

## The Early Church: A Worshipping Body

# ENCORE Discussion

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### 1. What does it mean to “minister to the Lord” (v. 2)?

- What did the leaders of the Antioch church do as part of ministering to the Lord (v. 2, 3)?
- Why do you think that today this concept might be considered “old school,” and neglected?

### 2. Can we reasonably expect God to give direction as we worship/minister to Him?

- How is this direction given? (List at least three ways the Lord leads us as we seek Him.)

### 3. How does preaching prepare us for worship?

- How does music prepare us for ministering to the Lord in worship? (Remember that true worship is not a feeling, but a response.)

### 4. List in simple terms several of God’s character traits and discuss why each contributes to His praise-worthiness.

### 5. True worship is based on God’s activity, not on our efforts or feelings. Meaning?

### 6. What are other potential reasons for going to church, or objects of our worship, other than God? Are these examples of biblical worship, according to our definition?

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# Read: Acts 16:1-40

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## Monday

v. 1-5 — In Acts 16:1, we are introduced to a young disciple: Timothy. Timothy would be a constant companion to Paul, he would later pastor the church at Ephesus and two NT epistles bear his name. Make a list of all the information these verses give us about Timothy.

## Tuesday

v. 6-15 — In verses 6-10, we see the missionary team being led by the Lord. They had a plan but God was hindering that plan, He had His own plan for them. Finally, God would grant Paul a vision and make His will plain to them. Do you ever struggle to know God's will? God does not grant visions today; how can we know if we are doing God's will (Romans 12:1 and 2)?

## Wednesday

v. 16-18 — "A certain girl" was possessed by a demonic spirit. The spirit was desirable in that it "brought her masters much profit." The possessed girl may have enjoyed the power and prestige this demonic spirit afforded her. Paul cast out the demon, freeing the girl from spiritual bondage, yet we have no record of her thankfulness or repentance. We even see that her masters had Paul and Silas arrested for this miraculous service. Many people are blinded by sin and wallowing in it, they do not want the light of the gospel shined on the darkness of their hearts. Be aware that you may face resistance or even persecution from those you are lovingly ministering to.

## Thursday

v. 19-25 — Paul and Silas were doing the will of God, yet they were arrested, beaten, imprisoned and locked in the stocks. What was their attitude (v. 25)? In what specific way would God use their testimony? Do you "walk the walk" in daily life? Maintaining a good personal testimony is critical if we are going to have an impact on the people God has placed in our lives. No one would want to listen to a couple of missionaries who were defeated, whining and dejected; all the other prisoners had that attitude. Paul and Silas demonstrated that their God is God, by living out their faith for all to see.

## Friday

v. 26-34 — Read verse 26 again; what would you have done in this circumstance? Paul and Silas knew that God had something more than their immediate freedom in mind. Notice also that none of the prisoners escaped (v. 28). What was the reaction of the jailer (v. 30)? It can be difficult to trust God while in the midst of a trial. We don't always know what God is up to, but we do know that He is good, that He loves us, that He is with us and will never leave us, and that He is at work in our world. If we are willing and submissive vessels, He will use us to glorify Himself.

## Saturday

v. 35-40 — Do you think it was wise for Paul to demand the magistrates "come themselves and get us out"? What might have emboldened him? When we have seen God work in our lives it often encourages us and gives us a spiritual boldness. Paul and Silas had seen God's power at work, they had witnessed first hand that no prison can hold who God wants out; they had seen God's saving grace at work in the lives of at least two households in Philippi. We serve the same God today. Pray that the Lord would give you spiritual boldness as you witness and live for Him.