



“They replied, “Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved—you and your household.” Then they spoke the word of the Lord to him and to all the others in his house. At that hour of the night the jailer took them and washed their wounds; then immediately he and all his family were baptized. 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 family.” (Acts 16:31-34 - NIV)

Prayer: Father in heaven, at the baptism of Jesus in the River Jordan You proclaimed Him Your beloved Son and anointed Him with the Holy Spirit. Keep me as Your baptized child of Christ, faithful in my calling as Your child, as I look forward to being an heir with Him of everlasting life; through Your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, Who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, One God, now and forever. AMEN



Order of Worship – The Common Service With L.S. – pg. 15

- Greeting by the Pastor

- Invocation (Liturgy pg. 15)

Opening Hymn **C.W. 295** / TLH 300 Sung by the Congregation

- Confession of Sins

- Absolution

- Prayer and Praise (pg. 16)

- Prayer of The Day (pg. 17)

First Lesson – Isaiah 49:1-7-Jesus, The Light of The World

PSALM OF THE DAY Psalm 2 (C.W. pg. 65 – Sung by Congregation)

Second Lesson – Acts 16:25-34-Paul & Silas In Prison.

Gospel Lesson – Mark 1:4-11-The Baptism of Jesus

Nicene Creed by the Congregation: (Liturgy pg. 18)

Sermon Hymn: **C.W. 297** / TLH 302 sung by the Congregation

Sermon Text: Acts 16:31-34

Sermon Theme: Prisoners Lead Others to Jesus.

"Create in Me" – (pg. 20)

Offering (The plates will not be passed but are at the entrance doors)

Offering Prayer

Prayer of The Church

Lord's Prayer

Communion Liturgy (Liturgy - pg. 21)

Sanctus (Holy, Holy, Holy – Liturgy pg. 22)

Words of Institution (Liturgy pg. 23)

Agnus Dei (O Christ Lamb of God – Lit. pg. 23)

RECEPTION of Christ's Body & Blood which are Really Present, In / With and Under the Bread and the Wine for the forgiveness of sins.

Communion Hymn **C.W. 294 vss. 1 & 2** / TLH 298 sung by the Congregation after everyone has communed including the Pastor

Nunc Dimittis (Song of Simeon - Liturgy pg. 24)

Collect / Prayer (pg. 24)

Benediction

Closing Hymn **C.W. 299** / TLH 301 sung by the Congregation.

SERMON TEXT: Acts 16:31-34

Vs. 31 – They replied, Believe in the Lord Jesus and you will be saved – you and your household.

Vs. 32 – Then they spoke the word of the Lord to him and to all the others in his house.

Vs. 33 – At that hour of the night the jailer took them and washed - ελουσεν - their wounds; then immediately he and all his family were baptized. - εβαπτισθη -

Vs. 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 family.** (Household - πανοικει -)

GREETING: Arise, shine for your light has come and the glory of the Lord rises upon you.

If given the choice between hiring someone with a prison record, and someone without a prison record, which candidate would an Employer hire first?

We see Paul and Silas, convicted of a crime (of which they were innocent, but tell that to everyone else) they are in prison, and they end up being God's tools to lead the Jailer of Philippi and his Household to faith in Jesus as their one and only Savior from sin.

In other words, as believers in Jesus Christ, the Jailer and his family are in heaven, instead of suffering the agony of hell. That is quite the turnaround in the life of this jailer and his family.

Hence: Vs. 34 – **he was filled with joy because he had come to believe in God – he and his whole family.**

How is it that Paul and Silas ended up in prison in the city of Philippi?

They were doing The Work of the Lord God!

The Lord God had called them to Philippi through a dream of the man from Macedonia, calling them to come. (Acts 16:6-10) So now Paul and Silas were in Philippi – The Adriatic Sea separates Italy from Greece.

As they were going to the place of Prayer to proclaim Christ, a slave girl possessed by an evil spirit, and able to predict the future for her owner, she began to shout, “**These men are servants of the Most High God, who are telling you the way to be saved.**” (Acts 16:17)
{Philippi = Present day Greece also once known as Macedonia. Philippi was formerly called Crenides, but was renamed by Philip of Macedonia, who was the father of Alexander The Great.}

As this slave girl who is possessed by an evil spirit calls out that Paul and Silas are servants of the Most High God, she is reaffirming the passage in:

James 2:19 – “**You believe that there is one God. GOOD! Even the demons believe that and shudder.**”

(For further study see also: Mt. 8:29; Mk. 1:24; 5:7; Lu. 4:34; Acts 16:17; 19:15)

This slave girl continued to do this until The Apostle Paul became so troubled that He commanded the spirit to leave her by saying, “**In the Name of Jesus Christ I command you to come out of her!**”

After the evil spirit had left the slave girl, the owners were very angry, since now they had lost their means of income. They were so angry that they dragged Paul and Silas into the marketplace, and told the authorities that Paul and Silas were causing an uproar. The owners of the slave girl accused Paul & Silas that they were opposing the Roman customs and laws, which led to the crowds also joined in the riot, and Paul and Silas were beaten, flogged and put into prison.

However, before they were thrown into prison, they were first:

Vs. 22 – The crowd joined in the attack against Paul and Silas, and the magistrates ordered them to be **stripped and beaten.**

Vs. 23 – After they had been severely flogged, they were thrown into prison and the jailer was commanded to guard them carefully.

Vs. 24 – Upon receiving such orders, the jailer put Paul and Silas **in the inner cell and fastened their feet in the stocks.**

While in prison what do Paul and Silas do?

It was there in that unlikely place of prison that Paul and Silas “**Were praying and singing hymns to God**” (Acts 16:25)

As they were doing this there was a violent earthquake that shook the foundations of the prison, the doors of the prison flew open and everyone’s chains came loose. (Acts 16:26)

This woke the jailer, who saw the prison doors open and immediately thought that everyone was gone, and so he drew his own sword to kill himself. Why? Since He thought that the prisoners were gone, he knew that he would be put to death by his superiors, since the prisoners had escaped. (For evidence of this see Acts 12:18-19)

But Paul shouted out, “**Do not harm yourself, we are all here.**”

The jailer, trembling with fear, fell before Paul and Silas and asked, “**What must I do to be saved?**”

Of course, the answer is: **Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and you will be saved.**

The Jailer then took them to his house and washed their wounds

Vs. 33 – **At that hour of the night the jailer took them and washed their wounds; then immediately he and all his family were baptized.**

Vs. 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 family.

Today we celebrate “The Baptism of Our Lord”.

Why is baptism important?

Baptism is important because God has made it important for us as New Testament Believers. In other portions of Scripture, we are told what *benefits* God gives us in Baptism.

Peter proclaimed on that First Pentecost Sunday after the resurrection:

Acts 2:38 – “Repent and be baptized, everyone of you in the Name of Jesus Christ FOR THE FORGIVENESS of your sins and you WILL receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. 39 – The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off – for all whom the Lord our God will call.”

Ananias to Saul / Paul after Paul was blinded on the road to Damascus

Acts 22:16 – “And now what are you waiting for? Get up and be baptized and wash your sins away, calling on His Name.”

Who is baptism for? Baptism is for all people of the world.

As we learn in **Matthew 28:19 – Go ye therefore and teach all nations, baptizing them in the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.**

Baptism is so important that Jesus was baptized!

Jesus of course was not baptized because of HIS sin, for Jesus has NO sin of His own as God informs us through Paul’s Second letter to the Corinthians:

II Corinthians 5:21 – “God made HIM, Who had no sin, to be sin for us, so that in Him we might become the righteousness of God.” - δικαιοσυνη Θεου -

Jesus Himself states why He was to be baptized: “To fulfill all righteousness.” (Matthew 3:15)
Jesus was set apart for a specific purpose. To save us.

In Baptism, Christ connects Himself to us:

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I Peter 3:18-22 – “For Christ died for sins once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring you to God. He was put to death in the body but made alive by the Spirit, 19 through Whom also He went and preached to the spirits in prison 20 who disobeyed long ago when God waited patiently in the days of Noah while the ark was being built. In it only a few people, eight in all, were saved through water, 21 and this water symbolizes baptism that NOW SAVES you also – not the removal of dirt from the body but the pledge of a good conscience toward God. It SAVES YOU by the resurrection of Jesus Christ 22 – Who has gone into heaven and is at God’s right hand – with angels, authorities and powers in submission to HIM.”

In the 2021 Pastor's Desk Diary there is an illustration given which pictures what Jesus did for us in His Baptism. "Jesus steps down into baptismal waters so that He can soak up the sins of the world." (pg. 43)

In other words, Jesus became like a super powerful sponge that never ran out of room to suck up all the sin of every human being in all the world for all time from Adam and Eve until Judgment Day.

Jesus then took that sin of the world upon Himself on the cross of Calvary, where He suffered hell in our place and by His glorious resurrection, Jesus demonstrated His Victory for us over death and the devil.

Do you remember the date of your baptism?

Have you made a photocopy of your baptismal certificate and put it on the mirror in your bedroom or on the refrigerator, or in your wallet or purse as a daily reminder of the day that God the Holy Spirit entered your heart and created saving faith in your heart?

God used Paul and Silas, two prisoners to lead the Jailer of Philippi and his household to Jesus.

So, keep your eyes open for opportunities, even in unsuspecting locations, to lead others to Jesus.
AMEN

THEME: Two Prisoners Lead Others to Jesus.

Quotes on Baptism:

"Jesus, Who had just received baptism unto the remission of sins, not for His own, but for those of the World that were resting upon Him," ... (Kretzmann, pg. 166 N.T. Volume I)

"John (the Baptist) here is getting a sinner WHO in His Own person has NO sin, and yet is the greatest sinner, that has and bears the sin of the whole world. For this reason, He permits Himself to be baptized and confesses with this action that His is a sinner. However, not for Himself, but for us. For He here takes my place and thy place and stands in our stead who are sinners, and since all, especially the arrogant saint, do not want to be sinners, He must become a sinner for all; He assumes the form of our sinful flesh and complains, as many psalms testify, on the cross and in His passion of the weight of the sins which He bears." (Kretzmann pg. 16 – N.T. Volume I in which he quotes Martin Luther)

"Because for the sake of sinners I have become a sinner, must therefore do what God has charged the sinners to do, in order that they may become just through ME." (Kretzmann pg. 166 Vol. I as he quotes Martin Luther)