

Sleepless Nights

(Acts 16:25-34)

Introduction

How many times have you awakened in the middle of the night, your mind racing over a situation, problem, or challenge that has put a choke hold on your thought life.

How many times have you become frustrated that you can't sleep. You are exhausted, but just can't sleep.

Contextualize Acts 16:25-34

Contextualize this sermon series.

I. The Cause of Their Sleepless Night

A) Their Difficulties

- 1) Political difficulties - "seized them" (16:19)
- 2) Emotional difficulties- "humiliation" (16:22)
- 3) Physical difficulties – "beat them" (16:23)
- 4) Social difficulties – "prison" (16:23)
- 5) Religious difficulties – "they not minister" (16:24)

B) Our Difficulties

- 1) Finances
- 2) Family/friends
- 3) Failures
- 4) Fear (of getting caught)
- 5) Faith (conviction)

Note: In the dark you can only think. Your mind wanders and then worries.

Note: In the dark, everything seems bigger, more pressing, more threatening.

II. The Response to Sleepless Nights – Prayer and Praise

Usual responses include television, reading, thinking, activity, or work.

A) What was the focus of their prayer (16:25)?

(proseuchomai [lit. *pros* toward, *euchomai* the face]
- This is communion with God.)

Notice for what they did not pray.

- 1) Against their jailor.
- 2) Beg for deliverance.
- 3) Judgment against the Roman system.
- 4) Relief from physical pain.

Note: When you focus on God, you forget about your problems; you forget about your pain.

B) What first got God’s attention?

(The word “sang” is humneo, which is hymns, i.e., “to sing toward God.” Talking to God in music.)

C) What caused God to respond? – Worship.

(“Sang praises,” the word from which we get Halallel, the Psalms sung as you approach Jerusalem and God’s presence.)

- 1) “The father seeks worship” (John 4:23).
- 2) If you worship Him, He will come to receive it.

3) Why were the doors opened and the chains removed? The Father was coming to make the prison a sanctuary.

- 4) Worship is the key to unlock your prison.

III. The Rescue from Sleepless Nights

A) What was first thing to happen (16:30)?

(The jailer was convicted. You have to get right with God, before you can win others to Christ.)

B) How did God use them?

- a. Soul winning, “was baptized” (16:33).
- b. Freedom to minister, “Spoke unto him the Word of the Lord” (16:32). “They entered into the house of Lydia . . . comforted them” (16:40).

C) How did God deliver them?

- a. Supernaturally – “a great earthquake” (16:36).
- b. Naturally. “The magistrates have sent . . . now depart” (16:36). “Let them come . . . fetch us out” (16:37).

Conclusions

How to get your mind off your hurt?

- Focus on Jesus.
- Focus on others.