

Schedule of Meeting Times:

WKAC 1080 AM Sunday 7:30 AM
 Study Sunday 10:00 AM
 Worship Sunday Morn 11:00 AM
 Worship Sunday Eve 5:00 PM
Singing every 2nd Sunday evening
 Study Wednesday 7:00 PM

Preacher / bulletin editor:

Kris Vilander, (256) 472-1065

E-mail: kris@haysmillchurchofchrist.org

Website: www.haysmillchurchofchrist.org

"...But about midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns of praise to God, and the prisoners were listening to them,"

—Acts 16:25

**Servants during July:**

Songleader: Dwight (7), Stanley (14), Larry (21), Dwight (28)

Reading: Mike M

Announcements: Stanley

Table: Larry, Marty, Mike M

Wednesday Lesson: Larry (10), Stanley (17), Kris (24), Larry (31)

Lawn Mowing (week starting): Kris (7), Marty (14), Stanley (21), Larry (28)

Area Meetings: Gooch Lane, 14-17, Jacob Hudgins; Russellville Church, 14-19, Lowell Sallee; **Truth Lectures (Athens Bible School), 15-18**

Hays Mill church of Christ

21705 Hays Mill Road
 Elkmont, AL 35620

The Bible . Examiner

"Examine everything carefully..." —1 Thessalonians 5:21 NASB

Volume 7

July 14, 2024

Number 6

The Night Paul and Silas Sang

Part 1, by Dick Blackford

What a night it was for singing!

For doing a good deed, Paul and Silas were arrested, brutally beaten, imprisoned and fastened in stocks, Acts 16:22-40.

Do You Want to Feel More Spiritual?

Sometimes Christians get discouraged and want to feel more spiritual. They try to find spirituality in all the wrong places—dimming the lights, lighting candles, humming and holding hands, having unstructured and “free” worship, meeting in a “cell group,” or a “house church,” counting beads, chanting masses, walking on hot coals, fasting to the point of near starvation, the sound of a pipe organ, the light of stained glass windows, listening to a dynamic speaker. It is difficult to think of anything that

hasn't been tried in an effort to achieve spirituality.

I have to tell you that I do not know a single thing you can do in the way of creating an external atmosphere that will make you a more spiritual person. It cannot be achieved that way. It comes by reading, studying, praying, and obeying the word, Psa 1:1-3. It comes when you put away sinful attitudes of envy, strife, and division; when you are busy converting the lost and restoring the erring, bonding with other Christians, growing in grace and knowledge.

And it comes by serving others. Jesus regarded those he depicted at the judgment scene who had served others as being spiritual people, Mt

25:31-46. There are no short cuts or gimmicks to achieving spirituality. Growing spiritually will involve average, routine days. It is not proven by one's ability to reach an emotional peak when talking about the Holy Spirit. No person can maintain that high emotional level at fever pitch for long. Those who have tried eventually suffer burnout and come crashing down. The lives of the great heroes of faith were not filled with numerous mountaintop experiences. Only a few. Most of their lives were filled with valleys. It was the valleys that helped make them the heroes they became. How do I know spirituality doesn't come by these external circumstances? Look at Paul and Silas!

The Atmosphere and Situation

When a Roman beating took place, clothes were stripped off. It was bare flesh. No cushion between your back and the whip. It is hard for us to imagine what just one lash with that whip would feel like. We don't want to think about what thirty-nine lashes would feel like. This was not a Jewish beating, but a Roman beating to which there were no limitations. When punished by the Romans, they didn't intend for you to enjoy it.

God Wants Us to Sing

Have you ever considered that these disciples could not tend to their own wounds or the wounds of each other, since they were fastened in the stocks? How could you rest in this situation? You couldn't lie down on your back. Miserable circumstances. Have you ever considered that they

were probably sitting there in a puddle of blood? I have to tell you, that's never happened to me. My problems are small. Do you know what else they were doing? They were singing!

This didn't happen that night, but try to imagine a scenario. Imagine Silas saying to Paul, "Paul, let's sing!" Paul says, "Silas, you know I can't carry a tune in a bucket. You're a good singer so I'm going to leave the singing to you." Silas says, "But Paul, we've got a lot to sing about and look at the opportunity here!" Paul replies, "I've been singing all my life. I've done my part. Besides, we don't have any song-books. Even if we did, it's dark in here so how would we be able to see?" Silas responds, "We can't let this opportunity slip away." Paul replies, "My voice is a little raspy tonight. Nobody wants to hear my fog horn of a voice. Anyway, I can't remember the words without a songbook. And I'm so mad right now that I'm just not in the mood for singing. And, good grief Silas, it's nearly midnight! What's matter with you? To be honest I don't feel like singing and nobody can make me. Besides, my back . . . kinda hurts."

Paul and Silas sang that night. We ought to be ashamed to make those worn out excuses that we've heard for many years. Here were two crusty old disciples. I bet it didn't sound anything like the Florida College chorus or the Harding choir or some professional gospel group or a "praise team" from some church. But it was

beautiful in the ears of God and it had an effect on those who heard. These were spiritual men! It had nothing to do with creating a spiritual atmosphere with external enhancements. They had not just been through an emotionally moving worship service. No stained glass, no dynamic sermon. It had everything to do with their faith and the fact that they were not thinking of themselves.

They were in the most unspiritual atmosphere imaginable. If anybody had a right to forego singing that night, they did. But they sang. They sang from memory, sitting there with their feet in the stocks, no way to get in a comfortable position, just sitting there in a puddle of blood.

Have you ever considered that if you are ever a prisoner of war or kidnapped by terrorists that you will have to rely totally on your memory for any hymns you might want to sing or any Scriptures you might want to hear or share?

The fact that Paul and Silas could remember the songs tells us they were used to singing. You can't remember them if you don't sing. "Is any among you cheerful? Let him sing praises," Jas 5:13. So how could Paul and Silas sing? They were happy! They had found the "peace that passes understanding," Phil 4:7. There is a kind of peace, tranquility, and happiness that transcends our earthly predicament and doesn't depend on the circumstances and counts it a joy to suffer for Christ. These were spiritual men and they were thinking of others. They had just healed a maiden girl. There were the prisoners and jailer. Possibly they were thinking of the infant church in Philippi for as soon as they were released they met with the newly formed congregation and encouraged them, v40!

Who is affected by the night Paul and Silas sang? What lessons might you and I learn from all this? Stay tuned for part 2, next week! 📖

Remember in Prayer

Carolyn had relatively extensive surgery on Thursday afternoon; the surgeon put in two plates and repaired some smaller bones, so she was in a great deal of pain. **Hazel** continues to improve; she is at

Goldton in Athens, Rm "111 Market St W."

Please continue to pray for those other brethren we know and love, including **Betty; Kathy Mitchell;** and **the Pollard Family.** 📖