

Week 14
92/273

Transforming Daily
“ . . . *praying and singing hymns to God . . .*”
Acts 16:25

This story in Acts about Paul and Silas is both encouraging and convicting. Here Paul and Silas are in the inner prison of the jail after having been arrested, humiliated and beaten, and when given the opportunity to escape, they are found praying and singing to God. This event is encouraging because it demonstrates the faithfulness of God and the power of His might. This event is convicting because it reveals how unfaithful I can be in my prayer and praise to God in less adverse circumstances than these, or worse, when no adversity exists at all.

The context of this passage in Acts has to do with the persecution of Paul and Silas for the cause of Christ. Having ruined the prospects of a profitable market by winning the principle money maker to Christ, her angry and aggravated business associates have Paul and Silas arrested on trumped up charges, beaten and imprisoned in high security. I don't know about you, but I would have been crying in my soup for a while, then railing threats, ultimately to be found depressed in the fetal position in the corner of the cell whining about how I didn't deserve to be treated so badly. Of course, that would be the problem. I would be thinking about me rather than God and those around me who needed a personal touch by the Savior.

Wouldn't it be great to have such a spiritual attitude that no matter the circumstances, situation or adversity our actions immediately revert to the prayer and praise of God? It seems more often than not when a believer gets a chipped nail or a paper cut they're ready and willing to give up the faith. Or when having to suffer some inconvenience like not getting a parking place next to the building, they're ready to level a law suit against everyone associated with that parking spot including those who have parked there before and those who will later park there.

The truth is that an attitude is developed from a thought and an action follows that attitude. In other words, for the believer to act as Paul and Silas did in this passage, the spiritual discipline must precede the physical discipline. When the time of troubles, trials and tribulations occur that is not the optimum time to develop the practice of prayer and praise. It will more than likely occur by default, but not by deliberate intent.

I am told by marathon runners and tri-athletes that the time to train for the event is not during the race, but far before the occasion. I am also told that the drain on the body is not just a physical one, but of mind, body and spirit. When the pain comes and the desire to give up crosses the runner's mind, they revert to their rigorous and diligent training prior to the challenge.

How about you? Are you spiritually disciplined? Do you have a routine of Bible reading, prayer, soul winning, worshiping God, fellowshiping with other believers, ministry, service, etc.? When was the last time you were accused of praying and singing to God?