

For Many are called, but few are chosen.”



[Matthew 22:14] God’s invitation goes out to everyone. The gospel is preached widely.

Salvation is offered freely. No one is excluded from the call. But ‘few are chosen’ does not mean God is unwilling, it means not everyone responds rightly. Some ignore the call. Some want the benefits without surrender. Some come on their own terms, not God’s. Yet even in the darkest places — prisons, midnight moments, broken lives, God is willing to go, that some may be saved.

Paul and Silas meet a slave girl controlled by a spirit of divination — a spirit that made her owners rich. Even though she spoke words that sounded true, the spirit was not from God. After days of this, Paul commands the spirit to leave her in the name of Jesus and it does. But when the spirit leaves, so does the profit. And that is when the trouble begins. Her owners don’t rejoice over a life set free they rage over money lost. So Paul and Silas are seized, falsely accused, publicly beaten, and thrown into darkness of prison — not for doing evil, but for setting someone free in the name of Christ.

[Acts 16.23 And when they had laid many stripes on them, they threw them into prison, commanding **the jailer** to keep them securely. 24 Having received such a charge, he put them into the inner prison and fastened **their feet in the stocks**.

25 But at midnight Paul and Silas were **praying and singing hymns** to God, and the prisoners were **listening to them**. 26 Suddenly there was a great earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison were shaken; and immediately all the doors were opened and

everyone's chains were loosed. 27And the keeper of the prison, awaking from sleep and seeing the prison doors open, supposing the prisoners had fled, drew his sword and was about to kill himself. 28But Paul called with a loud voice, saying, "Do yourself no harm, for we are all here."

29Then he called for a light, ran in, and fell down trembling before Paul and Silas. 30 And he brought them out and said, "**Sirs, what must I do to be saved?**"

31So they said, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you will be saved, you and your household." 32 Then they spoke the word of the Lord to him and to all who were in his house. 33And he took them the same hour of the night and washed their stripes. And **immediately he and** all his family were baptized. 34 Now when he had brought them into his house, he set food before them; and he rejoiced, having believed in God with all his household.]

### **What's Happening Here? 3 Sets of People**

**1<sup>st</sup> Set** of people were the missionaries Paul and Silas, sent by God and positioned in the darkness of prison for a time so that the many could hear and respond to the message of salvation which Paul and Silas bore witness to through, testimony, prayer and worship, with the prisoners listening.

**2<sup>nd</sup> Set** – Prisoners sitting in darkness God gave a miraculous sign, a taste of physical freedom — but only those who responded to the gospel received true spiritual freedom.[26 Suddenly there was a **great earthquake**, so that the foundations of the prison were shaken; and **immediately** all the **doors were opened** and everyone's **chains were loosed.**]

Each man individually encountered the effects of the miracle They all individually

- Felt the earthquake
- Saw the doors open
- Had their chains fall off

Yet miracles did not automatically produce faith. They said nothing, yet all had the same opportunity. The prisoners fell silent, no questions, no repentance, no request made.

**(John 12:37) But although He had done so many signs before them, they did not believe in Him**

The **3<sup>rd</sup> Set**. Yet, out of those many men in the prison only **ONE**, the Jailer

- Recognised God was involved
- Feared God in his heart
- With Godly fear, humbled himself

And asked “**Fell down trembling before Paul and Silas.** 30 And he brought them out and said, “**Sirs, what must I do to be saved?**” The response “**Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you will be saved, you and your household.**”

From here its likely His family would have lived nearby, often in quarters attached to or very close to the prison. Roman officials commonly lived on-site or next door.

It goes on to say “And he took them the same hour of the night and washed their wounds...”] So they would have been in a private home setting.

” **32**Then they spoke the word of the Lord to him and to all who were in his house. They were teaching and explaining the Gospel of Jesus Christ to this jailer and his family.

## Event Timeline

1. Paul and Silas testify to Jesus through prayer and singing hymns to God  
*(The prisoners were listening — Acts 16:25)*

2. “For the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy”  
*(Revelation 19:10 — Christ, not the miracle, is the message)*

3. The earthquake at midnight — the call goes out to all  
*Chains fall, doors open: many are called*

4. The jailer believes — a personal response of faith  
*Not everyone responds: few are chosen*

5. They leave the prison area - Order is maintained; no chaos, no escape

6. The Word is spoken in his house — teaching precedes baptism

7. He washes their wounds — repentance made visible

8 Baptism happens. — **obedience in response to faith.** It likely took place **in the early hours of the morning**, shortly after midnight. In other words, the jailer and his household were **baptised immediately**. There was no delay, no bargaining, no conditions not buts, just **sincere belief**, like children receiving the Word of God. They **heard the gospel, believed in their hearts, repented, and obeyed through baptism**, making **Jesus Christ Lord of their lives**.

### Joyful Outcome.

Finally, the result: “He **rejoiced greatly**, having believed in God with his whole household.” Many were called that night, but only few chose to believe and follow Christ. Its much the same today, with a huge call going out to many.

**To end.** Like the Philippian jailer, God can meet you in your midnight; open doors, loosen the chains of guilt, shame or regret and call you to faith. For any today who believe why not Respond immediately.

**For those getting baptised, let us end in a time of prayer and thanksgiving.**

**Luke 15:7 “I say to you that likewise there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine just persons who need no repentance.”**