



Series: Unstoppable (Part 25)

Speaker: Tiffany Goh

INTRODUCTION

What happens when we pray?

We have already encountered some amazing prayer-related events in the Book of Acts:

- In Acts 3, we see Peter and John going to the temple at “the hour of prayer” (v1). And as they did so, they encountered a man who was lame from birth, who was then miraculously healed (v6-8).
- In Acts 4, the believers prayed along with Peter and John, following their release (v24). And as they did so, they were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to preach (v31).
- In Acts 9, Peter knelt down beside the dead Dorcas/Tabitha and prayed (v40). And as he did so, she was brought back to life (v40-41).
- In Acts 10, Peter went up to the roof of a building to pray (v9). And as he did so, he had a vision that would alter the history of the church (vv10-16).

We could go on. But pay close attention. Were all of these events caused by prayer, or were there exceptions? What then can we say about the relationship between prayer and the work of God?

In this lesson, we will examine three other prayer-related events. These incidents might help us form an answer to these questions. But more importantly, these incidents would help us see examples of the Unstoppable Gospel being preached for salvation and deliverance, within and through an environment of prayerful worship.

DISCUSSION

1. Some of us have been Christians for many years. In our Christian life, how did we react when God intercepted our steps with His ways? Did this interception result from prayer? Share your experience with your group.
2. Read Acts 16:13-15.
 - a. Paul and his companions were on their way to a “place of prayer” or *proseuche*. This was where Jews at the time would worship God, in cities where their population was not large enough to establish a synagogue.¹ What would a present-day equivalent to their journey look like?
 - b. How did Lydia manage to hear Paul’s message? Why did she respond in the way that she did? What was Paul’s role in her response?
 - c. Did Paul and his companions do anything out of the ordinary in this encounter? Do you think they expected this encounter? Why or why not?
3. Read Acts 16:16-19.
 - a. Once again, Paul and his companions were on their way to a “place of prayer” or *proseuche*, when they met a spirit-possessed slave girl. How did he respond to her? Was he prepared for the encounter?
4. Reflect on the above two passages. What do you think Paul meant in 2 Timothy 4:2, when he charged Timothy to “be prepared in season and out of season”? What might it mean for us today? How, if so, can prayer or other acts of worship be part of this preparation?

¹ See <https://www.bibletools.org/index.cfm/fuseaction/Lexicon.show/ID/G4335/proseuche.htm>.

5. Read Acts 16:20-40, paying close attention to verses 25-32.

- a. Why did Paul and Silas pray and sing to God? Did their prayer and singing bring about the earthquake or the jailer's salvation, or was it something else? What did their prayer and singing do?
- b. Will we continue to pray and praise God when we are faced with difficulties in our lives? What should our heart's posture be, as we do so?

WHAT WOULD YOU DO?

God has a history of intercepting our steps with His ways. And many times, we are clueless of what His interception might mean - which places He is leading us or which people He has purposed for us to meet.

But as we stay faithful to the small steps God has shown us in our lives, God will work in and through us. Like Paul and Silas, despite their suffering and pain, they persisted in prayer and gave praises to God. And God allowed them to witness salvation and deliverance. May our eyes and hearts be open to witness what God is doing and wants us to do, as we pray.

MEMORY VERSE

"Pray continually, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus." **1 Thessalonians 5:17 (NIV)**