



# Silas

“Loyal Followers”

*"And he called for lights and rushed in, and trembling with fear he fell down before Paul and Silas, and brought them out and said, 'Men, what must I do to be saved?' And they said, 'Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved, you and your household.'" Acts 16*

Are we willing to risk our lives for what we think is right? That can be a decision of a soldier, a student, a person in the work place, or an apostle. It can be today or two thousand years ago. One man who did that was Silas a Roman citizen and a very important person in the ministry of the church, but we seldom hear anything about him except when he was with Paul. Today the Word of God has spread all over the world because of people like Silas who went out and told others about their Christ. He helped spread the Gospel and was even imprisoned.

Traveling with Paul must have been quite an experience. He was so eager to tell everyone about Christ that his enthusiasm sometimes got in the way when dealing with the other people who were trying to help him. Paul mentions Silas many times in his writing. We know he went to Asia Minor with Paul and it was important there that he was a Roman citizen and could speak their language. We also know that he went among the Gentiles to Antioch, Syria and Cilicia. He was among people who actually hated him because he was talking about a King they didn't know and they didn't trust him. The authorities always felt threatened because they thought of Christ as an earthly king who was jeopardizing their livelihood.

One time, Paul and Silas went to Philippi along with a couple other men. It was a very eventful time with Paul, Silas, and the other apostles and a wonderful woman named Lydia. While there Paul decided that he should remove the evil spirits from a woman that was being used by her owners to make money for themselves. When Paul removed the demons that were in the woman her owners were very upset because they had lost their income. They beat Paul and Silas and put them in jail. We have all heard about Paul in prison when the earthquake opened all the doors and the prisoners could have run. However we don't often hear or remember that Paul was not alone in this incident. Silas was with him and went through all the flogging and the prison time. Paul and Silas were the ones singing Gospel songs in the prison at midnight. Silas was also with Paul when they were fed and had their wounds dressed at the home of the prison guard. Silas was in on baptizing the whole family as converts to the following of Christ. The government had a problem. They were so concerned about getting rid of Paul that they put Paul and Silas, Roman citizens, in jail without a trial. After they were released and the actions of the authorities were made public the authorities had even bigger problems. The men went back to the home of Lydia before leaving town and it is believed that Lydia continued to lead a prayer group and helped convert many to Christ. The Bible tells us that those who believed sent Paul and Silas away at night.

They went to Thessalonica where Paul started preaching in the synagogue and telling the people about Christ. The authorities wrote "These that have turned the world upside down are come hither also." Acts 17:6 Again they were sent away under the cover of night.

They went to Berea and the number of believers continued to grow among Jew and Gentile alike. The unbelieving Jews were becoming the most vicious of Paul's opponents as Paul was persistent with his message of Jesus as Messiah and Savior. When Paul escaped one time to go somewhere else, Silas was the one left to continue the work. He went where he was called to minister and to preach. We never hear of his arguing with Paul or refusing to go anywhere. There is an old hymn that could have been a motto of Silas called "I'll go where you want me to go." "It may not be on the mountain's height, Or over the stormy sea; It may not be at the battle's front, My Lord will have need of me; But if by a still, small voice He calls, To paths that I do not know, I'll answer, dear Lord, with my hand in Thine, I'll go where You want me to go." Today, there are still people making that commitment.

Prayer: You are an awesome God and never ask more of us than You know we are capable of doing. Continue to guide us that we, like Silas, may reach outside of our comfort zone to tell others about Christ, our Savior and our King.

Questions:

1. Why did Silas go wherever Paul called him to go?
2. Is it more important to be known to the public, or unknown when asked about Christ?
3. What significance does the story of Silas have for us today? Tomorrow?
4. How far are we willing to go to tell others about our Saviour and Lord, Jesus Christ?
5. Are you willing to face ridicule for believing in Christ as your personal Saviour?

6. Why do we sometimes want to deny Christ like Peter did?

© Gail Kennedy Keffer