

## **Tuesday - Armor up with Peace!**

Midnight Praise with Paul and Silas

Acts 16:11-40

Deborah Upton

This Bible story is about 4 men who travel to the Roman colony of Philippi to share the Good News of Jesus Christ. In this passage we encounter a God-fearing Gentile businesswoman, a slave girl with a demon, angry slave masters, un-listening magistrates, unjustified and brutal punishment, imprisonment, midnight prayers and hymns, an earthquake, a release, a frightened jailer, belief in Jesus, baptisms, vindication, a release, a fond farewell, and a journey to Thessalonica. Talk about drama! Where in all this drama is peace? Let's explore this story through the following discussion questions:

1. What did it mean for Philippi to be a Roman colony?
2. What was the place of prayer and where was it?
3. Who was Lydia? Why is she important to this story?
4. Think about the slave girl and what she was doing to earn money for her masters. In our "western" way of thinking, could her gift have been real? Can this kind of thing happen today? Are there really demons or are demons a way for us to explain away sin and evil that we do not understand?
5. Why was Paul irritated with the slave girl? What did he do and what was the eventual result? Do you think Paul and Silas were surprised by all this?
6. What did Paul and Silas do when they were thrown in jail? Why?
7. What happened that night that would provide freedom for the prisoners? How did the jailer react? Why?
8. How did peace play into this story? Why do you think the jailer and his household responded positively to the words Paul shared with them?
9. How did Paul respond when the policemen of the chief magistrates announced that Paul and Silas were free to go in peace? Why?
10. What was the reaction of the chief magistrates? Why? What did they do as a result?

11. What did Paul and Silas do on their way out of the city? Why do you think they did this?
12. In general, how might the lives of the jailer, his household, and the believers gathered at Lydia's house have changed after hearing the good news?
13. What role did relationships play in this story? How did God use these relationships?
14. Which character or characters in the story teach you something important about faith in Christ? How?
15. As we travel through life, how do we armor up with peace? What does that mean?