



- The Holy Spirit works in believers to keep God's mission as our **focus**.

For to me, living means living for Christ, and dying is even better. Philippians 1:21 (NLT)

How the Spirit helps us focus on God's mission:

- God's mission requires an **eternal** vision.

Satan, who is the god of this world, has blinded the minds of those who don't believe. They are unable to see the glorious light of the Good News. They don't understand this message about the glory of Christ, who is the exact likeness of God. 2 Corinthians 4:4 (NLT)

- God's mission is bigger than our **politics** and **problems**.

I consider my life worth nothing to me; my only aim is to finish the race and complete the task the Lord Jesus has given me—the task of testifying to the good news of God's grace. Acts 20:24

One day as we were going down to the place of prayer, we met a slave girl who had a spirit that enabled her to tell the future. She earned a lot of money for her masters by telling fortunes. Acts 16:16 (NLT)

"These men are servants of the Most High God, and they have come to tell you how to be saved." Acts 16:17

...Paul got so exasperated that he turned and said to the demon within her, "I command you in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her." And instantly it left her. Acts 16:18 (NLT)

A mob quickly formed against Paul and Silas, and the city officials ordered them stripped and beaten with wooden rods. They were severely beaten, and then they were thrown into prison. The jailer was ordered to make sure they didn't escape. So the jailer put them into the inner dungeon and clamped their feet in the stocks. Around midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the other prisoners were listening. Suddenly, there was a massive earthquake, and the prison was shaken to its foundations. All the doors immediately flew open, and the chains of every prisoner fell off! The jailer woke up to see the prison doors wide open. He assumed the prisoners had escaped, so he drew his sword to kill himself. But Paul shouted to him, "Stop! Don't kill yourself! We are all here!" Acts 16:22-28 (NLT)

Two quick things in the jailers story:

- The action of your life always reflects the condition of your **heart**.

So the jailer put them into the inner dungeon and clamped their feet in the stocks.

At that hour of the night the jailer took Paul and Silas and washed their wounds. Then he and all his family were baptized immediately. After this the jailer took Paul and Silas home and gave them food. He and his family were very joyful because they now believed in God. Acts 16:33-34 (NCV)

- The Spirit changed the jailer's focus from **death** to **life**.

The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I have come that they may have life, and have it in all its fullness. John 10:10

- What we do in the **darkness** of our **difficulties** matters.
- How you respond to the **Spirit** in challenging times determines who gets the **glory** in this chapter of your story.

Around midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God... Acts 16:25 (NLT)

Why we need prayer & worship:

- Prayer and worship **connect** us to God.

...sing yourselves into his presence. Psalm 100:2 (MSG)

- Prayer and Worship is a necessary **response** to God.

...trust in him at all times. Pour out your heart to him, for God is our refuge. Psalm 62:8

- God is with you in your **darkest** hour.

LORD, you give light to my lamp. My God brightens the darkness around me. Psalm 18:28 (NCV)

Even when I walk through the darkest valley, I will not be afraid, for you are close beside me. Your rod and your staff protect and comfort me. Psalm 23:4 (NLT)

Where could I go to escape from you? Where could I get away from your presence? Psalm 139:7 (TEV)

2 When you're in over your head, I'll be there with you. When you're in rough waters, you will not go down.

When you're between a rock and a hard place, it won't be a dead end— 3 Because I am GOD, your personal God,...Isaiah 43:2-3 (MSG)

20 ...And be sure of this: I am with you always, even to the end of the age. Matthew 28:20 (NIV)

God has said: "Never will I leave you, never will I forsake you." So we say with confidence: "The Lord is my helper; I will not be afraid. What can man do to me?" Hebrews 13:5-6

Because God is with you:

- We need to make the effort to **be with Him**.

- Don't let what has happened **to you** be an opportunity for the enemy to work **in you**.

Prayer and worship are a response that keep us from becoming **bitter**.

- The darkness is a time where we **need** the light but also a time **to be** the light.

Suddenly, there was a massive earthquake, and the prison was shaken to its foundations. All the doors immediately flew open, and the chains of every prisoner fell off! Acts 16:26 (NLT)

Action steps to responding to the Spirit:

- In the darkness express your **trust** in God.

The Lord is my strength and shield. I trust him with all my heart. He helps me, and my heart is filled with joy. I burst out in songs of thanksgiving. Psalm 28:7 (NLT)

- In the darkness express your **love** for God.

I love you, LORD ; you are my strength. Psalm 18:1 (NLT)

- In the darkness express my **gratitude** to God.

I will bless the LORD at all times; his praise shall continually be in my mouth. Psalm 34:1 (ESV)

4 All you saints! Sing your hearts out to GOD! Thank him to his face! Psalm 30:4 (MSG)



TO CREATIVELY LOVE AND LEAD PEOPLE IN A GROWING RELATIONSHIP WITH JESUS.

Questions that can be used in Connection Groups:

These questions also work well for personal time with God.

- What scripture and/or point spoke most to you from the Talk on Sunday? Explain why?
- As you read the Story of Paul and Silas, what stands out to you? If you were Paul or Silas, What would you be doing at midnight in prison?
- What do you tend to do during times of difficulty and uncertainty? Why is it difficult to pray & worship in these times?
- Talk about the points under: "Why we need prayer & worship".
- How do you know that God is really with you in your darkest hour?
- "What happens to us when our circumstances become an opportunity for the enemy to work in us?"
- When we're going through difficult times, how does our connection with God affect those around us?
- Why do we need to express our trust, love and gratitude to God during the difficulties of life? Do you find this difficult to do during hard times?

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Today's Talk..



WORSHIPPING GOD IN THE DARK