**The Power of Your Praise**

Acts 16: 16-34

My son and I reminisced about the times I would stay up all night praying and praising God. I taught him at a young age not to interrupt me during my time with God unless it was something that needed my immediate attention. Though I am grateful for my current season, I am so thankful for the years God was molding and shaping me for His purpose. They were the best of times and the worst of times. However, I would not change one thing, because I learned how to worship and praise God through tears and life's challenges. I made up my mind that I would praise God no matter the circumstance.

In Acts chapter 16, Paul and his companions were sharing the Gospel and baptizing. They were met by a slave girl who was possessed by a spirit of divination. Her master used her knowledge in order to earn money. She followed Paul and his companions around for days, stating that they were servants of the Most High God. This lets us know that Satan knows who we are. He or his host of demons follows us around, watching our behavior so they can discover weaknesses. Satan is our enemy and the Bible gives us insight into his character.

The Bible says He is a ...........

* **LIAR** (John 8:44c)-His nature is to lie, so he does what comes natural to him.
* **MURDERER** (John 8:44b) - Attempts to kill your God-given purpose and dream.
* **ACCUSER** (Revelation 12:10) - Reminds God of our shortcomings
* **DECEIVER** (Revelation 12:9)- Mixes truth with error to create doubt
* **THIEF** (John 10:10a) - Will steal your joy if you are not careful
* **DESTROYER** (John 10:10a) - His ultimate goal is to destroy the lives of Believers by whatever means necessary.

Paul being spirit-filled discerned that the slave girl operated through an evil spirit. After getting fed-up with her taunting, he cast the demon out of her. This caused her master to have Paul and Silas thrown into jail. According to Romans 8:28, God will cause ALL things to work together for good, for them who love Him and are called according to His purpose. That plan does not always feel good, look good, and can be painful, but it will work out for our good!

At about midnight, Paul and Silas began to praise God. They sang so loudly that all the prisoners heard them. God caused an earthquake to occur, and the prison doors opened. Sisters and brothers, when God gets tired of the enemy attacking you, He will shake up some things to bring you out. The prison guard believed that Paul and Silas had escaped since the doors were opened. He was about to commit suicide, but Paul yelled, " Do not harm yourself, we're still here." That prison guard was converted that evening!

All of us will go through something. If it's not one thing, it's another, but God is faithful!. He will open your prison doors at the appointed time. Just keep trusting, praying and praising, because there is power in your praise!

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