
DAY 5 • AUGUST 9

Unashamed of God in Adversity**READ: ACTS 16:16-34; JOHN 16:33**

²⁵About midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the prisoners were listening to them, ²⁶and 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.

ACTS 16:25,26**REFLECT**

Paul and Silas were faithful Christians and missionaries. If following Christ promised an easy life, these two would have been on top of a list of the most comfortable Christians. However, what happened to them was the opposite. They were wrongly accused, beaten by an angry mob, and thrown into jail. Being Christians does not guarantee us comfortable lives.

Instead of complaining, Paul and Silas were found praying and singing hymns to God. They didn't know whether they would be executed the next day or die a slow death in prison, but they still chose to worship God. Under the most difficult circumstances, they showed that peace can be found in Jesus Christ.

Of course, the other prisoners with them had no choice but to listen in; they must have wondered how two beaten-up missionaries could rejoice in a God who allowed this unjust hardship. Not all of us will necessarily be imprisoned like Paul and Silas, but we may all face harsh treatment or persecution in school and at home. During these times, people around us will be watching. Our reactions bear witness to the words we speak about Jesus Christ. Like Paul and Silas, we should aim to do all things for the sake of the gospel, even if it means enduring hardship and shame.

Paul and Silas knew that God could have prevented their troubles from the beginning, but He did not do so. They trusted that God was in control of the situation and had a reason for allowing the situation to develop in this way. In the end, we learn that God's larger purpose was not only

to deliver them but also to bring the jailer and his family to a knowledge of Christ.

We will experience shaking in our lives, but all these can be used by God for His purpose and glory. Let us remember that the most important thing is not that we are delivered, but that Christ is preached and God is glorified.

RESPOND

1. What shakings are you experiencing right now? Are you able to rejoice and trust God despite your circumstances? Why or why not?
2. What challenges or opposition have you experienced because of your faith? How do you think God will use these for His purpose and glory?
3. Share your testimony with a family member, classmate, or friend this week. Highlight how God was able to turn around the troubles of your past for His purpose and glory.

PRAY

1. Thank God for being good. Praise Him for being present and in control, in good times and in bad.
2. Pray that the hardships you're facing now will be a testimony to your family and classmates.
3. Pray for Christians in your nation and around the world who are experiencing hardships for the sake of the gospel.