



21-DAY FAST LAUNCH

REDIRECTED

It Didn't Get In Me

STUDY GUIDE

Acts 16:16-34 · Psalm 42:5

Pastor JD Bellamy

VERTICAL TAMPA

HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

This guide walks back through Sunday's message, "It Didn't Get In Me," so you can dig deeper on your own or with your group during the 21 days of Redirected. Read each point, sit with the Word Study and Key Line boxes, and let the questions move you from information to reflection. You do not have to answer every question in one sitting. Slow down. Let the fast do its work.

A suggested rhythm: read one Point per day across the first five days of the fast, then return to the Big Idea and the Close on day six to reset before moving forward.

BIG IDEA

What matters most is not simply what prison you're in, but what the prison is doing in you.

You can be physically bound and spiritually free, or physically free and internally bound. Paul and Silas were in chains and still free in their souls. The fast is asking the same question of you: it went through you, but did it get in you? This guide is built to help you answer that honestly.

REFLECT BEFORE YOU BEGIN

1. Think of a season you are currently in or recently walked through. Has it simply gone through you, or has it started to get in you?
2. Read Acts 26 and Acts 16 side by side. Same man, two very different postures in prison. What made the difference?

POINT 1 · THE PRISON OF PEOPLE

ACTS 16:16-18, KJV

A certain damsel possessed with a spirit of divination met us, which brought her masters much gain by soothsaying... Paul, being grieved, turned and said to the spirit, I command thee in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her. And he came out the same hour.

The girl in this story was not only spiritually oppressed, she was economically owned. Her bondage had become someone else's business model. Paul does not negotiate with the people profiting from her chains. He speaks directly to the spirit, and it leaves. Paul and Silas are arrested not because they hurt somebody, but because they freed somebody. They disrupted a system that was making money off her bondage.

WORD STUDY · GREEK

μαντεύομαι (manteuomai) "soothsaying"

To divine, give oracles, speak as one possessed. From the same family of words used of pagan oracles under a spirit's influence. Not a gift. A takeover.

Freedom will always look like trouble to whoever was benefiting from your chains.

The accusation against Paul and Silas was that they were troubling the city, but really they were troubling a system. All of this happens while they are fully in the will of God. Trouble is not automatic proof that you missed Him.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Has freedom ever cost you a relationship or a system that was benefiting from your bondage? What happened?
2. Who or what in your life profits, in some way, from you staying stuck?
3. How do you personally tell the difference between trouble that means you missed God and trouble that means you are doing exactly what He called you to do?

POINT 2 · THE PRISON OF THE MIND

PSALM 42:5, KJV

Why art thou cast down, O my soul? and why art thou disquieted in me? hope thou in God: for I shall yet praise him for the help of his countenance.

WORD STUDY · HEBREW

שָׁחָח (*shachach*) "cast down"

To bow down, crouch, become bent beneath a weight. David's body is not chained. His soul is bent.

David is not merely saying his circumstances will eventually improve and then he will praise. He is saying that his hope is that God's presence is still toward him, and because that presence is his help, his soul's current condition will not have the final word. This is a prison with no jailer, no stocks, no chains. Some prisons have your home address. They go to work, church, and even the pulpit with you.

Mature faith just refuses to let feelings become lord.

David interrogates his own emotions instead of letting them run unexamined, and that is maturity, not weakness. Hebrews 4:15 reminds us that Jesus knew grief, rejection, betrayal, exhaustion, and a soul exceeding sorrowful even unto death. Feeling it does not mean you have failed God. The real issue is not whether life touches you, but whether what touched you takes over you.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What is a prison you carry that has no walls, no jailer, and no stocks, one that follows you into ordinary places like work or church?
2. Read Hebrews 4:15. How does knowing Jesus felt grief, rejection, and exhaustion change the way you process your own hard emotions?
3. What does it look like, practically, to feel something honestly without letting it become lord over you?

POINT 3 · THE PRISON OF DECISION

ACTS 16:25-26, KJV

And at midnight Paul and Silas prayed, and sang praises unto God: and the prisoners heard them. And suddenly there was a great earthquake... and every one's bands were loosed.

WORD STUDY · GREEK

ὑμνέω (hymneō) "sang praises"

Root of the word hymn. A deliberate song of praise, not accidental emotion. A decision made in the dark.

They sang at midnight, before the earthquake, before the doors opened, before any evidence that morning would look different. Their circumstance changed their location. It did not change their worship. The earthquake loosed everybody's chains, not just theirs.

The beating got on them. But it didn't get in them.

Verse 25 notes that the prisoners heard them. Somebody was always watching how Paul and Silas handled what hurt them. When the jailer draws his sword to take his own life, Paul stops him: the prison was not the end of the assignment, it became the venue for it.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What would it look like for you to worship at your midnight, before anything has changed?
2. Who is watching how you handle what hurts you right now, and what are they learning?
3. Has a hard season ever become the venue for your assignment rather than the end of it? Explain.

POINT 4 · SOVEREIGNTY AND SURRENDER

Caution: this point is not “praise God and He will open the door.” That still turns worship into a transaction. The center of this story is not the earthquake, the open door, or the chains falling off. The center is surrender. God's sovereignty means He has the right to allow a season you did not choose. It does not mean He stopped being God.

We worship Him not because He always explains Himself, but because He's too wise to make a mistake.

ROMANS 7:15, 24, KJV

For that which I do I allow not: for what I would, that do I not; but what I hate, that do I... O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?

WORD STUDY · GREEK

δουλεύω (douleuō) "to serve as a bond slave"

Paul's language for the mind serving God's law while the flesh serves another. The prison of knowing better and still wrestling with doing better.

Paul answers this prison not with self-effort but with a Person: he thanks God through Jesus Christ our Lord.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Where in your life are you currently wrestling with the gap between knowing better and doing better?
2. What would it mean, this week, to answer that wrestle with a Person rather than more self-effort?
3. Can you worship God even when He has not explained a season to you? What makes that possible or hard?

POINT 5 · FREE INDEED

JOHN 8:36, KJV*If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed.***WORD STUDY · GREEK****ὄντως (ontōs) "indeed"**

Really, truly, actually. The line between looking free and actually being free.

You can have no chains on your hands and still have chains on your heart. You can leave the relationship and still carry it, leave the job and still carry the bitterness. Freedom is not the absence of a difficult circumstance. It is what happens inside one when the soul stops negotiating with bondage and surrenders to Jesus. He does not liberate one room and leave the rest locked, not the marriage, the mind, the habits, the grief, the anger, or the disappointment.

Free indeed means every door.

Reframe the fast's question. Not just “God, get me out,” but “God, what got in me while I was going through it?”

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Which room does Jesus want to open that you have kept locked, even while other areas of your life look free?
2. What did the last hard season get into you that you never let Him remove?
3. Rewrite your prayer for this fast using the reframed question above. What would it sound like in your own words?

CLOSE · WORRY OR WORSHIP

When you do not know what to do, there are two options: worry or worship. Neither one denies that the problem is real. Worry rehearses, replays, and imagines until the problem moves from around you to inside you. Worship puts God back in His proper place. Worry magnifies the prison. Worship magnifies God in the prison. Paul and Silas worshiped before anything moved, before the earthquake, the doors, the chains, or the answer.

Worry gets the problem in you. Worship gets the problem out of you.

HABAKKUK 3:17-18, NIV

Though the fig tree does not bud and there are no grapes on the vines, though the olive crop fails and the fields produce no food, though there are no sheep in the pen and no cattle in the stalls, yet I will rejoice in the Lord, I will be joyful in God my Savior.

PSALM 3:3, KJV

But thou, O LORD, art a shield for me; my glory, and the lifter up of mine head.

THIS WEEK, DURING THE FAST

- 1.** Name one thing currently in your life that has gone through you but that you suspect has also gotten in you.
- 2.** What is one practical, decided act of worship, not a feeling, you will offer this week regardless of what changes?
- 3.** Write out your own “if God does not” statement, following the pattern of Habakkuk 3:17-18, and finish it with “yet I will.”

“If God doesn't change this prison tonight, this prison will not change me.”

So at midnight, I'm going to sing.