



## Cases of Conversion: The Philippian Jailer

In Ephesians 1 great promises are offered to “the saints in Ephesus.” In verse 13, a phrase is used there that is also found in the conversion of the Philippian jailer. Verse 13 says, “In Him you also trusted, after you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation; in whom also, having believed, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise...”

The phrase “having believed” clearly looks back at the Ephesians’ conversion experience, just as it does with the Philippian jailer. Acts 16:34 says, “Now when he had brought them into his house, he set food before them; and he rejoiced, having believed in God with all his household.”

The question we hope to answer is: what evidence did the Philippian jailer show of his belief that led to this rejoicing?

First, we notice He was willing to listen. After hearing the hymns of Paul and Silas and seeing their sincere concern for him (they encouraged him not to kill himself) he asks the question, “Sirs, what must I do to be saved?” (Acts 16:30).

Second, the text instructs the jailer to “believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you will be saved, you and your household” (16:31). Obeying Jesus is not for a select few, it was for everyone. Thus, Paul and Silas extend the opportunity to everyone in the jailer’s household. Yet, do not stop reading the passage there—read on.

Verse 32 says, “...they spoke the word of the Lord to him and to all who were in his house.” Observe that there were more specific things to be taught.

In verse 33 it says the jailer, “...took them the same hour of the night and washed their stripes. And immediately he and his family were baptized.” Thus, we see repentance (the jailer was cleaning their wounds). Finally, we see baptism (not a ceremonial, delayed baptism but an immediate reaction).

So, “having believed” refers back not just to mental assent, but also to the obedience of the jailer. Have you believed and obeyed the Lord?

by Joshua R. Welch