

Philippians

A GUIDE TO JOY

Acts 16 – The Birth Of The Church In Philippi

April 19, 2020

Happiness — It is an attitude of satisfaction and delight based on our present circumstances. Happiness is based on our happenings.

Joy — It is confidence that all is well in spite of our circumstances. Joy comes from being in a relationship with God. Being loved by God. Being the saved by God.

1. We are a society pursuing happiness, not joy.

A. We pursue happiness by possessions.

B. We pursue happiness by religion.

2. What is the backstory on the Philippians?

A. God steered Paul to Philippi to plant the church.

...for a wide door for effective work has opened to me, and there are many adversaries. 1 Corinthians 16:9 (ESV)

At the same time, pray also for us, that God may open to us a door for the word, to declare the mystery of Christ, on account of which I am in prison— Colossians 4:3 (ESV)

B. The city of Philippi was a strategic Roman city.

3. How did the church begin?

A. Lydia

One who heard us was a woman named Lydia, from the city of Thyatira, a seller of purple goods, who was a worshiper of God. The Lord opened her heart to pay attention to what was said by Paul. Acts 16:14 (ESV)

And after she was baptized, and her household as well, she urged us, saying, "If you have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come to my house and stay." And she prevailed upon us. Acts 16:15 (ESV)

B. A Demon Possessed Slave Girl

As we were going to the place of prayer, we were met by a slave girl who had a spirit of divination and brought her owners much gain by fortune-telling. She followed Paul and us, crying out, "These men are servants of the Most High God, who proclaim to you the way of salvation." And this she kept doing for many days. Paul, having become greatly annoyed, turned and said to the spirit, "I command you in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her." And it came out that very hour. Acts 16:16–18 (ESV)

But when her owners saw that their hope of gain was gone, they seized Paul and Silas and dragged them into the marketplace before the rulers. And when they had brought them to the magistrates, they said, "These men are Jews, and they are disturbing our city. They advocate customs that are not lawful for us as Romans to accept or practice." The crowd joined in attacking them, and the magistrates tore the garments off them and gave orders to beat them with rods. And when they had inflicted many blows upon them, they threw them into prison, ordering the jailer to keep them safely. Having received this order, he put them into the inner prison and fastened their feet in the stocks. Acts 16:19–24 (ESV)

C. The Philippian Jailer

About midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the prisoners were listening to them, and 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 bonds were unfastened. When the jailer woke and saw that the prison doors were open, he drew his sword and was about to kill himself, supposing that the prisoners had escaped. But Paul cried with a loud voice, "Do not harm yourself, for we are all here." And the jailer called for lights and rushed in, and trembling with fear he fell down before Paul and Silas. Then he brought them out and said, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" And they said, "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved, you and your household." And they spoke the word of the Lord to him and to all who were in his house. And he took them the same hour of the night and washed their wounds; and he was baptized at once, he and all his family. Then he brought them up into his house and set food before them. And he rejoiced along with his entire household that he had believed in God.
Acts 16:25–34 (ESV)

Life Group Questions

1. From this past week's sermon, what one statement or point was either most helpful or most challenging?
2. Go back and read Acts 16:6-40. What do you find most encouraging in the chapter? What do you find most challenging?
3. Why should we plant churches? What can we learn about church planting from Acts 16?
4. Do you find it difficult to share the gospel? What encouragement can you find in Acts 16 regarding personal evangelism?
5. Philippians talks a lot about joy. Compare the joy Paul talks about in his life to the pursuit of happiness in our culture.