



July 9

Passage: **Acts 16**

And so our hated, now beloved, Saul becomes... Paul! Yes, THE Paul you've probably heard about many times, who wrote most of the New Testament. God has truly done a work in his life, and he is telling anyone and everyone. Our reading today will be in Acts 16, but once again I'm going to give you a little back story. Remember I told you that Saul, now Paul, was one of the greatest missionaries ever? Well that's what he's been doing between chapter 9 and where we pick up today. He's been going so many places, telling all kinds of people, seeing many people come to know Christ, and collecting a few other missionaries as he goes, Silas being one of them. At the beginning of our chapter he adds Timothy, and then they meet Lydia, who becomes a Christian. And now we get to read!

READ & DIG:

READ Acts 16:16-18

This might seem like an odd thing- a girl follows them around telling everyone that they are men of God who are proclaiming the way to be saved, and it makes Paul so annoyed that he casts the evil spirit out of her! Why wouldn't he want people to know that? What was his problem? Imagine, though, if Brother Stephen stood up to preach Sunday morning and a person kept standing and yelling to the whole church that Brother Stephen was such a godly man and he knew how to be saved and on and on- it would be so distracting that we would actually miss the message, wouldn't we? But, the situation backfires on Paul.

READ Acts 16:19-24

The owners of the prophesying slave girl got so mad about this situation that they basically had Paul and Silas stripped, severely beaten, chained, and thrown into jail! Now what will they do?!? Let's keep reading!

READ Acts 16:25-34

Wait, what?!? Read verse 25 one more time. They were doing what??? Praying and singing to God! Right after they had been beaten?! Yes! And what happened because of their faithfulness? Other prisoners were listening, the guard and his whole family became Christians, and the news kept spreading! But where would they go now that they had been released?

READ Acts 16:13-15, and then verse 40

It's crazy how all of this comes full circle. God used Paul and Silas to witness to Lydia before all of this happened, and He opened her heart to respond to the message and become a believer. Now she and her family have opened their home so that Paul and Silas have a place to stay after being beaten, jailed, and released!

APPLY AND GO

When God leads you somewhere, GO! When God leads you to speak to someone, SPEAK! When you're at your lowest point, PRAISE HIM!