



# Shackled Feet On the Move

*“And at midnight Paul and Silas prayed, and sang praises unto God: and the prisoners heard them.<sup>26</sup> And suddenly there was a great earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison were shaken: and immediately all the doors were opened, and every one’s bands were loosed.” (Acts 16:25 – 26)*

Have you ever lost the use of your legs? I recall a time when I was on crutches temporarily from a martial arts injury. However, maybe you know someone that has permanently lost the use of their legs, or perhaps that is part of your story.

Paul and Silas were preaching the Gospel on Philippi, and in the midst of their preaching a demoniac girl began to interrupt their preaching. Paul cast the demon out of the girl which, but her masters were livid, as the girl brought them much financial gain through her demonic soothsaying which was forbidden by God (Lev. 19:31; 20:6). When her master brought Paul and Silas before the magistrates, they charge that was placed upon them was not, casting out a demonic spirit, but rather they said these men “teach customs, which are not lawful for us to receive, neither to observe, being Romans (v. 19-21).” Paul and Silas are beaten with rods, and their feet were placed in stocks (a device for publicly punishing offenders consisting of a wooden frame with holes in which the feet or feet and hands can be locked (*Merriam-Webster's collegiate dictionary*)). Paul wrote in Eph 6:15, “And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace...,” concerning the armor of God, and in Rom. 10:15, “How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things!” Paul and Silas sat in prison with their physical feet immobilized, however the guards could not shackle the gospel shoes of peace, their beautiful feet, from preaching the gospel.

**“At midnight they sang praises to God and the prisoners heard them (v. 25).”** The world cannot stop the message of the Gospel from going forth when the Christian walks in the gospel shoes of peace. I believe the praises Paul and Silas sang to the Lord, was their way of having an open – air gospel meeting which not only they praised God, but also proclaimed the gospel. They knew full well they were ministering to a captive audience (no pun intended) within the sound of their voice. Notice they were not “sensitive” to the midnight hour when perhaps many would have wanted to sleep. The world is asleep in their sins loving the darkness, having feet in the bondage stocks of their sins. Too many Christians wait for the “right time” to share the gospel, usually waiting until the sinner asks the Christian about their faith, which is rare at best. I was told to stop preaching one time when on a NYC train, because a women proclaimed that I was interrupting her “right” to read. I told the women she also has the right to sit wherever she wished, and that I had the right to preach from the book that I read, the Bible. Paul and Silas let their voice be heard at the midnight hour even if perhaps it was “inconvenient” for the prisoners who were perhaps tired and weary. There are too many stationary soldiers that feel that any evangelistic movement is too burdensome and will intrude on the “rights” of others. If they are not seeking to win the lost, they are not advancing ground for God’s Kingdom. This is the will of Satan, to keep Christians busy, hesitant, and shackled to anything that will hinder them from using their evangelistic feet to go into the enemy’s camp and warn Satan’s prisoners of God’s wrath. Matthew 25, in the parable of the virgins (which speaks about true and false conversions), the bridegroom (Jesus) came at a time no one expected, AT MIDNIGHT! Perhaps this was an inconvenient time for the virgins; however the Lord will come when he chooses. Paul wrote, “Preach the Word; be prepared in season and out of season; correct, rebuke and encourage—with great patience and careful instruction (2 Tim 4:2). Paul and Silas preached at midnight, the bridegroom returned at midnight.

Let’s speak the Word of God to the prisoners which are held captive in bondage of their sins at this midnight hour, because we don’t know when people will die, and we surly do not know when the Lord will return. Be faithful, be obedient, even though Satan may try to shackle our feet with fear, business, tolerance, excuses, etc..., walk in the boldness and obedience of the Lord Jesus, and “*Go into all the world and preach the good news to every creature!*”

Until the nets are filled...

Blessings, Pastor Phil