

Would I?

John Cole / General

Acts 16

Walk through Acts 16 and constantly ask yourself the question: "Would I do that?" In this sermon, we will ask this question together nine times throughout the passage. Watch out, it is pretty insightful.

› INTRO

1 Thessalonians 2:19–20 KJV

¹⁹ For what *is* our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? *Are* not even ye in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at his coming? ²⁰ For ye are our glory and joy.

10,000 Sermon Illustrations C. H. Spurgeon

C. H. Spurgeon

The renowned 19th-century English preacher C. H. Spurgeon told this story about King Cyrus, the man who conquered Babylon and freed the Jews from captivity: A visitor who was admiring Cyrus' gardens said it gave him much pleasure. "Ah," said Cyrus, "but you have not so much pleasure in this garden as I have, for I have planted every tree in it myself."

Spurgeon then commented, "One reason some saints will have a greater fullness of heaven than others will be that they did more for heaven than others. By God's grace they were enabled to bring more souls there."

Those words should cause all of us who know the Lord to do some serious thinking. How many people will be in heaven because of us? Our desire should be that when we reach our eternal home, some will say to us, "I'm so thankful for you. It was your testimony, your life, your invitation to accept Christ that accounts for my being here today." The apostle Paul anticipated the joy in heaven of seeing people who were there as a result of his ministry (1 Th. 2:19–20).

Yes, heaven's joys will be the fullest for those who have helped lead others to Christ. So do all you can to bring to Jesus those who are lost in sin. That's how you can lay up pleasures in heaven!

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1 Thessalonians 2:19-20 clearly reveals the mindset Paul had.

A mindset that considered as his greatest joy the future gathering in Heaven with those he had influenced for Christ.

Today, I am going to do something unfair.

I am going to go through this amazing testimony of Paul and some other new believers and simply ask nine times the question: **Would I do that?**

| (Not to be confused with the famous Steve Erkle question: "Did I do that?")

› PRAYER & TRANSITION TO THE PASSAGE

Acts 16:4–8 KJV

⁴ And as they went through the cities, they delivered them the decrees for to keep, that were ordained of the apostles and elders which were at Jerusalem.

⁵ And so were the churches established in the faith, and increased in number daily.

⁶ Now when they had gone throughout Phrygia and the region of Galatia, and were forbidden of the Holy Ghost to preach the word in Asia,

⁷ After they were come to Mysia, they assayed to go into Bithynia: but the Spirit suffered them not.

⁸ And they passing by Mysia came down to Troas.

#1 Would I have obeyed the Holy Spirit?

- Aware?
- Too stubborn?
- Rationalized my way out?

Acts 16:9–10 KJV

⁹ And a vision appeared to Paul in the night; There stood a man of Macedonia, and prayed him, saying, Come over into Macedonia, and help us.

¹⁰ And after he had seen the vision, immediately we endeavoured to go into Macedonia, assuredly gathering that the Lord had called us for to preach the gospel unto them.

#2 Would I have responded to the need?

- Heard?
- Cared?
- Understood?
- Avoided?

Acts 16:13 KJV

¹³ And on the sabbath we went out of the city by a river side, where prayer was wont to be made; and we sat down, and spake unto the women which resorted *thither*.

#3 Would I have invested in this small, seemingly insignificant group?

Acts 16:14 KJV

¹⁴ And a certain woman named Lydia, a seller of purple, of the city of Thyatira, which worshipped God, heard *us*: whose heart the Lord opened, that she attended unto the things which were spoken of Paul.

#4 Would I speak words God wants others to follow?

Acts 16:15 KJV

¹⁵ And when she was baptized, and her household, she besought *us*, saying, If ye have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come into my house, and abide *there*. And she constrained us.

#5 Would I have offered my home and resources for the

Lord's work?

Acts 16:16–24 KJV

¹⁶ And it came to pass, as we went to prayer, a certain damsel possessed with a spirit of divination met us, which brought her masters much gain by soothsaying:

¹⁷ The same followed Paul and us, and cried, saying, These men are the servants of the most high God, which shew unto us the way of salvation.

¹⁸ And this did she many days. But 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.

¹⁹ And when her masters saw that the hope of their gains was gone, they caught Paul and Silas, and drew *them* into the marketplace unto the rulers,

²⁰ And brought them to the magistrates, saying, These men, being Jews, do exceedingly trouble our city,

²¹ And teach customs, which are not lawful for us to receive, neither to observe, being Romans.

²² And the multitude rose up together against them: and the magistrates rent off their clothes, and commanded to beat *them*.

²³ And when they had laid many stripes upon them, they cast *them* into prison, charging the jailor to keep them safely:

²⁴ Who, having received such a charge, thrust them into the inner prison, and made their feet fast in the stocks.

#6 Would I have done this good when I knew it would bring me harm?

Acts 16:25 KJV

²⁵ And at midnight Paul and Silas prayed, and sang praises unto God: and the prisoners heard

them.

#7 Would I have prayed and sung praises in prison?

Acts 16:26–31 KJV

²⁶ And suddenly there was a great earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison were shaken: and immediately all the doors were opened, and every one's bands were loosed.

²⁷ And the keeper of the prison awaking out of his sleep, and seeing the prison doors open, he drew out his sword, and would have killed himself, supposing that the prisoners had been fled.

²⁸ But Paul cried with a loud voice, saying, Do thyself no harm: for we are all here.

²⁹ Then he called for a light, and sprang in, and came trembling, and fell down before Paul and Silas,

³⁰ And brought them out, and said, Sirs, what must I do to be saved?

³¹ And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house.

Acts 16:35–39 KJV

³⁵ And when it was day, the magistrates sent the serjeants, saying, Let those men go.

³⁶ And the keeper of the prison told this saying to Paul, The magistrates have sent to let you go: now therefore depart, and go in peace.

³⁷ But Paul said unto them, They have beaten us openly uncondemned, being Romans, and have cast *us* into prison; and now do they thrust us out privily? nay verily; but let them come themselves and fetch us out.

³⁸ And the serjeants told these words unto the magistrates: and they feared, when they heard that they were Romans.

³⁹ And they came and besought them, and brought *them* out, and desired *them* to depart out of the city.

#8 Would I have put the needs and interest of the jailor and church before my own for the sake of the Gospel?

› CONCLUSION

This last question pulls it all together.

It is reveals the fruit of the previous mime questions.

It is a result of Paul's Spirit-filled pursuit.

Acts 16:32–34 KJV

³² And they spake unto him the word of the Lord, and to all that were in his house.

³³ And he took them the same hour of the night, and washed *their* stripes; and was baptized, he and all his, straightway.

³⁴ And when he had brought them into his house, he set meat before them, and rejoiced, believing in God with all his house.

Acts 16:40 KJV

⁴⁰ And they went out of the prison, and entered into *the house of* Lydia: and when they had seen the brethren, they comforted them, and departed.

#9 Do I see the love and Gospel of Christ transforming lives like did Paul?

We can and ought to personally see the love and Gospel of Christ transform lives.

Will you make this a godly pursuit of yours?

Would you?