grumble and a groan, or we can lift our voices and thank God for the opportunity to grow in faith and patience. He may miraculously rescue us from our situation or He may not. Regardless, we can praise Him for His faithfulness, knowing we win in the end.