

GOD SPEAKS

READ ACTS 16:25-40

This Word from God is excerpted from a study prepared by Rev. Dominic Rivken for God's Sending Heart, Study 46, "A Mind Opened to Believe." Download the entire devotion and book at thegreatsending.org.

Then [the Jailer] brought them out and said, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" And they said, "Believe on the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved..." (Acts 16:30f)

"What must I do to be saved?" the Jailer asked. Rightly translated, Paul and Silas' response is a bit unexpected. "Believe ON the Lord Jesus" they say. This is quite different from believing IN the right thoughts, actions, and feelings about Jesus. In other words, Paul and Silas call to the Jailer is to believe ON Jesus' life, death, and resurrection. They're speaking of freedom for the captor who is captive in his sin. It's Jesus Who is for you, for your family, and for all imprisoned souls!

Belief is trust, not in principles, but on a Person. Belief is faith, not in rules, but on a Ruler. Belief is conviction, not in experiences, but on an encounter with the living God. With a mind opened to believe ON Jesus, the Jailer is converted from his captivity to sin and invited into the family of God. It is here that he and his household are baptized IN Christ Jesus!

See how his life mission changes, from minding a prison designed for punishment to a home filled with hospitality, joy, and love? With our minds opened to believe we become believers IN God as we believe ON Jesus. Together we can move confidently with the Spirit from our baptism into His mission, to God's glory and the expansion of His Kingdom!

Lord God, You know the prisons of our making and all our feeble attempts to free ourselves from the chains of sin. Come, Holy Spirit, take our thoughts captive to Christ. Come, Holy Spirit, make our actions reflections of gratitude. Come, Holy Spirit, shake our complacent beliefs with faith in the gracious encounter of Christ. Help us to believe ON Jesus, and thus to believe IN You. May Your glorious mission, to free all people in Christ, become our own mission as we seek to open our minds and our homes to Your healing power. May Your peace, O God, which surpasses all understanding, guard our hearts and minds in Christ Jesus. Amen.

Acts
16:5

So the churches were strengthened in the faith and grew daily in numbers.

CALL TO PRAYER

Luke 10:2

The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field.

SET YOUR ALARM FOR 10:02



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July MISSIONS PRAYER GUIDE



**EQUIP, EMPOWER, ENGAGE,
CONNECTING PEOPLE TO JESUS.**



1 That each person in the FLGA District would see themselves as Along-siders, bringing Jesus' joy to their neighbors, coworkers, and friends. Pray that the Holy Spirit will show each person someone whom they can disciple as a disciple-maker.

2 Pray that the message of eternal life and salvation will be proclaimed in our neighborhoods and communities without hindrance, and that many will come to know Jesus' saving grace.

3 Pray that as a nation, we would humble ourselves before the Lord, seek His forgiveness and mercy for our selfishness, lack of self-control, and desire to be our own gods, and pray for a time of National Re-awakening to the Gospel and our need for God.

4 **Independence Day** - Give thanks for the freedoms and privileges we enjoy as citizens of the United States of America and pray that we will be vigilant citizens to preserve these freedoms.

5 For God's protection for our nation and its people, especially for the protection of our military personnel and their families, for the police and firefighters as they serve and protect our communities.

6 That all people in our nation, beginning with our leaders, would respect life as a gift from God, seeking to protect all life from the unborn to the elderly and vulnerable.

7 Ask the Holy Spirit to bless Vacation Bible Schools in our congregations this summer, and to bless the follow-up from VBS's that many children & families will be connected to Jesus as a result.

8 Ask the Lord of the Harvest to give wisdom and creativity to congregations who want to begin new community outreach ministries.

9 Ask the Holy Spirit to continue and increase His work of aligning our hearts and minds with the mind of Christ so that our lives always point to Jesus.

10 Give thanks to our Creator God for the bounty, the beauty, and the natural resources we enjoy in our land. Pray that we may be wise stewards of these gifts.

11 Praise God for the many opportunities to witness and serve with our Latino friends and neighbors. Ask God to bless our new neighbors from Mexico and Central American nations.

12 Pray that pastors and leaders will remain focused on God's mission and His purpose for gathering and sending His Church as they prepare for weekend worship.

13 Pray that every congregation will see themselves as participants in planting the Church - making new disciples, starting new ministries, planting new micro-churches and multi-sites, starting new congregations, or leaving a mission legacy.

14 Give thanks for our Lutheran Schools and Early Childhood Centers, for their administrators and staff, as they engage in summer activities and camps. Pray for a safe summer for teachers, students, and families.

15 Pray for everyday missionaries near and far that God will give them an understanding of the culture around them, knowledge of the people to whom they are called, and insights into the most effective methods for sharing the Good News of Jesus.

16 Pray that every believer will feel a burden for the lost, will pray for open doors, open hearts, and boldness in witness and service.

17 For workers in the Harvest, that the eyes of every believer will be opened to the Harvest around them that is ripe, ready, diverse, and abundant!

18 Pray that deliverance from the Evil One and the coming of God's Kingdom will always shape and move the work of the Church.

19 Pray for Missionary Lophane Laurent, Mission Haiti. Pray for protection, both physical and spiritual, and pray for God to provide the needed funds for monthly food distribution.

20 Pray for elected leaders in our FLGA District, Vice Presidents Jeff Jordan, Jay Winters, Charles Reich, David Brockhoff, and Scott Henze, District Secretary Greg Michael, and our Board of Directors, that God will bless their mission leadership.

21 Ask that God bless the vision and work of President Rockey and his staff, our Circuit Visitors, pastors, and local church leaders who understand the purpose of the Church and take mission seriously in these times.

22 Ask God to inspire the hearts of His people in all our congregations to mission action this summer, especially noting opportunities to plant the Church in new places with new people.

23 Pray for the Presidents of our 35 LCMS Districts to be filled with mission zeal and joy, inspiring a growing evangelistic focus and passion within their districts.

24 Praise God for fellow church members and disciples who want to grow as disciples - following Jesus, learning from Jesus, living and loving like Jesus, and sharing Jesus, making more disciples.

25 Pray for plans made by our Campus Ministries to connect with new and returning students in the coming weeks; pray that God will encourage students to continue their walk with the Lord as they prepare for the Fall semester.

26 Pray that God's people will be blessed with perseverance, especially when facing challenges to their faith. Pray for boldness in sharing the Gospel and assurance of God's strong presence.

27 Pray that the Holy Spirit will protect and enrich the marriages and families of our congregation leaders, pastor, and all church workers, so that the Evil One will not separate what God has joined together.

28 For **everyday disciples**, that they may see and learn to love their personal mission fields, and so to engage as the priesthood of all believers. Ask God to show you who He is sending you to, enable you to listen, and share the Good News.

29 Give thanks for opportunities to worship together with other Christians, and for the joy of seeing others come to know Jesus as their Savior, forgiven, loved, restored, and precious in His sight.

30 Ask the Holy Spirit to open the hearts of those you know who need to receive Jesus' invitation to **come and see** God's mercy and grace for themselves.

31 Ask the Lord to use your mouth and hands to bless others in His name, and that others will be ready to receive our loving witness.