

Questions the Jailer May Have Asked

Sunday, September 6th, 1987

Acts 16:22-34

“And the multitude rose up together against them: and the magistrates rent off their clothes, and commanded to beat them. And when they had laid many stripes upon them, they cast them into prison, charging the jailor to keep them safely: Who, having received such a charge, thrust them into the inner prison, and made their feet fast in the stocks. And at midnight Paul and Silas prayed, and sang praises unto God: and the prisoners heard them. And suddenly there was a great earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison were shaken: and immediately all the doors were opened, and every one’s bands were loosed. And the keeper of the prison awaking out of his sleep, and seeing the prison doors open, he drew out his sword, and would have killed himself, supposing that the prisoners had been fled. But Paul cried with a loud voice, saying, Do thyself no harm: for we are all here. Then he called for a light, and sprang in, and came trembling, and fell down before Paul and Silas, And brought them out, and said, Sirs, what must I do to be saved? And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house. And they spake unto him the word of the Lord, and to all that were in his house. And he took them the same hour of the night, and washed their stripes; and was baptized, he and all his, straightway. And when he had brought them into his house, he set meat before them, and rejoiced, believing in God with all his house.”

I’m going to read a passage of Scripture from the Book of Acts, the 16th Chapter. I’ll begin reading with verse 22 and read through verse 34. I have an unusual subject today, but I think it is interesting. I think it will be very helpful to you if you will listen carefully to the whole message.

The title of this message is: “SOME QUESTIONS THE PHILIPPIAN JAILER MAY HAVE ASKED PAUL.” Do you suppose that the only question he asked Paul may have been, “What must I do to be saved?” Did he not have other questions?

Let’s read the story beginning with verse 22 of Acts: 16: *“The multitude rose up together and the magistrates rent off their clothes and commanded the apostles to be beaten. When they had laid many stripes upon them, they cast them into prison charging the jailer to keep them and not let them go. Who having received that charge thrust them into the dungeon, the inner prison, and made their feet fast in the stocks.”*

This is the first time that we have run across this man’s name or his business, he was a jailer. *“At midnight, Paul and Silas prayed and sang praises unto God and the prisoners heard them. Suddenly, there was a great earth quake so that the foundations of the prison were shaken and immediately, all the doors of the prison were open and every*

prisoner's bands loosed. And the jailer awaking out of his sleep, and seeing the doors opened, he drew out his sword."

He wasn't under conviction, he wasn't out there listening to Paul singing hymns and songs and praying, he was asleep; the man was asleep. Here is a man on the verge of committing suicide. The magistrate had instructed him to keep these men in the dungeon and not let them escape. He thought that they were all gone.

He knew that being responsible for their safe keeping that he would be slain. He was going to do it himself. He took out his sword and would have killed himself supposing the prisoners had fled. Paul cried out with a loud voice, *"Wait, do thyself no harm; we are all here."*

Then, the jailer called for a light, came into the dungeon trembling and fell down before Paul and Silas and said, *"Sirs; what must I do to be saved?"* Paul replied, *"Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved and thy house."*

Watch these next verses, *"And they spake unto him the Word of the Lord and unto all that were in his house and he took them the same night and washed their stripes and gave them food. He brought them into his house and set meat before them and was baptized, he and all his, believing in God with all his house."*

Now, you know, I have heard a lot of sermons on the Philippian Jailer and I know that you have too. About as far as most folks go on this matter of the conversion of the Philippian Jailer, is to tell about his frightening experience in the earthquake and the question, *"What must I do to be saved?"*

I just know that this whole evening that he spent in his home with the apostle Paul was with the greatest preacher who ever lived outside of the Lord Jesus Christ. He spent a whole evening in his home with a man who left the deepest mark on the human race of any man except Jesus Christ, the apostle Paul.

I know that he must have had question after question after question. The Scripture says; *"He took Paul and Silas into his house. He ministered unto them. He washed their stripes; he attended their wounds."* The Scripture says, *"He set food before them and entertained them at his table."* The Scripture also says that *"Paul preached to him and taught him the Word of God and all that were in his household."*

So, *"What must I do to be saved?"* and *"Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ,"* was certainly not the whole conversation between the Philippian Jailer and the apostle Paul. I will tell

you this, a man cannot call on Him in whom he has not believed and a man cannot believe in Him of whom he has not heard.

Men are not different. If I had been born two thousand years ago, I might have been the Philippian Jailer. So, I know that there would be some questions that I would have for the apostle Paul.

This man was an ignorant Gentile. He was awakened by the power of God and he was seeking mercy. He asked Paul some questions and I have what I believe to be, the questions that he would have asked the apostle Paul. I want to give them to you today:

First of all: As he and Paul sat in his house at the table or in the family room, he would say to Paul, *“What must I do to be saved, and Paul would reply; “You must believe on the Lord Jesus Christ?”* And then the Jailer might ask *“You say that salvation is by believing on the Lord Jesus Christ. Who is the Lord Jesus Christ? You just tell me, who is the Lord Jesus Christ?”*

I believe that Paul would then say to him, *“Well, first of all; His very name indicates His Person, the Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord, meaning, God Almighty. “There is one Lord, one faith and one baptism. There is one Lord, the God of Heaven and earth.”*

The Scripture says in Isaiah 9:6; *“Unto us a child is born; unto us a Son is given, a child is born and a Son is given.”* You might say, *“Preacher; does “born” and “given” mean the same thing?”* No, that is not the same thing. A child is born from a woman’s womb that never lived on this earth before.

When a woman gives birth to a child, that is the first time that the child has seen the light of day and it is the first time that the woman has seen the child; a child is born. But, he says; *“A Son is given.”* In the body of that child that is born of woman there is a Son not born, but given.

Christ wasn’t created or born, *“He is the only begotten Son of God.”* He was with God from the beginning. *“In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God and the Word was God and all things were made by Him. Without Him was not anything made and the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us.”* He is the Lord!

Isaiah said, *“Immanuel, (God with us), the Lord.”* His name is Jesus and He is the Lord Jesus. He is Lord, Son of God, Jesus, Son of man. When the angel appeared to Joseph, he said; *“Fear not to take unto thee Mary to be thy wife. That Holy thing conceived in*

her is the Son of God. She shall bring forth a Son and thou shalt call the name (of that Son, who is the Son of God and the Son of man), Jesus, for He shall save."

The New Testament word "*Jesus*" is the Old Testament word "*Joshua*." Joshua is God my Saviour. "*Call His name Jesus, (Saviour, Joshua, God my Saviour).*" Do you see that? "*He shall save His people from their sins.*" He is the Christ of God.

As he talked to the Philippian Jailer, he said; "He is the Lord." The Lord our God is one God but three persons. He is Father, Son and Holy Spirit. He is one God. He is the Lord. He is Jesus the man, the Son of man and He is the Christ.

You see; "*the Christ*" is not a name, it is an office, Jesus the Christ. He said to the religious people, "*What think ye of Christ?*" They said, "*He is the Son of David.*" Yes, He is the seed of woman; He is the seed of Abraham; He is the root of Jesse; He is the Lion of the tribe of Judah and He is the Son of David.

Jesus Christ is the Messiah, He is the Redeemer, and He is the Christ. God said to Moses from among the people, "*I will raise up a prophet like unto you; Him ye shall hear.*" He speaks My Words. Christ is that prophet. He is the Priest after the order of Melchizedek. He is the King like David. He is Prophet, Priest and King.

You see, in the Old Testament, there were prophets, priests and there were kings. No man ever held all three of those offices. They were all types and pictures of Christ. When Christ came, He was our Prophet to reveal God; He was our Priest to redeem us from sin and He was King to reign over us. He is Prophet, Priest and King. That is who He is, He is the Christ.

The angels of God announced His birth; they said, "*Unto you is born this day in the city of David, a Saviour, Christ the Lord.*" Then, the angels announced His resurrection; they said, "*He is not here; He is risen.*" When He ascended to heaven, the angels said to the disciples; "*This same Jesus will come again.*"

Well, the Jailer would sit there and say; "I'm seeing what you are saying but I have another question. You say that He is the Christ, the Messiah and the Redeemer, the Promised One, the Prophesied One, the Pictured One. He is Prophet, Priest and King; He is the Messiah, the Saviour of the world. He is the one to whom we look for salvation."

I ask you this question; who appointed Him to this office? Did He take it upon Himself? Who says that He is the Messiah? Who says that He is the Redeemer? Who says that He is the Christ?

Moses didn't appoint himself a prophet; God did. Aaron didn't make himself high priest; God did. David didn't even make himself king; *"No man taketh this office or honor unto himself but he that is called of God."* David did not make himself king. *"So also Christ glorified not Himself to be made the High Priest but He who said unto Him; Thou art My Son; this day have I begotten Thee."* God made Him our High Priest.

The Scripture says in Hebrews 10, *"Wherefore; when He cometh into the world, He saith; a body Thou hast prepared Me. Lo I come to do Thy will O God, by the which will we are sanctified through the offering of that body of Jesus Christ once and for all."*

Who appointed Him the Messiah? The Father appointed Him. Who sent Him? *"In the fullness of time, God sent forth His Son, made of a woman, made under the Law, His own Son to redeem us who were born under the Law."* God sent Him! God made Him High Priest; God made Him the Christ. He said, *"I come not to do My will but the will of Him that sent Me."* Who sent Him? *"As My Father sent Me; I send you."*

The Jailer may have had another question. "I see that He is the Lord Jesus Christ. I see that God the Father appointed Him, anointed Him, ordained Him and sent Him. What did He do when He came? You say that He came to the earth and lived on this earth. What was the purpose for His coming?"

"Did He come as a reformer? Did He fail? Did He come as a King who was rejected? Why did He come into this world? What was the purpose for His coming into this world? Why did God become a man? Why did God take upon Himself the form and likeness of sinful flesh? Why did He do that?"

Paul would say, *"This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptation; that Christ Jesus the Lord came into this world to save sinners, to redeem sinners, to deliver sinners, of whom I am chief."* That is why He came.

Christ said Himself; *"I'm not come to condemn the world but that the world through Me might be saved."* The world is already condemned. *"I am come that they might have life (that is why I am come), and have it more abundantly."*

He said, *"The Son of man is come to seek and to save the lost."* The apostle Peter said, *"Christ has suffered for sin, the just for the unjust that He might bring us to God."* In 2 Corinthians 5:19, the Scripture says; *"God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself."*

While our Lord was here on this earth, He went about doing good. He healed the sick; He gave sight to the blind; He made the lame to walk; He opened deaf ears and He raised the dead. These acts of mercy were done to illustrate His spiritual mercies to sinners. The Lord Jesus Christ didn't just come to cause a blind man to see physically; He was illustrating why He came, He came to make those spiritually blind to see the glory of God and the mercy of God.

He came that spiritually deaf men may hear. *"Blessed are your ears that they hear."* He said, *"They hear."* He said, *"The natural man has eyes but he does not see; he has ears but he does not hear; he has a heart but he does not understand."* When Christ opens our eyes and opens our ears, we see and we hear.

He came that the spiritually dead might live. When He stood outside the grave of Lazarus who had been dead for four days and was corrupted and said; *"Lazarus, come forth."* He had been dead for four days. He had been lying in the tomb. He came walking out. He did that to illustrate the fact that the, *"Son quickeneth the dead."*

They that are dead in sin hear His voice and live. He came that the spiritually lame might walk. All of these physical miracles illustrate His spiritual miracles.

It took a miracle to put the stars in place
It took a miracle to put the moon in space.

But when He saved my soul
Cleansed and made me whole
That took a miracle of love and grace.

Why did He come? *"He came to seek and to save the lost."* He came on a mission. He came to perform a task. He came to redeem a people. *"I am come that they might have life."* That is why He came.

He didn't come down here to set up a Kingdom. He didn't come to reform the Roman Government. He didn't come down here to make the world a better place in which to live. He came to call out of Adam's race, a people and make them like unto Himself.

He said, *"My Kingdom is not of this world. If my Kingdom were of this world, my servants would fight. My Kingdom is not of this world; My Kingdom is righteousness and peace and to do the will of My Father."* That is why He came; He came to redeem a people.

Well, you say; “He came to earth to bring us to God, to save a people; what did He do to bring us to God?” What had to be done to save these people? Couldn’t God just decide that He was going to overlook everything, make a people His own and take them to heaven?” No sir! Christ had to come down here and meet two obstacles, the two obstacles that stand in the way of God redeeming sinners and forgiving sinners.

First of all: One of them is His Law and one of them is His justice. You see, God is a holy God. He is holy and we are sinners. God is light and we are darkness. God is truth and we are liars. All men are liars. God is life and we are death. God is holy and we are unholy.

We are not like God. We have lost the image of God. There is nothing about us, from the soul of our feet to the top of our heads are like God. We are full of dead men’s bones. We are putrid, running, sores that have not been mollified or bound up with ointment. There is nothing good in us. God is infinitely, incomprehensively, holy, *“Dwelling in a light to which no man can approach.”*

Christ had to come down here in the dunghill and meet two obstacles to take these beggars to the throne. First He had to meet the obstacle of God’s Law, the holy, unchangeable, immutable, infinite, and perfect Law of God, the immaculate Law of God is still in effect.

If you want to go to heaven by what you do, I will tell you what to do; you keep God’s Law perfectly in every jot and tittle, word and deed. It can’t be done. Christ did it, Christ the man did it. He came down here as a man, bone of our bone, flesh of our flesh, born of a woman, made under the Law. He was subject to the law of the family, the law of the land, the law of the Levites and the moral Law of Moses.

He perfectly obeyed the Law. He *“loved God with all His heart, mind, soul and strength”* and He *“loved His neighbor as Himself. He was tempted in all points yet without sin.”* He perfectly pleased God Almighty. That has never been said about any human being. It had to be so. He did it representatively. He did it as our Federal Head. He did it as our Substitute. He did it not for Himself, but for us. Do you see that?

“By one man’s disobedience, many were made sinners.” I’m talking about Adam’s fall. *“By one man’s obedience, we were made righteous.”* By Adam’s disobedience sin and death and judgment passed upon us.

There are just two men, the first Adam and the second Adam. *“In Adam all die; in Christ they are made alive. The first Adam is the man from earth, (the red earth) and the second*

man is the Lord from heaven. As we have born the image of the earthy, we shall bear the image of the heavenly.” That is representation, Christ obeyed God’s Law.

I have righteousness. You will probably say, “Preacher; you are not any more righteous than I am.” You are right on that count. My thoughts are like your thoughts. My imaginations are like yours. My righteousness is not my own, it is His. He did it for me. He did it for all who believe.

We have the righteousness of God in Christ. He is our representative. That is the reason that we lay hold of Christ and believe in Christ. He is our Righteousness. Read Romans 10 and see if it does not say that. Romans 4 uses the word imputed nine times. It says that Christ was imputed, counted and reckoned for righteousness.

The second thing or obstacle that Christ met was the justice of God. *“God must and will punish sin.”* He said, *“I will in no wise clear the guilty. The soul that sinneth shall die.”* Have you ever sinned, then you have to die? The Scripture says, *“Sin, when it is finished, brings forth death.”* Do you believe that? God said that.

That is why Christ died. He came down here and He met the Law of God and obeyed it. At Calvary He met the Justice of God. The sword of God’s Justice plunged into my Substitute because *“He was made sin for us. He knew no sin. He bore our sins in His body on the tree.”* Sin killed Him; sin slew Him and *“He made His soul an offering for sin.”*

You say, “Why won’t the believer die?” The reason is because Christ has died. Why won’t we go to hell? The reason is because Christ went to hell. He didn’t go literally into the lake of fire but hell is to be separated from God. He said, *“My God; why hast Thou forsaken Me?”*

Christ did all this as a representative. I can’t teach you that; I wish I could and tell you. The Holy Ghost has to teach you. There are two words to learn in this thing of salvation. The two words are substitution and satisfaction. Christ is our Substitute. He has taken our place.

You boys that play ball have a substitute. He goes in and you come out. You both can’t go in at the same time or it is not a substitute. When he comes in, you go out. When Christ came down here and met the Law and obeyed it, He did it for me, in my place, in my stead. When He went to the cross, He hung there in my place and now it is finished.

I believe that the Jailer looked at Paul and he likes what he hears. "I like it. I like what I hear. That is my only hope." The sinner's only hope is a Substitute before a Holy God.

Why was all of this necessary? It seems like an awful price to pay; it is but God is holy. God sent Christ down here in order that He might be holy and forgive folks like me and you in order that "*He might be Just and justify the ungodly.*" That is why He did it. He died unto our sins. "*He was buried and rose again.*"

Christ is the Son of God and the Son of man. He is the Messiah. He obeyed the Law that we might be righteous. He died that we might live. How do I know that the Father accepted Him? If I trust Christ and believe Christ and rest in Christ and cast my soul upon Christ, how do I know that the Father accepted Christ Jesus?

I will tell you how you know; in Acts 17:31, the Scripture says; "*God hath appointed a day in which He will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom He hath ordained, whereof, He has given assurance to all men in that He raised Him from the dead.*"

Jesus Christ, as my scapegoat bore my sins, died and was put in that tomb. If He is still there and I am still lost, then my sins are not paid for and God is not satisfied. When God Almighty raised Him from the dead, He was giving assurance to the whole world that He had accepted all that Christ did and all that Christ obeyed and all that Christ performed.

Back there in the Old Testament when the High Priest went in the Holy of Holies once a year with the blood to make atonement on the mercy seat, unto the Shechaniah glory of God; how did the people out there, outside the tabernacle know that God had accepted the atonement? How did they know?

I'll tell you how they knew; they knew when He came out of that Holy of Holies. If He had not come out, if He had died in there, they would say; "God didn't accept Him." He did come out. Our Lord Jesus Christ went into the grave but He came out.

The Jailer may have another question, "Where is He now?" Paul would say, "*He is at the right hand of the Majesty on High.*" What is He doing? "*He is our fore-runner. He has entered the veil, within the veil for us.*" He is our Advocate. He is pleading our cause. He is our Intercessor, He is our Mediator and He prays for us.

Yes sir, He does intercede for other sinners like me. I believe and I obtain mercy. If God can save me then He can save any sinner.

