The Night the Jailer was Converted
Acts 16:26-34

Introduction:
A. Paul and Silas jailed at Philippi, Macedonia.
   1. Their “crime” – casting “spirit of divination” out of slave girl.
   2. Their treatment – arrested, beaten, put in maximum security.
   3. Their release – Midnight earthquake and jailer’s response.
B. Paul and Silas were found in three positions the night the jailhouse rocked.

Discussion:
I. Prisoners.
   A. The *formal* charge: Unlawful troublemakers (vv. 20-21).
      1. Unfair to charge “troublemaker” or “division causer” period! (Cf. Acts 17:6; Rom. 16:17).
      2. Unfair to stigmatize one with generalities: “anti”, “troublemaker”, etc.
   B. The *real* reason: Selfishness of masters (v. 19) – cared neither for girl or law.
      1. People often hide real griped behind more acceptable language – often called “spin”
      2. Brethren often use high sounding principles as pretext for sin (Matt. 15:4-5).

II. Prayers (v. 25)
   A. Praying and Singing is not the sounds of enraged self-pity (cf. Mt. 5:11,12)
   B. Praying and Singing openly, without shame, in heathen prison.
      1. The prisoners heard them!
      2. Many afraid to be caught religious away from “church.”

III. Preachers (v. 32).
   A. The sinner’s question: “Sirs, what must I do to be saved?” (v. 30).
      1. Saved from what?
         a. Not earthquake – it was over.
         b. Not Roman penalty – prisoners were safe.
   B. The preacher’s answer: “Believer on the Lord ... (vv. 31, 32).
      1. Answer began where the jailer was – an unbelieving pagan.
         a. Answer to Pentecostians began where they were – believers (Acts 2:38).
         b. Answer to Saul of Tarsus began where he was – penitent believer (Acts 22:16).
      2. Answer was not “faith only” – but, active, living faith including repentance and baptism.
   C. The believer’s baptism (v. 33).
      1. The time shows the urgency and importance.
      2. The place shows how baptism was performed.
         a. Not in the jail (v. 30).
         b. Not in the house (vv. 33, 34).
         c. Hence, not sprinkling.
      3. The prerequisites and results show that no infants were involved (vv. 32, 34).

Conclusion:
A. You can be saved like this family did and rejoice like they did.
B. You can then behave like Paul and Silas: Suffer joyfully, pray and sing unashamedly, Preach plainly.