



## Conversion, Persecution, and Baptism

By Taylor Braswell on June 17, 2024

### TODAY'S READING: Acts 16

In Acts 16, we see an example of how God uses His servants to accomplish His will. God does not need us, but He chooses to use us to bring Himself glory. I want us to focus on three places in Acts 16.

**Verses 14-16:** Lydia heard the gospel and believed not because she was better than others in some way, but because, "The Lord opened her heart to pay attention to what was said by Paul." The conversion of a sinner is a supernatural act of God. We must remember that we cannot argue or convince anyone to believe in the gospel apart from the Spirit's work in their heart. In John 6:44, Jesus says, "No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him." Like Lydia, you and I were once spiritually blind and God, by His grace, opened our eyes to see Him (2 Corinthians 4:4, John 9:39). Church, when we pray for the lost, we are acknowledging that God alone has the power to save. Who are you praying for in your life?

**Verses 19-24:** Paul and Silas were ultimately beaten and put in prison because they were doing what God commanded them to do. Being a Christian was not popular then and it is not popular now. As Christians, when we live to glorify Christ, we will automatically be countercultural. Calling people to repent of their sins and believe the Gospel is an offensive message that will get you persecuted! What we would consider hate crimes are occurring in many places in the UK, Canada, and California. Are you willing to obey God even if it means being put in prison?

**Verses 30-34:** Many denominations use passages like this to advocate for infant baptism. Their argument sounds something like this, "Their whole household was baptized, which implies children." The problem with this, Church, is that it is an argument from silence. There is not one example of an infant baptism in all of scripture. Infants and very young children cannot hear the gospel and believe. After the jailer heard the gospel and believed, Acts 16:32 says Paul and Silas shared the gospel with his family afterward! Baptism is an outward sign of what God has done in our lives internally. The biblical model is always belief, followed by baptism.

**PRAYER:** God, thank You for giving me a new heart and new desires to live for You. Use me to glorify You and empower me through Your Spirit to share the Gospel with others.

### TOMORROW'S READING: 1 Timothy 1

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