

Deliberately Loyal to the Gospel

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Preacher: Jim Masters

[0 : 00] If you would take your Bibles or devices, go to Acts chapter 16, Acts 16.

If you're visiting with us, if you pull that black Bible out, go towards the back, find page 106, you'll find Acts 16, we're going to start in verse 11 and go to the end of the chapter.

1611 through 40 this morning. 1611 through 40, page 106 in that black Bible.

Let's read and then we'll do our study. Therefore, putting out to sea from Troas, we ran a straight course to Samothrace, and the day following to Neapolis, and from there to Philippi, which is a leading city of the district of Macedonia, a Roman colony.

And we were staying in this city for some days. And on the Sabbath day, we went outside the gate to a riverside where we were supposing that there would be a place of prayer. And we sat down and began speaking to the women who had assembled.

[1 : 29] And a certain woman named Lydia, from the city of Thyatira, a seller of purple fabrics, a worshiper of God, was listening. And the Lord opened her heart to respond to the things spoken by Paul.

And when she and her household had been baptized, she urged us, saying, if you've judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come into my house and stay. And she prevailed upon us.

And it happened that as we were going to the place of prayer, a certain slave girl, having a spirit of divination, met us, who was bringing her master's much profit by fortune telling.

Following after Paul and us, she kept crying out, saying, these men are bondservants of the Most High God who are proclaiming to you the way of salvation.

She continued doing this for many days. But Paul was greatly annoyed and turned and said to the spirit, I command you in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her. And it came out at that very moment.

[2 : 31] But when her master saw that their hope of profit was gone, they seized Paul and Silas and dragged them into the marketplace before the authorities. And when they had brought them to the chief magistrates, they said, these men are throwing our city into confusion, being Jews, and are proclaiming customs which it is not lawful for us to accept or to observe, being Romans.

And the crowd rose up together against them. And the chief magistrates tore their robes off them and proceeded to order them to be beaten with rods. And when they had inflicted many blows upon them, they threw them into prison, commanding the jailer to guard them securely.

And he, having received such a command, threw them into the inner prison and fastened their feet in the stocks. Verse 25. But about midnight, Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns of praise to God.

And the prisoners were listening to them. And suddenly there came a great earthquake so that the foundations of the prison house were shaken. And immediately all the doors were opened and everyone's chains were unfastened.

And when the jailer had been roused out of sleep and had seen the prison doors opened, he drew his sword and was about to kill himself, supposing that the prisoners had escaped. But Paul cried out with a loud voice saying, Do yourself no harm, for we are all here.

[3 : 53] And he called for lights and rushed in and trembling with fear, he fell down before Paul and Silas. And after he brought them out, he said, Sirs, what must I do to be saved?

31. And they said, Believe in the Lord Jesus and you shall be saved, you and your household. And they spoke the word of the Lord to him together with all who were in his house.

And he took them that hour of the night and washed their wounds. And immediately he was baptized, he and his whole household. And he brought them into his house and set food before them and rejoiced greatly having believed in God with his whole household.

35. And when day came, the chief magistrates sent their policemen saying, Release those men. And the jailer reported these words to Paul. The chief magistrates have sent to release you.

Now therefore, come out and go in peace. But Paul said to them, They have beaten us in public without trial, men who are Romans, and have thrown us into prison. And now are they sending us away secretly?

[5 : 00] No, indeed. But let them come themselves and bring us out. And the policemen reported these words to the chief magistrates. And they were afraid when they heard that they were Romans.

And they came and appealed to them. And when they had brought them out, they kept begging them to leave the city. And they went out of the prison and entered the house of Lydia. And when they saw the brethren, they encouraged them and departed.

For things that keep employees loyal. Hint, it's not money or perks. I just googled the word loyal.

And this is one of the first hits that came up. For things that keep employees loyal. The article begins like this. You can ditch the esoteric interview questions.

Skip the outlandish benefits and hit working conditions. And forget building an awesome brand. When it comes to hiring, and more importantly, keeping, great employees, not even paying well above market compensation guarantees success.

[6 : 18] In a recent survey, the article continues, of companies with the highest amount of employee turnover, guess which trailblazing exemplars of world-class employee centricity came in second and fourth respectively.

Any guesses? No, no. Second, Google.

Fourth, Amazon. Article goes on. Talking about this and that. Here are the four key ways to ensure that, so long you're paying at or near market compensation, your employees will remain engaged and loyal, irrespective of the size of your business.

One, good communication. Two, consistency. Three, the opportunity to do great work. Four, a decent, non-toxic manager.

Now the article goes on explaining all four of those, but how it ends, and explain the fourth one, and how the whole article ends, it says this. Don't make someone a manager because they're not cutting it in their day job.

[7 : 36] Don't make your cousin Jimmy a manager because your sister asked for a favor. Don't make battlefield promotions under pressure that you'll regret a month or two later.

You have the road map already. Appoint managers who communicate well, who are consistent, who let their people do great work, and who are reasonably competent at what they do.

You know, decent people. Remember them? Remember them? I thought this article was quite funny. Loyal. Loyalty.

It's a word that's not used much anymore. The word loyalty or loyal. People don't talk about that much. How do we see loyalty?

I mean, we're talking about here in the business world. Loyalty to your business. But how does that work its way into our passage? How does loyalty come about from our passage?

[8 : 39] Why would I bring up the word loyalty? What does loyalty, the word loyal, have to do with our text this morning? Loyal to what?

As we come to this part in the book of Acts. Just do it. Be who you are. Let God use you, Christian, to fulfill his mission. Here in our passage we see being deliberately loyal to the gospel.

Deliberately loyal to the gospel. And when I say gospel, the gospel of Jesus Christ. So you could even say loyal to Jesus Christ. Because Jesus Christ is what the gospel entails.

It's about him. Because the gospel is him. He's good news. Loyalty to Christ. Loyalty to Jesus. Loyalty to the good news.

Deliberate loyalty to the gospel. Why do I say deliberately? Deliberately. Deliberately means intentional. Purposely.

[9 : 46] Calculatedly. With intent. By design. We are deliberate.

We are intentional. In our loyalty to the gospel. In our loyalty to Jesus Christ. That's what our text is about this morning. Deliberate.

Loyal. Loyalty to the gospel. Deliberately loyal to the gospel. Deliberate loyalty to Jesus Christ. You see four different parts.

That we're going to split this thing up. In different ways. And looking at different parts. Four different parts though. More or less. The conversion of Lydia. Deliberation of this slave girl.

The conversion of the jailer. And then the protection of the church. And there's four missionaries. Paul. Silas. Timothy. And Luke.

[10 : 43] Four of them. So as we come to the passage. We see. Deliberately loyal to the gospel. That the gospel is for all. To liberate anybody from sin.

The world. And the devil. Realizing we may suffer for our devotion to this gospel truth. Yet. We will do whatever it takes to speak it. That's what our passage entails.

That's what this is about. The gospel is for all. To liberate anybody from sin. The world. From the flesh. From the devil. Realizing that because we have such devotion to this gospel.

We may suffer. It doesn't matter. Because we're going to do whatever it takes. To speak it. And to live it. Because we're loyal to Christ.

We're loyal to the good news of the gospel. So how? How do you know you're loyal to the gospel?

[11 : 46] How do you know if we are loyal to the gospel as a church? How do you know if you're loyal to the gospel as a Christian? How does it show itself that we're loyal to the Lord Jesus Christ?

How does it show itself in your life? Three different ways. First one. We are so loyal to the gospel that number one. We long for gospel liberation.

We long for gospel liberation. We'll look at verses 11 through 18 and 26 to 34. Let me put a statement note for you to kind of unpack this.

We long to see ourselves liberated from the bondages of sin in our lives. We long to stay away from the slope of legalism and license. And we long to see others liberated through faith in Jesus Christ alone.

That's what we long for. That's what we know we're loyal to the gospel. Because we want to see the gospel liberate us in our own lives.

[12 : 49] We want to see the gospel liberate other Christians in their lives. And we want to see the gospel liberate those outside of the church. People to experience freedom in Christ.

That's what we want to see. That's our passion. We long for that. We have a desire for that. That's how you know you're loyal to the gospel. When you have a desire to see people liberated from the gospel.

Yourself and others. Because that's what the gospel does. It liberates. It frees. It frees you from the slope of legalism and license.

Legalism. I have to do this and this and this and this and this to get God's approval. No you don't. It's all found in Christ. Well it's all grace.

I can go do whatever I want to do then. That's license. No. God's grace changes and transforms you to be a people holy unto him. Zealous for good deeds.

[13 : 51] The gospel liberates. We know we're loyal to the gospel when we have a longing to see people liberated from the gospel. Liberated in the gospel. So let's go through our passage.

We'll see this unfold. Starting in verse 11. From Troas to Samothrace. They went to Neapolis and then they came to Philippi.

A Roman colony. They stayed there for many days. Now you've got to understand. Philippi. What were they about? Because as we understand the city of Philippi. Then we'll kind of understand why they did the things they did to Paul.

And to Silas. Philippi prided themselves on being Roman. Had a strong Roman influence.

They observed the imperial cults. Which worshipped Caesar. But they worshipped many other gods too. A very wealthy city. They had many veterans there.

[14 : 51] From the military. They retired from the military. They're living there. Roman citizens. They settled in that territory in Philippi. And for any Roman citizen that came from Italy.

To any Roman colony like Philippi. They had the same rights. As someone who lived in Rome. As someone who lived in the vicinity of Italy. The same rights.

And not only did they have those same rights. But there in Philippi. Or any Roman colony for that matter. They had a Roman form of government. There was Roman law.

They didn't have to pay tribute. They didn't have to pay taxes. Oh. Oh. All of you woke up at that point. Oh. They don't pay taxes? Well I'm listening now.

That's what it was like to live in Philippi. So notice. Verse 13. Sabbath. They went outside the gate to Riverside. Where they were supposing there would be a place of prayer.

[15 : 48] We sat down. We began. Speaking to the women who had assembled. Now there's lots of things here. Why they go to Riverside? Because that's where the Jews would fulfill their laws of purification.

But there was no synagogue there. How do we know that? Because you needed ten Jewish men to have a synagogue. To start the synagogue. Notice there was no Jewish men in the text.

There are no Jewish men. Just women. Only women gathered there. To worship the God of Israel. And notice it says in verse 14.

A certain woman named Lydia from the city of Thyatira. A seller of purple fabrics. A worshiper of God was listening. Thyatira was known for their skill in fine clothes.

For the wealthy. They were very well at solid purple fabrics. So it shows her high economic status.

[16 : 52] So she had some money. And notice. She was not a Jew. She was a pious woman. A worshiper of God. A God fearer. So she was not a Jew. And she was either single.

Widowed. Or divorced. Possibly. Given the situation. Maybe. Most likely widowed. But notice. She heard Paul. She was listening to Paul.

And we know what Paul would do. Paul would speak about Jesus being the Messiah. This is what he would do. And notice what happens. The Lord opened her heart to respond to this thing spoken by Paul.

Paul spoke the message. But only the Lord can open the heart of hearers. So that they can respond to God's message. Which is what he did for Lydia.

God changes the will. God changes the will giving faith. And the response will always be repentant faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. It will always be that.

[17 : 55] God will not change somebody's will. And they will not respond. It doesn't happen that way. It doesn't work that way. So God opened her heart. She responded to the things spoken by Paul. When we proclaim the gospel.

It will not be effective in itself. It takes the Lord changing the heart for a response to come. That's what he does. We speak it.

And God opens the heart. We speak it. And God changes the will. And that's what he did with Lydia. And notice. Verse 15. When she and her household had been baptized.

So the way to show that she and her household responded to the message was baptism. That's how you show. How do you show that you've responded to Christ? This. Not walking the aisle.

Not signing a card. But it's very apparent from the text. That the way you display that to others is. You get dunked. You get baptized. That's how you display that. That's how you show that.

[18 : 53] Now afterwards notice. She was baptized. She and her household. And she urged them to stay with her. Now. This could be a bit awkward.

Because A. She was single. And B. She was a Gentile. But the fact that she was not alone. There was a household. And having stayed with Gentiles before.

They stayed with her. Notice it says. She prevailed upon us. Oh by the way. This is used. This and then later on.

In chapter 16. Is used as a proof text for infant baptism. But this passage clearly shows there's a faith response. Before baptism. That's why we Baptists don't believe that children or infants are baptized.

There's a response to the gospel in the way they show that is by being baptized. But here we see first. How God liberated Lydia. Saving her by her responding to the message of the truth.

[19 : 55] By responding to the gospel. Go to verse 16. Another liberation. And it happened that as we were going to the place of prayer.

A certain slave girl having a spirit of divination met us. Who's bringing her masters much profit by fortune telling. Now Paul and Silas they meet a slave girl. Went to the same place of prayer.

She had a spirit literally of Python. A Pythonian spirit. From the Pythian god Apollo. She was a soothsayer.

A very lucrative business. Brought in lots of money. Well what happened was. The spirit would overcome a woman.

Allowing her to foretell the future. She would be in an unnatural wild state. Under the spirit's influence. So she would almost go into a trance.

[20 : 58] And then she would become erratic. And then the demon would speak. Obviously what was most important to her masters was the money. Those who commit fraud prey on others.

So abuse was most likely present with this woman. This young slave girl. But notice what's going on here. Verse 17. Following after Paul and us.

She kept crying out saying. These men are bond servants of the most high God. Who are proclaiming to you the way of salvation. That's true.

They were. Remember they did the same thing. Sort of the same thing to Jesus. The demons would say. We know who you are. You're the Holy One of God.

They knew who Jesus was. So she's doing the same thing. This spirit was speaking through her. And she's proclaiming. Salvation.

[22 : 00] Salvation. What is that? Salvation is the call to repent. And trust Jesus the eternal son. And one receives forgiveness of sins. The Holy Spirit. A changed life. The blessing of being part of God's kingdom.

Now and in the future. At the resurrection. That's what this entails. They're going to tell you the way of salvation. There's a problem though.

First. Given the fact that she represented many gods. It makes her testimony really confusing.

I mean. How were her hearers. Who heard her give glory to other gods. Supposed to take this statement. That she just made about Paul and Silas. I mean that's confusing. Not to mention the fact.

She really had no idea what she was talking about. Or maybe we should say it. The Spirit. Notice what happens in the text. Verse 18. She continued doing this.

[22 : 56] For many days. But Paul was greatly annoyed. Or disturbed. Burdened. He turned to the Spirit. Not to the girl. Notice. Turned to the Spirit.

He commanded to come out of her in the name of Jesus Christ. And it came out at that very moment. The power of Jesus Christ. Overshadowed the Spirit.

The gospel liberates people. The gospel frees them. The gospel transforms them. The gospel takes someone. In a state of sin.

And under the bondage of sin. And the devil and the world. And liberates them. Frees them. Transforms them. Changes them. That's the gospel. And you know what?

It does that to us too. As Christians. The gospel continues to liberate us from sin. The gospel continues to free us from the bondage of sin.

[23 : 55] Continues to change us. And transforms us into the image of Christ. That's what the gospel does in us. Loyalty to the gospel.

So the liberation of Lydia. You see the liberation of the slave girl. Now another liberation. We're going to get into this in just a moment. They get arrested.

They get beaten. They get thrown in prison. Go to verse 26. They're in prison. They're singing praises to God. Verse 26.

Suddenly there came a great earthquake. So the foundations of the prison house were shaken. All the doors flung open. The chains were all loose. Verse 27.

The jailer. He was roused out of his sleep. He saw the prison doors open. He drew his sword. He's about to kill himself. Why? Because the penalty for allowing escaped prisoners was death.

- [24 : 53] To allow escaped prisoners to escape was death. He didn't want to be shamed. He wanted to have honor. Maybe the prisoners left their cells because of the destruction. Maybe they're all huddled in one safe place. Look at verse 28. He's about to kill himself. But Paul cried out with a loud voice saying, Do yourself no harm for we are all here. Notice how Paul saved the jailer's life.
- Giving attention to his welfare. While Paul was in chains suffering for the gospel. The jailer called for lights.
- Rushed in trembling with fear. The jailer fell down before Paul and Silas. Out of respect for them. And out of fear that some divine force was at work.
- He wished to know more of this teaching. What is this all about? Notice his question. Verse 30. He brought them out. Sirs, what must I do to be saved?
- [25 : 54] Literally. What is necessary for me to do to be saved? The word necessary. Guess which word Luke uses here. Day. D-E-I.
- Delta Epsilon Yoda. What is necessary? What must I do? He heard about this religious proclamation. Whatever's going on.
- God was at work. I need to be saved. I need to be freed. I need to be liberated. What do I need to do? Simple yet profound. 31.
- Believe in the Lord Jesus and you shall be saved. You and your household. Faith in Jesus will save the jailer. And will save his household. If they believe in Jesus as well.
- Trust in Jesus. His person and work. There's no other way to be saved. There is no other way to be saved. To confess Jesus as Lord.
- [26 : 56] Is to trust and commit oneself to him. To embrace him as Lord. That's the essence of the gospel. That's the thing that frees us. It liberates us. The gospel. It's the good news.
- We long to see people liberated from the gospel. Notice what happens. Verse 32. Paul and Silas.
- They spoke the word of the Lord to him. Together with all who were in his house. So he gave them more teaching. What does it mean about salvation? Maybe he started at the beginning. Maybe he started with the Old Testament. Maybe he worked his way through the Old Testament.
- But it's showing how Jesus fulfilled the Old Testament. The promise was there. And with a heart of gratitude. The jailer took Paul and Silas.
- And washed their wounds. Notice 33. Washed their wounds. Notice how God changed him.
- [27 : 57] Notice how his values changed. He cared for them. He was willing for his household to be taught. He had a desire for baptism. He was totally liberated.
- Transformed. That's what the gospel does. And notice what else he does. Verse 34. He brought them into his house.
- Set food before them. He rejoiced along with his entire household. That he had believed in the one true God. They were ecstatic. So they're eating. I mean here's Paul and Silas as prisoners.
- And they're eating together. Because God has saved them. These who once were enemies and separated.
- Now have a new fellowship. See the gospel liberates. Not just at the divine level. But it reconciles and liberates at the human level as well.
- [28 : 57] Notice in all these things. In all three of these instances that we looked at. With Lydia. With the slave girl. With the jailer. Notice.

Paul did not push for political change. Social change. Legal change. Economic change. The gospel calls for personal change.

Friend. It's not about getting people to vote Republican versus Democrat. Or vice versa. It's not about people trying to see that you must be more of a capitalist rather than a communist.

Or vice versa. We don't call people to some type of political change. Social change. Economic change. We call for personal change.

That's the gospel. It liberates them. It changes. It transforms them personally from the inside out. See when the gospel breaks into a person's life.

[29 : 55] Their whole life transforms. The practices of their whole life is renovated. They've been totally liberated and freed from the bondage to this world.

I mean think about it. How does the gospel impact people? It alters their desires. The desire for homosexuals.

A homosexual desire. It changes that. It changes the heterosexual too. Because desire is not just for sex. It desires for Christ. It alters their desires.

It changes their dreams. It transforms their values. It changes their ambitions. Relationships. Their whole life outlook is different now.

How do we know. That we are a church that's loyal to the gospel. We long. To see people liberated.

[30 : 58] With the gospel. We long for that. We long for that. Not just in their lives. But in our own lives. Are you here. And not a follower of Jesus.

Are you here. And have not been liberated. Do you need to be freed. Do you need to come to Christ. You deserve God's justice. You deserve his judgment.

Yet God was so merciful. Sending Jesus. Who lived. And who died. And who rose. Repent. And put your trust in him. He will free you. He will transform you.

That's the gospel. So how do we know. We're a church. How do we know. We're a Christian. Loyal to Jesus Christ. Loyal to the gospel.

First. First. We long for gospel liberation. In our lives. The lives of other Christians. And others outside the church. Number two. We submit to gospel persecution.

[32 : 01] We submit to gospel persecution. What do I mean. We're so loyal to the gospel. That we're ready to face trials.

Suffering. Or persecution for the sake of the gospel. But our joy will be found in the Lord Jesus Christ. And what he's done for us. Our joy is not found in our circumstances.

Our joy is not found in our stuff and our things. Our joy is found in Christ. Our joy is found in the gospel. Because it's about the gospel. You get that there's a theme in the book of Acts.

You think so. Nah. I'm just crazy. That's what my kids think. Verse 19. Now we're going 19.

So. Liberates Lydia. Liberates the slave girl. 19. Well the masters saw that their hope. But the prophet was gone. They seized Paul and Silas.

[33 : 02] And dragged them into the marketplace. Before the authorities. They weren't happy campers. Our prophet is gone. Their source of good money making.

Had come to an end. Money was more important to them. Than this girl. Her well being. Her dignity. Her welfare. They didn't care about that.

So they grabbed Paul and Silas. Notice not Luke and Timothy. Why? Luke and Timothy. They were Gentiles. Paul and Silas. They were Jews. Dragged them.

To the marketplace. Where the magistrates. Sat on the judgment seat. The chief magistrates were there. They complained. These men are thrown. They're sending to devotion. They're being Jews.

Notice anti-Semitic. They're proclaiming customs. It is not lawful for us to accept. To observe. Being Romans. They're bringing a foreign religion.

[34 : 00] Their customs are not acceptable. To us being Romans. Now. Rome's policy. Was religious tolerance. Unless.

A religion was destructive to others. So. These Jewish customs are not practiced by Romans. They're destructive to us as Romans.

They appealed to the Roman pride. This religion is not sanctioned. Of course this was a crock.

Because it was about their money. Had nothing to do with what they were saying. Had nothing to do with what Paul and Silas were preaching. Monetary interest outweighed people.

Well. If they're disturbing the city. That pushes the magistrates. They had to do something. The kids did not. Just allow this. And notice how. The appeal to being Romans.

[34 : 58] That's what got the crowd involved. Verse 22. And the crowd was up together against them. So now they got this misinformation. Well the crowds. Oh yeah. Yeah. We're Romans. Yeah.

And notice what happens. The chief magistrates. They did something. They tore the robes off them. And proceeded to order them to be beaten with rods. They pulled their shirts off their backs. And they beat them with bundled rods.

Flogging them upon their bare backs. This was an injustice. Because no Roman was supposed to be flogged. No Roman should have faced the rods.

The bundled rods have been beaten like this. No Roman citizen should have this happen. Especially without a fair trial. They assumed that they weren't Romans.

No fair trial was given. They thought of them as evil doers. Who wanted to hurt others with their beliefs. And when they beat them as a way to discourage them. You stop this teaching right now.

[36 : 01] And the beating was done publicly. To shame them. Notice after many blows. Verse 23. Threw them into prison. Commanded the jailer to guard them securely. Oh he did. Receiving this command. Verse 24.

He threw them into the inner prison. He fastened their feet to wooden stocks. Which was tight and painful. The confinement was not pleasant. They had the sleep.

Either sitting up or lying on the floor. Which was dark. Grimy. Rats and mice. Blah blah blah. It was miserable. Horrible.

25. About midnight. Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns of praise to God. Well that's a stark contrast. Wow.

[37 : 00] What a testimony to the other inmates. Who were listening to them it says. They heard Jesus in song. Maybe the other guards that were around.

Maybe they are hearing them too. It's kind of funny. Either these guys. Paul and Silas were holy men. Or they were total nut cases. They definitely weren't boring.

Paul and Silas would stand as examples to this young church. That suffering cannot hinder the gospel. Now we're just told about Lydia. About the slave girl.

About the jailer. Lydia's household. The jailer's household. But most likely. Other people responded to the gospel. So this is this new young church. And Paul and Silas would stand as examples.

To show them. Suffering can never hinder the gospel. As a matter of fact. It gave Paul and Silas.

[38 : 00] Another opportunity. To boldly proclaim the gospel to others. As well as having an opportunity. To have joy in the midst of suffering. To display joy in the midst of suffering.

So they acknowledged. God's sovereign control. Putting their trust in him. Amid this injustice. They testified to God's presence.

And their confidence in him. No matter their circumstances. We're loyal to the gospel. How do we know? We submit to gospel persecution. Gospel suffering.

We're loyal to Christ. We're loyal to the good news. So much so. We'll face the suffering. So friend.

What opportunities. Is God giving you today? How is he wanting you to suffer. For the sake of the gospel today? Will you submit to that?

[39 : 04] How has he put that neighbor in your life? That co-worker? Your mom? Your brother? Your cousin?

Your son? Your daughter? Your grandson? Grandparents? How has he put them into your life? For you?

To have an opportunity? To show. I'm loyal to Christ. I'm loyal to the gospel. So it means. I'm going to suffer. I'm going to suffer.

But I'm loyal to Christ. I'm going to show that. I'm loyal to the Lord Jesus Christ. Because you've been so gracious to me. You've liberated me. Here comes the suffering.

We submit to that. So there's a longing. For gospel liberation. There's a submission to gospel persecution. Here's number three. Number three.

[40 : 05] We push for gospel expansion. We push. For the gospel to expand. We long for people to be liberated from the gospel.

Us and others. We're submitting to be facing persecution. Suffering. Since we're committed to the gospel. Third. We push.

For the gospel to expand. In other words. We should utilize. Our rights. Only in so far. As it will further the cause of the gospel.

And the future of God's church. Rights that we have. We use them. For what purpose? For the cause of Christ.

I'm not as crazy as you think. Flipping chapter 1. Verse 12 through 14. And 27. 29. This correlates perfect with what we're talking about here. This is exactly what Paul did. Starting in verse 35 to 40.

[41 : 04] This is exactly what he did. He uses the rights that he had. To further the cause of the gospel. Notice. 35. 35. The jailer.

Eating food. They're happy. The jailer says. I've got to take you guys back to prison. I know. I'm okay with that. So they go back to prison. Next morning comes. Chief magistrate.

Center policeman. Saying release those men. Let them go. Jailer informed. Paul and Silas. Free to go. Go in peace. No biggie. See ya.

Well this kind of. Is weird. It's almost like a hasty decision. Why. Why. Why did they do this all of a sudden? No say. Maybe they thought it was a hasty decision.

Maybe they said. You know. We. We probably shouldn't have done that. Maybe they were superstitious. Romans were known to be very superstitious. So with that earthquake. They're like. Oh no.

[42 : 05] The reason why the earthquake. Was because of those guys. Release those men. We don't know. We're not told. 36 though. Jailer reports these words. Chief magistrate. Sam. Go in peace. But Paul said to them. Notice he doesn't say this to the jailer. Specifically. He says to them. So in other words. The policemen. All those that were there. What?

What? Notice the four different parts. You beat us publicly. We aren't given a trial. We're Romans. And you throw us into prison.

Now you want to sweep it under the rug secretly? Uh-uh. Uh-uh. Girlfriend? Uh-uh. I don't think so.

Notice what he says. Come out. Come out and go in peace. No. You let them come themselves and bring us out. Come and publicly escort us out to show that we are innocent.

[43 : 09] You shamed us. You beat us publicly and shamed us. So now you come over to the jail. Not every day the chief magistrates go to the jail. Like can you see President Obama?

I'm going to go to the jail. And go over there. You know. Can you imagine him going to the jail? I mean that doesn't happen. So the chief magistrates go to the jail. And they bring out Paul and Silas.

So it's telling them. Whoa. What's going on? Hey. Whoa. Whoa. Hey. Weren't those the guys that they just beat up? Oh yeah. What did they do? Oh wow. I guess they kind of made a boo-boo. Uh-oh. Somebody did something wrong. So they're kind of showing them that.

Hey. We shame these guys. So now we're shamed. Paul says. Nuh-uh. That's what you guys. You got to come over here. You got to bring us out yourselves. I don't think so. It was against the law to Cain.

A Roman citizen. So they were owed an apology at the very least. Their rights were violated. They were shamed.

[44 : 05] The role of the magistrates. In a Roman colony. Is to protect the rights of Romans. Duh. If they failed.

Then there would be major repercussions upon them. You know. It's ironic too. They said. They're proclaiming customs.

Which it is not lawful for us to accept. Or to observe being Romans. Remember when they said that? And yet what they just did. Was definitely not Roman.

They came these guys in public. Both of them were Roman citizens. Well how did they know they were Roman citizens? Like did they have a record?

Well there was actually a proof of citizenship. Like some people would have like a birth certificate. Or they have like something called a professia. But most people didn't carry that. I mean that was like a big wooden thing.

[45 : 01] You didn't have to pull out you know your wallet or anything like that. Because the wallets wouldn't be like this big. Yeah I got my wallet here with big old wooden thing. I'm a Roman citizen. You know signed by Caesar. Puts the stamp of approval.

Now it didn't work like that. But I'll tell you. If you falsely claim to be a Roman citizen. And you weren't. They kill you.

You didn't go around saying hey I'm a Roman citizen. You didn't normally do that. But why does Paul bring this up now? Why didn't he bring it up when they were just about to beat him?

Why didn't he say wait a minute. I don't know I'm a citizen. I'm going to get my wallet out. See. I didn't do that. Why is he bringing it up now?

Afterwards. Two reasons we think. First. It could have been confusing. Because they would not have understood where his loyalties lie.

[46 : 05] See he was not faithful to Rome. Paul was faithful to the gospel. So that's the first reason why he didn't bring it while they were about to beat him. Because it would have shown that he's loyal to Rome.

No. He's not loyal to Rome. He's loyal to the gospel. He's loyal to Christ. That's the first reason. A second reason though. At this point. It really was going to speak.

It was going to speak on behalf of the church. Because. It was a way to help justice be met on behalf of those in the new church. In other words. This kind of injustice.

That was done to Paul and Silas. Would not be good for other Roman Christians. Who might face persecution for the faith. It was a way to give added protection to God's new community.

That's why he brings it up here. And that's why it would speak volumes at this point. Because if they were to come against any of those who were Roman citizens.

[47 : 04] Most of the people that were in this new church. Most of them were most likely Roman citizens. They were. So. To keep them from being persecuted.

For the Christian faith. It was a way to give them added protection to God's new community. So what does that mean for us? We use our rights as Americans.

Only in so far as it will help further and advance the gospel. And advance God's church. As a local church friends. This should be our goal.

It's the gospel. It's not about being good and nice in the community. It's not about people being more conservative versus liberal. It's not about people being more capitalist versus communist or vice versa.

That's not what this is about. If you think that's what it's about in this next election. Friend you're wrong. You're really wrong. Because.

[48 : 08] Whether you're a conservative or whether you're a liberal. We both believe in the same thing. And I say what are you talking about? We both believe.

That people are just kind of. Mean. And if you're a liberal. You think the government should do that. To keep things in check. And if you're a conservative.

You think more individuals should do that. But you know what? That's not going to solve the problem. Because the problem. Is here. The problem is the heart. The problem is that people.

Do not worship Christ. The problem is people. Do not know Jesus. The problem is people. Have not believed the gospel. So. That needs to be.

As Americans. As followers of Jesus. Who live in America. We use our rights. In so far. As it's going to advance the gospel.

[49 : 05] And it's going to further the church. That's why we use our rights. Notice how the story continues.

The policemen. Verse 38. They put these words. They were afraid. Oh great. We just beat up Romans. Nice. Now we're going to get it. Notice 39.

They came and appealed to them. They brought. They brought them out. And they're begging them. Please leave the city. Please. We're so sorry we did this. We should not have done that. And Paul and Silas. Could have just said.

Nope. We're going to stay here. You know. They could have done that. But notice how Paul and Silas. Just graciously responded. Okay. We're going to give up our rights.

Notice. Notice this. Notice. They gave up their rights. And they left. Now they could have said. No. We're sticking around. We use our rights. Only in so far.

[50 : 01] As it's going to advance the gospel. And it's going to further the kingdom. So. They went out of the prison. Entered the house of Lydia. They met with the brother.

They encouraged him. And then they left. Encouraged the young church toward growth. Encouraged the young church toward stability in the gospel.

And just as a side note by the way. This church in Philippi was a very dear church to Paul. He loved the church in Philippi. And they were the ones that actually helped financially support him.

They were one of the ones. The main ones to do that. Deliberately loyal to the gospel? Yes. We long for people to be liberated.

Because of the gospel. We submit. To suffering for the gospel. And we push. For the gospel to expand. Not necessarily our rights.

[50 : 57] The gospel. Christ. Take a few moments. And. It's a few moments of silence for what you think. And to pray. What we've seen in God's word this morning.

Take a few moments to think about. And to ponder what we've seen. We've. We've been encouraged. For. The gospel to be central.

And. To be our. Focus as a church. And as. Individual Christians. And we'll do our time of giving. Sing our last two songs. In our closing prayer.

And we'll have our. Fellowship meal together. Let's think. And pray. We'll be at peace.

Thank you.