

## **WILD WEST Philippi**

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### *In the Wild West town of Philippi...*

*After they had been severely flogged, they were thrown into prison, and the jailer was commanded to guard them carefully. Upon receiving such orders, he put them in the inner cell and fastened their feet in the stocks. (Acts 16:23-24)*

- **Prayer and songs in the night of suffering** – “About midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the other prisoners were listening to them.” (v. 25)

#### ***How do I respond in times of undeserved distress?***

- **Anger and bitterness?** – “See to it that no one misses the grace of God and that no bitter root grows up to cause trouble and defile many.” (Heb. 12:15)
- **Despair and self-pity?** – “Consider it pure joy, my brothers, whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith develops perseverance. Perseverance must finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything.” (James 1:2-4)
- **Prayer and praise?** – “Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice!” (Phil. 4:4)

- **A seismic response and a new start** – “Suddenly there was such a violent earthquake that the foundations of the prison were shaken. At once all the prison doors flew open, and everybody’s chains came loose.” (v. 26)

#### ***Phil. 1:18-19: Finding joy when you’re chained in life through...***

- **The prayers of others** – “Yes, and I will continue to rejoice, for I know that through your prayers...”
- **The help of the Spirit** – “...and the help given by the Spirit of Jesus Christ...”
- **The hope of deliverance** – “...what has happened to me will turn out for my deliverance.”

- **An open heart and a transformed family** – “The jailer woke up, and when he saw the prison doors open, he drew his sword and was about to kill himself because he thought the prisoners had escaped. But Paul shouted, ‘Don’t harm yourself! We are all here!’ The jailer called for lights, rushed in and fell trembling before Paul and Silas. He then brought them out and asked, ‘Sirs, what must I do to be saved?’ They replied, ‘Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved – you and your household.’ ...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.” (vv. 27-31, 34)

*Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone and the new has come!  
(2 Cor. 5:17)*