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# Words of Truth

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## Hebrews 13:3

By: Brian A. Yeager

*“Remember them that are in bonds, as bound with them; and them which suffer adversity, as being yourselves also in the body”* (Hebrews 13:3). The word translated “bonds” [δέσμιος] means: “a captive (as bound): — in bonds, prisoner” (Strong’s # 1198). Generally, when you think of a prisoner you think about someone who has broken civil law. We know that Christians are supposed to obey civil law (Romans 13:1-7 and I Peter 2:13-16) unless those laws are contrary to the will of God (Acts 5:12-42). So, how would a faithful Christian end up being a prisoner?

Before anyone was ever called a Christian, the forerunner for Jesus was cast into prison for preaching the truth (Matthew 14:1-12). Jesus warned that persecution would include imprisonment (Luke 21:12). Jesus was arrested, tried, convicted, and put to death through the plotting of the ungodly (Matthew 26:47-27:56). Therefore, we can see that someone being in prison doesn’t necessarily mean that person was guilty of a crime (Acts 8:1-3).

After Jesus left this world the Apostles experienced what Jesus warned them of (Acts 4:1-3). Notice what later happened to Paul and Silas: *“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: 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. 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. 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, And brought them to the magistrates, saying, These men, being Jews, do exceedingly trouble our city, And teach customs, which are not lawful for us to receive, neither to observe, being Romans. And the multitude rose up together against them: and the magistrates rent off their clothes, and commanded to beat them. And when they had laid many stripes upon them, they cast them into prison, charging the jailor to keep them safely: Who, having received such a charge, thrust them into the inner prison, and made their feet fast in the stocks. And at midnight Paul and Silas prayed, and sang praises unto God: and the prisoners heard them. 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. 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*

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*had been fled. But Paul cried with a loud voice, saying, Do thyself no harm: for we are all here. Then he called for a light, and sprang in, and came trembling, and fell down before Paul and Silas, And brought them out, and said, Sirs, what must I do to be saved? And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house. And they spake unto him the word of the Lord, and to all that were in his house. And he took them the same hour of the night, and washed their stripes; and was baptized, he and all his, straightway. And when he had brought them into his house, he set meat before them, and rejoiced, believing in God with all his house. And when it was day, the magistrates sent the serjeants, saying, Let those men go. 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. 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. And the serjeants told these words unto the magistrates: and they feared, when they heard that they were Romans. And they came and besought them, and brought them out, and desired them to depart out of the city. 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” (Acts 16:16-40).*

Paul spent plenty of time in prison. Some of his letters were written from prison (Ephesians 4:1; 6:20, Philippians 1:7-16, Colossians 4:3, II Timothy 1:8, etc.). While Paul was in prison there were various brethren that came and tended to his needs (Philippians 2:25-30 and Philemon 1:10-13). When Paul wrote he desired that he would not be forgotten while he was in prison (Colossians 4:18). That shouldn't have been a concern though, right?

Brethren are supposed to relate to one another and love one another well enough to feel the sufferings of brethren. We are all part of the same body. Consider these Scriptures: *“Rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep. Be of the same mind one toward another. Mind not high things, but condescend to men of low estate. Be not wise in your own conceits... That there should be no schism in the body; but that the members should have the same care one for another. And whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or one member be honoured, all the members rejoice with it. Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular”* (Romans 12:15-16 and I Corinthians 12:25-27).

Take a moment and read through part of the description Jesus gave concerning the Judgment Day (Matthew 25:31-46). Think about what you read as it applies to our study. The King said: *“I was in prison, and ye came unto me...”* To which the question was asked: *“Or when saw we thee sick, or in prison, and came unto thee?”* The King responded: *“Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me.”* The saints that the Hebrew letter was written to were not neglecting brethren in prison (Hebrews 10:34). Yet, they were still being taught to remember those in bonds and those suffering affliction. If our brethren are suffering for righteousness sake (Matthew 5:10-12), we need to be there with them and for them. All of our souls depend on that!