

HOUSEHOLD SALVATION

Text: Acts 16:16-34

Key Word: Salvation

Key Thought: Vibrant Principles need to be applied for Salvation

One of the great prayer requests that often come to me is that a loved one would be saved. We are all sensing that Jesus could return at any moment. This brings a sense of urgency to reach our families. It is not wrong to be unsatisfied until all of your family is saved. As each day passes, we should become more concerned and carefully involved.

Have you ever wondered what it will take to see your loved ones saved? Let's see what took place on Paul's second missionary journey as he came to a city called Philippi. Let's glean some of the vibrant principles that we can apply to our lives in order to bring about HOUSEHOLD SALVATION.

I. A FOUNDATION WILL NEED TO BE SET (Acts 16:25)

II. A JAIL WILL NEED TO BE SHAKEN (Acts 16:26-28)

III. A LIGHT WILL NEED TO BE SHONE (Acts 16:29)

IV. A TRUTH WILL NEED TO BE SIMPLIFIED (Acts 16:31-34)

I. A FOUNDATION WILL NEED TO BE SET (Acts 16:25)

There are many things which reinforce the foundation that is required for someone to get saved. **A relationship built upon trust is needed.** I've often heard of people who have accepted the Lord's offer of salvation as they sensed the peace of God enter their lives. There are many other important "stones" in our foundation. There are a few key stones which are seldom referred to which are very important.

We must always remember that there is a strong opposition to our loved ones becoming saved. The devil doesn't approve when we come in the power of the name of Jesus Christ. When the devil gets cast out of lives, he tries to have God's people bound and placed in prisons. There can often come times of severe persecution. Accusations are often made (Jews not Romans !!!). **There are times we may feel stripped of our legal rights, beaten and bound and perhaps carefully guarded.**

Our response during these times is very important. We need to be careful about pleading for our "rights." We must put our trust in God who is still able to perform miracles on our behalf. Jesus never carried His cross without a purpose and neither should we. **Paul and Silas used this time to glorify God through prayer and worship.** The rest of the prisoners were listening. They probably wondered who those religious fanatics were. They probably wondered how they could be praising the God who allowed them to be beaten and imprisoned.

I. A FOUNDATION WILL NEED TO BE SET (Acts 16:25)

The Bible teaches us that prayer and worship can be powerful weapons against our enemies. Paul and Silas were not only praying, but they also had a number of other churches praying for them. Paul encouraged people to pray no matter where he went. **These missionaries were not only sent out in prayer but also uplifted in prayer.**

When Paul wrote to the church at Ephesus while in Roman prison he encouraged the people by saying,

“Pray also for me, that whenever I open my mouth, words may be given me so that I will fearlessly make known the mystery of the gospel, 20. For which I am an ambassador in chains. Pray that I may declare it fearlessly, as I should.”

Ephesians 6:19,20

When in Rome (or Philippi) do as Paul did - pray and worship God. Leave behind a good example for others to follow.

****** A fine funeral was ordered for a woman who had henpecked her husband, driven her kids half crazy, scrapped with her neighbors at any slightest opportunity, and even made neurotics of the cat and dog due to her explosive temper.

As the casket was lowered into the grave, a violent thunderstorm broke, and the pastor’s benediction was drowned out by a blinding flash of lightning, followed by a terrific clash of thunder.

“Well, she’s got there all right” commented one of the mourners. ******

*Dr. Francis Leo Golden
“Holy Humor” p. 45*

The example we leave can have an impact on what others do with their lives.

****** A young boy and his mother were walking down the street when they saw a man carrying a placard which read, *“The world will end tomorrow!”*

The young boy turned to his mother and asked, *“Do I hafta do my homework?”* ******

Ibid, p. 35

Set a positive foundation of prayer and worship when your world is falling apart.

II. A JAIL WILL NEED TO BE SHAKEN (Acts 16:26-28)

The Bible tells us that both the prisoners and the guards were together in the prison. This is an important factor which cannot be overlooked when dealing with HOUSEHOLD SALVATION. Some people think they have God's people in captivity when in fact they are the ones who need to be set free.

"So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed."

John 8:36

*** In Russell Stendal's book titled, "**Rescue the Captors**," we read of his autobiography. He was taken captive by the Marxist guerilla's in Columbia, South America. They demanded 1 million U.S. dollars from his parents for his release. It was beyond any reasonable expectations of his missionary parents to pay money.

This prolonged Russell's captivity in which time he wrote a book about his adventure. During this time he also was given ample opportunity to share the gospel with his captors.

On Jan 2, 1984, after 142 days of captivity, Russell was set free. By the time that day had arrived Russell had led many of the Columbian guerillas to the Lord. ***

The apostle Paul also saw a shaking take place while being kept in chains in a Philippian jail. The miraculous event took place around midnight as they were praying and worshiping the Lord. A violent earthquake took place in order to shake the prison doors from their locked position. God is still shaking man's prison doors in order to declare how powerful He is.

I believe the longer Jesus waits to return to this earth, a greater shaking will be required to capture the attention of our loved ones. They will need to be shaken from their indifference. Our attitude towards them will be very important no matter what they've done to us.

"Don't harm yourself! We are all here!"

Acts 16:28

The Bible says the jailer woke up from his sleep. **Our loved ones need to be wakened from their sleep of indifference towards the things of God.** When they do, they'll notice that the prison doors have been opened. This may initially cause a great turmoil. They will have to make a decision. This will be a critical time in their lives. They will need us close to them. It will be difficult for them to release all the prisoners of the soul. It is very important that we guide them through their decisions at this time less they bring harm to themselves.

III. A LIGHT WILL NEED TO BE SHONE (Acts 16:29)

What do we do when we are surrounded by darkness? We can either curse the darkness or light a candle. It was the jailer who called for the lights. He had to see for himself that the prisoner's were still in their cells. He had to walk through the prison carrying a light to expel the darkness. It doesn't take a very bright light to do the job.

God uses children to proclaim the truth of whom He is and what He does.

*** A mother discovered her five-year old daughter drawing with her crayons on some paper. "What are you drawing?" she asked. "A picture of God," the little girl said. The mother replied, "No one knows what God looks like." "They will when I get through," the little girl said.

Ibid p. 203

*** Bill Keane was penciling a cartoon for Family Circus one day when his young son Jeffrey asked, "Daddy, how do you know what to draw?" "God tells me," Bill answered. "Then why do you keep erasing parts of it?" Jeffrey said. ***

Ibid p. 22,23

There are times when our household members think WE'RE totally bound and living in darkness. Yet when they are confronted with the light of the gospel, they soon discover who it is that is bound. The light reveals the truth about who is really bound.

The reaction of some is very interesting. **The jailer responded in fear when confronted by the truth that was exposed by shining the light.** It is our duty, if this happens, to do our best to calm those fears and bring about a compassionate heart of humble service.

IV. A TRUTH WILL NEED TO BE SIMPLIFIED (Acts 16:31-34)

There is no doubt in my mind that the jailer knew he needed something that Paul and Silas already had. He may have already had the gospel preached to him but never understood it enough to reach for a personal relationship with God. **We sometimes assume that people understand the implications of the gospel message when in reality they may not.** It may take a certain type of experience to open their eyes.

This man could have very well been confused by all the false teaching of his day. He probably had to sift through Judaism, Gnosticism, and a host of Greek and Roman gods. The majority of these beliefs were based upon acceptance by works. Christianity has always based its message of salvation upon a belief in God.

“Believe (cling to) in (on) the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved - you and your household.”

Acts 16:31

This jailer had already gone through an intense time of stress. He didn't need a long list of man-made stipulations in order to get saved. **What he needed was a simplified message of truth.** He didn't need a list of dos and don'ts. Paul and Silas trusted God to do His part in leading this jailer into further truth as he and his family surrendered to the will to God.

Keep the gospel message simple.

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Date: June 6/21

Place: FCA

Time: 10:30 Am

Song: Shine Jesus Shine - A

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