

WE DIDN'T RUN

From Acts 16:23-28

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We didn't run that wondrous night,
though some have asked us why
when freed from all the prison's bars,
we didn't even try.

Two guys were thrown into our cell
and bound down tight in stocks
by guards who knew the order given
and used up all the locks.

But we through candle shadows saw
the ripped up clothes and skin,
the caked on blood in matted hair,
the pain they held within.

The older said his name was Paul,
his friend was nearly dead.
The floor of stone would sooth the burn
but for the stocks of dread.

"What did you do?" we all did ask
to warrant such a treat.
It must be bad beyond the norm,
beyond the ken and beat.

Then Paul began, ignoring pain,
to softly sing a verse,
a simple hymn that we all knew,
it from his soul did burst.

Silas joined the worship tunes
of faith and hope and trust,
A psalm from David's heart and soul
transcended time and dust.

Between the hymns Paul gently said
what on earth they'd done,
and what we heard amazed us all
our souls were all undone.

Paul spoke of God, of Jesus Christ,
of times when he'd been Saul,
of others he'd so wrongly beat
because they'd loved their all.

He seemed to think his suffering
was not just simply trust
of God in him, but open doors
to prove his own true lust

to look for chance, retaliate
against the Evil One,
for all the suffering he had caused
before he'd been undone.

Their praise soon drowned all earthly pain,
their focus evident.
They sang the truth of His true Reign
His Spirit's provident.

We had to hear, we could not sleep,
there was no sure escape
eternal words of truth and love,
the worship of such faith.

When the earthquake hit so strong
we thought that we were through.
Yet doors and chains just fell away
as integrated proof.

We sat in awe, we could not flee
the power of loving praise,
the truth of God before our eyes,
the proof of love and grace.

When one asked what we should do
the voice we knew as Paul
told a simple choice to make,
to surrender all.

I've stayed in touch with most of them
my cell mates from that night,
our lives were changed from deep within,
Paul gave us such insight

to understand the consequence
of sins and praise of Him,
the need to worship and to live
so fully free of sin.

Looking back I can now see
the chains of love within
the power of His simple love,
expressed in simple hymns.

We didn't run 'cause deep inside
we could no longer flee
the truth of sin and sin's release
we knew we'd been set free.