



Freedom Has A Name

Acts 16:16-34 | Ryan Pfeiffer | August 2, 2026

INTRO. We Pick up where we left off last week in Acts 16.

We're going to watch how Jesus sets people free thru Paul/ co

- A slave girl from a dark spirit, her owners from idolatry, jailor from despair

Jesus said... If the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed. John 8:36.

Freedom can mean many things to us...

1. External... relationship, circumstance, etc..
2. Internal... physical health, psychological, spiritual...

If there is one place you would like freedom where would it be?

What kind of freedom does Jesus offer?

FOCUS. Jesus frees us from spiritual powers, idolatry, and from despair.

SPIRITUAL POWERS. 16 Once when we were going to the place of prayer, we were met by a female slave who had a spirit by which she predicted the future. She earned a great deal of money for her owners by fortune-telling. 17 She followed Paul and the rest of us, shouting, "These men are servants of the Most High God, who are telling you the way to be saved." 18 She kept this up for many days. Finally Paul became so annoyed that he turned around and said to the spirit, "In the name of Jesus Christ I command you to come out of her!" At that moment the spirit left her.

It's an odd account... why is Paul so annoyed... speaking truth right?

- Jesus didn't allow evil spirits to speak... Jn 4:33- Holy One! Quiet! Come out!
- This Spirit in Acts is disruptive... could be creating confusion...
- Evil spirits work by lies... worst kind... a little truth wrapped in lies...

Point is the most fundamental level at which we need freedom is spiritual

There are powerful spiritual powers working beneath the surface of life...

Ephesians 6:12 For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms.

- Why is this important to know? ... teaches us we need spiritual power. AA.
- Think of Bible/ Acts like an MRI on Human Condition... beneath surface...

IDOLATRY. 19 When her owners realized that their hope of making money was gone, they seized Paul and Silas and dragged them into the marketplace to face the authorities. 20 They brought them before the magistrates and said, "These men are Jews, and are throwing our city into an uproar 21 by advocating customs unlawful for us Romans to accept or practice."

What's interesting— the owners don't respond w/ Wow! Tell me about Jesus!

They would rather have the "spirit" than Jesus... because of the money.

Spiritual powers get a hold of our life thru things we want, desire, need...

That's where idols come in... An Idol was physical form of a spiritual being...

Tim Keller... "An idol is whatever you look at and say, in your heart of hearts, 'If I have that, then I'll feel my life has meaning, then I'll know I have value, then I'll feel significant and secure.'"

1. It can be alcohol, drugs... coping with pain...
2. It can be a relationship... young college guy... suicide after break up.
3. It can be a hobby or sport... loss of identity when we are cut... bad game...

For these "owners" its money... Luke 16:13 No one can serve two masters... You cannot serve both God and money.

The irony is that these owners are owned by their desire for money...

Bible shows us there are spiritual powers behind this... holding them captive

The pt is Everyone has a Master... you are slaves of the one you obey. Rom 6:16.

DESPAIR. 22 The crowd joined in the attack against Paul and Silas, and the magistrates ordered them to be stripped and beaten with rods. 23 After they had been severely flogged, they were thrown into prison, and the jailer was commanded to guard them carefully. 24 When he received these orders, he put them in the inner cell and fastened their feet in the stocks. 25 About midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the other prisoners were listening to them. 26 Suddenly there was such a violent earthquake that the foundations of the prison were shaken. At once all the prison doors flew open, and everyone's chains came loose.

The first thing Paul/ Silas do is find spiritual strength in the Spirit.

- They know the battle is not against flesh and blood.
- They also know they are Roman Citizens... v37...

Yet... First thing Paul/ Silas do is find strength through prayer/ praise. WHY?

Eph 6:18 Do not get drunk on wine, which leads to debauchery. Instead, be filled with the Spirit, 19 speaking to one another with psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit. Sing and make music from your heart to the Lord... giving thanks...

"Don't cope with hardship with alcohol, video games, TV, buying, gossip..."

Rather than medicating, hiding, running from our pain... Make room for God.

Get filled with the Spirit... Let the Lord strengthen you with his joy, presence.

That's part of why we come to Church... praise/ sing at the beginning...

When we do... our lives overflow...

27 The jailer woke up, and when he saw the prison doors open, he drew his sword and was about to kill himself because he thought the prisoners had escaped. 28 But Paul shouted, "Don't harm yourself! We are all here!" 29 The jailer called for lights, rushed in and fell trembling before Paul and Silas. 30 He then brought them out and asked, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" 31 They replied, "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved—you and your household." 32 Then they spoke the word of the Lord to him and to all the others in his house. 33 At that hour of the night the jailer took them and washed their wounds; then immediately he and all his household were baptized. 34 The jailer brought them into his house and set a meal before them; he was filled with joy because he had come to believe in God—he and his whole household.

The prison doors aren't opened for Paul/ Silas... they're opened for jailor!

They're already free... their freedom isn't circumstantial its internal/ eternal

Their freedom helps set the jailor free from despair...

Jesus doesn't set us free to live our way... that's the problem!

Jesus sets us free to belong to HIM... HIS FAMILY... & to set OTHERS free!

- 1. The Jailor comes to faith... v30 what must I do to be saved?**
- 2. His HOUSEHOLD is baptized! ... Remember this theme... Lydia?**
- 3. He's filled with joy... v34 he had come to believe in God...**

Let Jesus free you today... right now with his joy and love...