



prayer *life!*

Weekly Prayer Focus

February 2, 2020

Free!

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. —Acts 16:29-33

As the saying goes, no good deed goes unpunished. When Paul set a slave girl free from demon possession, the “good citizens” of Philippi attacked him and Silas, tore off their clothes, beat them with rods, and threw them in prison. Then as now, the world we live in is no friend of grace and no true home for those who trust in Christ. Following orders, the Philippian jailer placed the two apostles in the inner prison and fastened their feet in stocks so they wouldn’t escape.

Only God’s Word can make sense of times of trial like this. Only God’s presence with them can explain the apostles’ songs in the night. *By day the LORD commands his steadfast love, and at night his song is with me, a prayer to the God of my life* (Psalm 42:8). There’s a joy from outside us that sustains those who trust in Christ. Paul and Silas brought that joy to Philippi, by *praying and singing hymns to God, and the prisoners were listening to them* (16:25).

Prayer is the privilege of the redeemed, praise is the response of the free, and joy is the mark of those who believe in Christ. Confined as they were in a dungeon and no doubt aching from their beatings, Paul and Silas were free to praise and call on God in prayer. And His answer was unmistakable. The earth quaked, and the prison shook until the doors flung wide open and their shackles fell off.

But freedom for the prisoners meant death to the jailer, who immediately grabbed his sword and got ready to end his life. Don’t miss the irony of what happened next. The prisoners led the jailer to freedom. Paul reassured the jailer that none of the prisoners had fled, and the prison keeper bowed to the prisoner and asked how to be saved. The earth has been shaking with their answer ever since. *Believe in the Lord Jesus and you will be saved, you and your household* (16:31).

The jailer tended Paul and Silas’s wounds and was immediately baptized along with his family. Then they all enjoyed a meal together and rejoiced *that he had believed in God* (16:34). Joy has characterized people who have been set free by Christ ever since. Those who know the God of heaven no longer find their joy exclusively in their circumstances on earth.

“Joy is the uproarious labor by which all things live,”* and the message of freedom in Christ has echoed around the world and resounded throughout history. Our church is founded on the truth that Jesus saves and rejoices in the freedom only Christ can give—freedom from the shackles of sin.

Charles Wesley gave voice to everyone who celebrates freedom in Christ.

“Long my imprisoned spirit lay fast bound in sin and nature’s night;
Thine eye diffused a quickening ray, I woke, the dungeon flamed with light.
My chains fell off, my heart was free, I rose, went forth, and followed thee!
Amazing love! How can it be, that thou, my God, shouldst die for me!”

And that Philippian Jailer and his family are singing in heaven, along with all who’ve found freedom from sin, by believing in the Lord Jesus two thousand years ago.

To the praise of God’s Glory.

* From *Orthodoxy*, by G. K. Chesterton

Prayer for the Week

Faith Is: Understanding that everything happens in the light of God’s purposes and walking through all of life with Him right beside us.

Sunday (Church): Pray for Northpoint's search for our next pastor to Adults. Pray for a man who will build us up in Christ, unite us as a community of faith, and lead us to know God as His Word reveals Him.

Monday (Home and Family): Commit your household to Christ. “As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord” (Joshua 24:15).

Tuesday (Job/School): Pray for opportunities to express God’s love for those you serve through your job.

Wednesday (Neighborhood and Community): Pray for your relationships and influence for Christ in your neighborhood. Acknowledge God’s right to command you to, “Go and make disciples.”

Thursday (Our Nation): Pray for the love of God to spread throughout His Church in America, so that we are “filled with all the fullness of God” (Ephesians 3:18).

Friday (The World): Pray for the triumph of the Gospel throughout Latin America. May the Gospel be the “power of God to salvation for all who believe.”

Saturday (Praise and Rejoicing): Praise your Creator for His glorious creation and for giving you life. “Of His fullness we have all received, and grace upon grace.”

Prayer for Our Leaders

Pray that God’s hand will be on our leaders, to give them His strength and protection.

1. **Our Pastors and Directors:** Tony Chute, Taylor Mendoza, Terilyn Brown, and Marti Wiegman.
2. **Our Lay Elders:** Tim East, Steve Flood, Mark Kiker, Vinoj Zechariah, and new elders who will soon come onto the board.
3. **Our Church Staff:** Michelle Balga, Bob Brown, Carolee Jefferson, Amber McEwen, Tamene Menna, Mark Norland, Corie Saunders, Karen Sherwood, and Dani Tiqui.

Prayer Record

Record specific prayers you have below. Note when and how God answers your prayers. It will help you to see that He really is paying attention.

| Date | Request | Date | Answer |
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For freedom Christ has set us free; stand firm therefore, and do not submit again to a yoke of slavery. ... For you were called to freedom, brothers. Only do not use your freedom as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another. –Galatians 5:1, 13