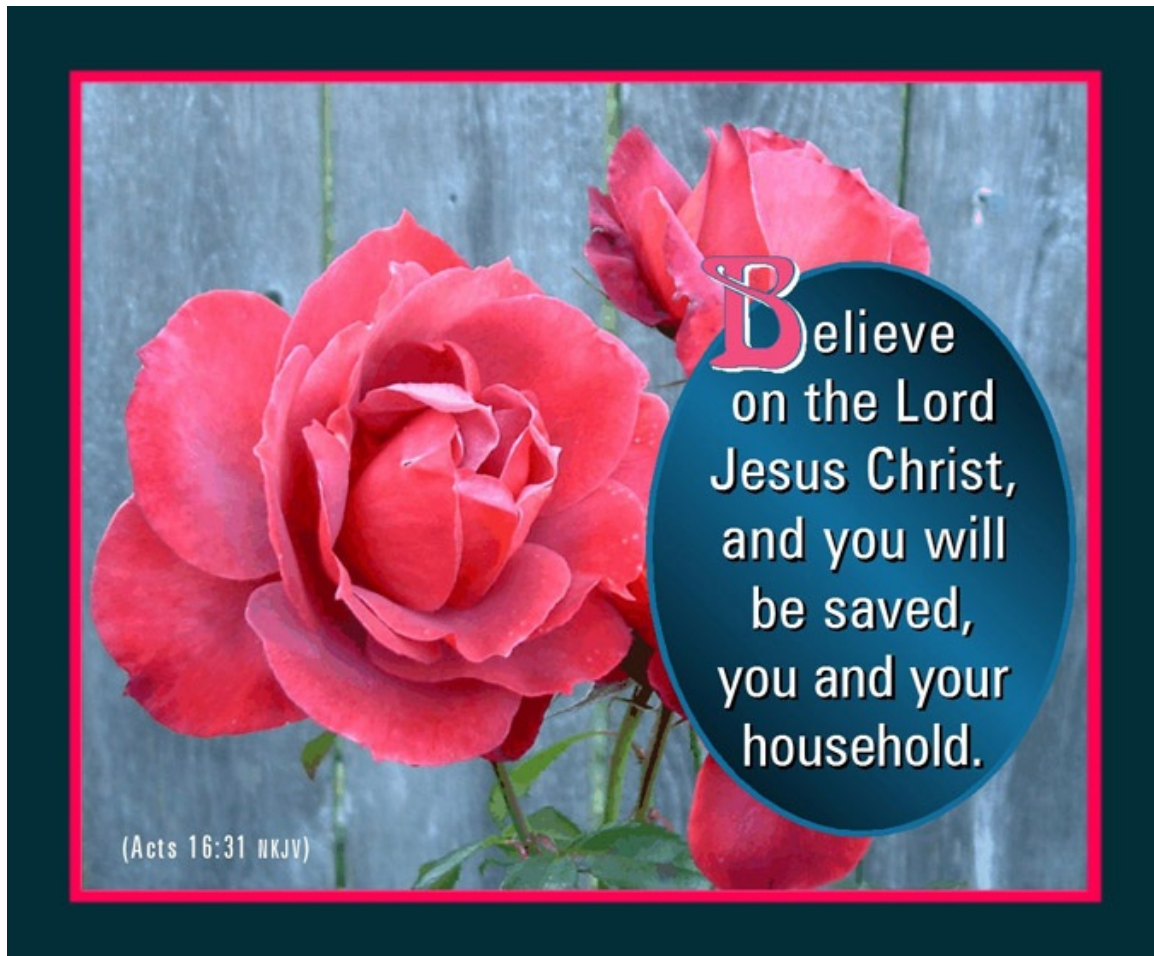


The Second Missionary Journey
The Gospel Reaches into Europe; Paul and Silas Imprisoned in Philippi

A Study in Acts Chapter 16



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Acts Chapter 16

The Second Missionary Journey

In this wonderful chapter, the Spirit of God guided and directed His missionaries. For the first time the gospel was introduced into Europe, beginning at Philippi. The chapter contains one of the most precious salvation promises found in God's Word: "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved" (Acts 16:31). Paul and Silas provided a wonderful example of rejoicing in the midst of suffering (Acts 16:25), and God responded in a miraculous way to deliver His servants!

Acts 16:1

Paul and Silas did not follow the route which they took on their first missionary journey when they started at Cyprus. Instead they started in Paul's home province of Cilicia, the region in which Tarsus is located. From there they worked their way back through cities which Paul had visited previously. What a joy it must have been for the churches to hear from Paul and Silas, and to learn what had taken place at the Jerusalem Council. Silas was an official representative of the Jerusalem church and also a prophet of God (Acts 15:32). As God's prophet, it is possible that God spoke through him to forbid the team from going to Asia and Bithynia, though we are not told this (Acts 16:6-7).

For the first time, Timothy is introduced to us. His mother was a believing Jewess named Eunice; his grandmother was Lois (2 Tim. 1:5). These two women faithfully taught Timothy the Old Testament Scriptures as a young boy (2 Tim. 3:15). Perhaps in God's marvelous providence Timothy was introduced to Paul during a horrible persecution that Paul endured. Paul was stoned and left for dead in Lystra, probably Timothy's city. Timothy was trained in the Scriptures by his mother and grandmother. Yet, he was led to the Lord by Paul through whom Timothy learned the gospel with its emphasis upon Christ crucified and risen (1 Cor. 15:1-4). Paul referred to Timothy as "my own son in the faith" (1 Tim. 1:2). Indeed, Paul was Timothy's spiritual father.

Paul spoke very highly of Timothy: "For I have no man likeminded, who will naturally care for your state" (Phil. 2:20). Paul considered him one of the most faithful, diligent, dependable disciple that God had ever given to him.

Timothy's father was a "Greek" which may suggest that he was not only non-Jewish, but also an unbeliever. At the time of Paul's visit he may have already died.

Timothy was invited to join Paul and Silas: "The early apostles not only worked in pairs, but also took along younger brethren (Mark and Timothy) for training in practical aspects of the Christian ministry. What a privilege it was for these young men to be yoked together with seasoned veterans in Christian missionary enterprise."¹

¹William MacDonald, *Believer's Bible Commentary*, p. 1632.

Acts 16:2

Timothy was well reported of by the brethren who were at Lystra. He had an excellent testimony among the believers and they spoke well of him. These first two verses are unclear as to whether Timothy was from Derbe, Lystra or Iconium. Since Lystra is mentioned in both of these first two verses, he was probably from Lystra, the city where Paul was stoned (Acts 14:19).

Acts 16:3

How does the circumcision of Timothy harmonize with what Paul wrote to the Galatians: “Behold, I Paul say unto you, that if ye be circumcised Christ shall profit you nothing. For I testify again to every man that is circumcised, that he is a debtor to do the whole law” (Gal. 5:2-3)? Did Paul compromise with his own teaching? No, Paul was using wisdom in reaching others. That is, Paul was circumcising Timothy in order to accomplish a more effective outreach to Jewish people who would be offended if Timothy were not circumcised. The text says that he was circumcised “because of the Jews.”

Paul believed that Timothy's ministry to the Jews would be hindered if he were not circumcised. Timothy was half Jewish: his mother was a Jew but his father was a Gentile. According to Jewish thinking, if the mother were a Jew, then even though the father were a Gentile, the child would still be considered a Jew. Timothy was considered to be a Jew, even though he only had one Jewish parent. We can understand why Jewish people could have a problem with Timothy not being circumcised. Circumcision was a sign of the Abrahamic covenant. “Timothy, if you are a son of Abraham by virtue of your mother's lineage, then why aren't you circumcised? Are you a true Jew or aren't you?”

It is fascinating that Paul circumcised Timothy but he refused to circumcise Titus. Why was this so? It is important to understand the difference. Titus was not compelled to be circumcised (Gal. 2:3-5). Titus was not a Jew; he was a Gentile. To insist that Titus be circumcised would be an attack against the heart of the gospel. It is totally wrong to suggest that circumcision has anything to do with a person being saved. This was the error that had to be corrected in Acts 15 by the Jerusalem Council.

Timothy's case was totally different. The people living in Timothy's area knew that Timothy was a Jew. Paul was going to take Timothy with him on his missionary journey, and as they went into a city their first contacts would often be among Jewish people. This gospel team would usually go first to the synagogue to preach the gospel. If these Jews knew that Timothy had not been circumcised they might be offended and refuse to listen to the gospel message he preached. Timothy's circumcision was not a perversion of the gospel, but it was for the purpose of reaching the Jewish people with the gospel (compare 1 Cor. 9:20, 22). Sometimes it is needful to forgo our personal liberty in order to reach people for Christ. “Timothy's circumcision was not for salvation but was performed to make Timothy acceptable to synagogue audiences (not to placate Judaizing Christians). The operation regularized his status and increased his usefulness to Paul in Jewish areas.”²

²Homer Kent, Jr., *Jerusalem to Rome*, p. 133.

Silas was also one hundred percent Jewish, and thus Paul's entire missionary team had been circumcised and could effectively work with Jewish people. Later, as seen in this chapter, they were joined by Luke who was a Gentile believer.

Acts 16:4

Paul and his team faithfully delivered to the believers in these cities the "decrees" (authoritative opinions, from the Greek term from which we get the word "dogma") which came from the Jerusalem Council, and especially the four things that Gentile believers were to abstain from (Acts 15:20,29). The cities where they delivered these decrees were no doubt in the province of Galatia.

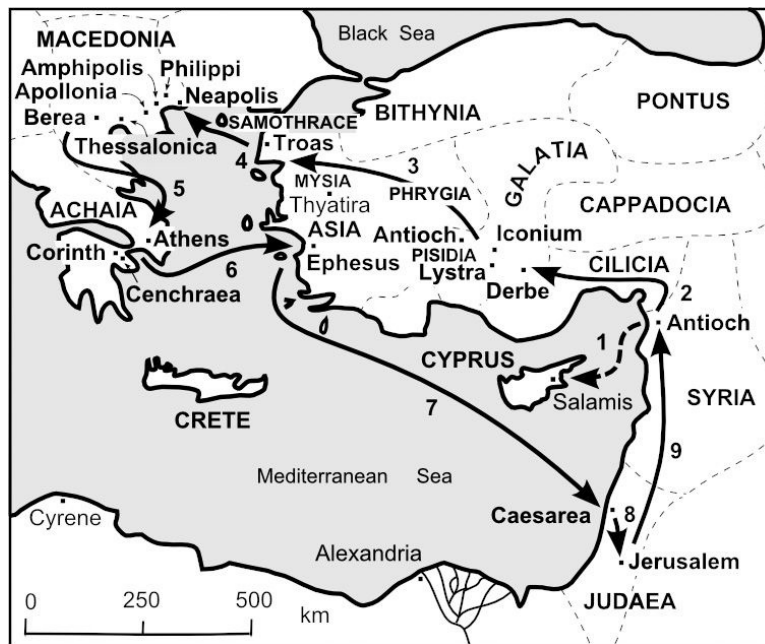
Acts 16:5

God was working, the churches were being established or strengthened in the faith, and people were being saved.³ God was adding to the Church daily such as should be saved (Acts 2:47). In this second missionary journey there was a definite leadership structure. Paul was clearly the leader, then Silas his co-worker, and then Timothy, who was a young man serving as an additional helper. Compare this to the first missionary journey involving Paul, Barnabas and John Mark.

Acts 16:6

This missionary team may have had their sights on that great city of Ephesus in Asia, with hundreds of thousands of people. Ephesus was a major population center. This was Paul's basic strategy in missions. He would seek to spend his time in big cities, rather than small towns. In the big city he could train people to go to the smaller towns. It was a brilliant mission strategy. Concerning his desire to go to Ephesus in Asia, the Holy Spirit said, "No!" Why? We are not told the reason why. We can only assume that it was not God's time. On his third missionary journey, Paul would be permitted to go to some of these Asian cities such as Ephesus, but it was not God's will on this trip (compare Acts 19:10 where "all they which dwelt in Asia heard the word of the Lord Jesus, both Jews and Greeks"). The verb "forbidden" means to prevent or to hinder. The Holy Spirit prevented them from preaching the gospel in Asia. Exactly how He did this we are not told. It is possible that it came by way of a prophet, and we know that Silas was a prophet (Acts 15:32). The cities and regions mentioned in Acts 16:6-8, 11-12 can be found on the following map.

³The word "established" or "strengthened" is used of a lame person being strengthened or healed (Acts 3:7,16).



Acts 16:7

Mysia was just north of Ephesus, and from there they tried to go to Bithynia, which would have been north near the Black Sea. Again the Spirit said “No!” The verb “suffered” means to allow, permit or let. The Spirit did not allow them to go to Bithynia.⁴ God had a love and concern for Bithynia (see 1 Peter 1:1), but the time was not yet. Doors were slamming shut! Negative guidance was being given. God did not yet tell them where to go, but He told them where not to go.⁵ And yet the missionary team kept moving, trusting that God would direct them to where He wanted them to go. As the expression goes, “It’s easy to turn a moving ship.”

Such humble reliance upon the direction of the Holy Spirit is but little known in our days. The great movements of our times seem to place more stress on organization, widespread advertising methods and financial support, than on the presence and guidance of the Holy Spirit.⁶

⁴Many Greek manuscripts have “Spirit of Jesus,”—“the Spirit of Jesus did not allow them” (NASB).

⁵William MacDonald has a very helpful discussion of how God guided the early Christians as this passage illustrates. See *Believer’s Bible Commentary*, pages 1633-1634.

⁶Arno C. Gaebelein, *The ACTS of the Apostles*, p. 281.

Acts 16:8-9

Finally they moved straight northwest and came to Troas, a major port city.⁷ One night an amazing thing happened as Paul received a vision. A man of Macedonia implored (begged, beseeched) him saying, “Come over into Macedonia and help us!”⁸ Ironically, the “man” they came to help turned out to be a group of women! One of the women, Lydia (verse 14), was a seller of purple from Thyatira!⁹ The long, westward march of the gospel, which had started in Jerusalem and Judea and Samaria, was now headed into Europe. From Europe the gospel would eventually go to the new world, and after the new world was evangelized, the gospel would go back to the “old world” by way of countless missionary endeavors, as well as to Africa and South America, etc. Truly, the gospel would go to the uttermost parts of the world (Acts 1:8).

Two visions in Acts led to monumental developments in the spread of the gospel: 1) Peter’s vision in Acts 10 resulted in the spread of the gospel to the Gentiles; 2) Paul’s vision in Acts 16 resulted in the spread of the gospel to Europe.

The Leading of the Holy Spirit

Many a time in history has supernatural restraint and constraint changed the course of God’s servants. Livingstone assayed to go into China, but God suffered him not and sent him to Africa to be its missionary general, statesman, explorer. Before him, Carey planned to go to the Great Polynesia in the South Seas, but God guided him to India to lay foundations for giving a vernacular Bible to one sixth of the people of the world. Judson did go to India, but was driven to Burma, where he built up an apostolic church for all the age. Barnabas Shaw was thrust out from Boerland, and trusted to God’s guidance of his kine and cart, not knowing whither he went, until the twenty-eighth day brought him the chief of Namaqualand, his “man of Macedonia,” who literally said, “Come over and help us.” How many secrets of leading are yet to be brought to light, thousands of God’s servants having been forbidden of Him to follow out their plans, because He has had some unexpected open door of service to set before them! And how we need to trust Him for guidance and rejoice equally in His restraints and constraints; because if we had infinite wisdom and love to guide us, we should not, by one hair’s-breath change His perfect plan for our lives! —Arthur T. Pierson, *The Acts of the Holy Spirit*, pages 121-122.

Acts 16:10

We learn from this verse that someone else had joined them on this missionary journey. Notice the pronoun “we” in which the author Luke includes himself. This is the first mention of the writer

⁷Troas was located close to the site of ancient Troy.

⁸The noun for man [*anér*] refers to a male individual. It is not the general word for man [*anthropos*] which can refer to a male or female.

⁹Thyatira was a city in Asia and Paul was forbidden to preach there (Acts 16:6), but the Lord led him to this relocated Asian!

Luke. "He joined Paul and his party here at Troas and traveled with him frequently from that time forward. Luke remained with Paul at the close of his life when Paul was a prisoner in Rome."¹⁰ Whenever Luke was part of the team, he indicated this by the pronoun "we." When he was not part of the team, he did not use that first person plural pronoun. So at this point Luke, the beloved physician, joined them. Some believe that Luke came from Philippi in Macedonia. In fact, the city of Philippi was famous for a school of medicine, and Luke was a medical doctor. Paul had his own personal physician to travel with him and attend to his physical needs.

The vision convinced the missionary team that God wanted them to preach the gospel in Macedonia, and they wasted no time in heading there. In the Roman Empire at this time, people had freedom to travel from one country to the next without having to show passports and go through a lot of red tape. There was also an amazing transportation system which made it possible to board a ship and easily travel to their destination. The Roman Empire was also famous for its remarkable system of roads.

Acts 16:11-12

Samothracia is an island. Neapolis (literally "new city") is a coastal city which served as the seaport for Philippi, which was ten miles inland. From Neapolis they went to Philippi which was the chief city of that part of Macedonia, and a Roman colony. The citizens of Philippi considered themselves to be a very privileged city under direct Roman jurisdiction. This city was named after Philip of Macedonia, who was the father of Alexander the Great three hundred years earlier. It was a very important city in those days and was located on the Egnatian Way. This Roman highway connected the Aegean Sea with the Adriatic Sea. Philippi was encircled by two rivers. Philippi was also significant in Roman history because in its vicinity was fought the battle where Brutus (the assassin of Julius Caesar) and Cassius were defeated by Antony and Octavian.

Acts 16:13

Normally when Paul visited cities, he would attend the synagogue on the Sabbath day with the purpose of sharing Christ with the Jews. Philippi had no synagogue, so on the Sabbath day (Saturday), Paul and his companions went to a place where a group of Jewish women were in the habit of praying to God.¹¹ There they sat with and spoke to the women who had gathered there to pray to the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. "They did not despise the small things but were ready to speak to the few women who had come together for prayer."¹² What a touching scene it was! A group of devout women met by this scenic river bank to call upon the name of the Lord. How we each need to develop prayer habits so as to meet with the Lord both alone and at times with other God-fearing souls. How fitting it is to find a quiet gathering place in the midst of God's creation, far from the distractions and interruptions of the world! Consider how the Lord Jesus would often

¹⁰See the note under Acts 16:10 in the *Pilgrim Study Bible*, E. Schuyler English, editor.

¹¹According to Jewish custom, ten Jewish men were needed in order to establish a synagogue in a city; apparently in Philippi this criteria was not met.

¹²Arno C. Gaebelin, *The ACTS of the Apostles*, p. 285.

do the same: “He went up into a mountain apart [by Himself] to pray” (**Matt. 14:23**; Mark 1:35; Luke 5:16). These women had been **prepared by prayer** and were ready to hear the gospel message! From this humble prayer gathering the church at Philippi could trace its origin.

Acts 16:14

Thyatira was a city in Asia which was famous for its production of purple dye. The purple dye came from a type of seashell or mollusk. It was also very valuable and very much in demand. A lot of work was required to extract the purple dye and thus only the wealthy could afford to purchase the resulting richly-colored garments. At His trials, the Lord Jesus was dressed in purple for the purpose of mocking His kingship. When it says that Lydia was a seller of purple, it means that she sold cloth or garments that had been dyed in purple.

Lydia was engaged in this business and was probably a wealthy woman. She may have been a widow. She had a large house in Philippi which was an extension of her commercial operation and also became a meeting place for believers. Lydia worshiped God as best she could, and yet she lacked the full truth that was contained in the gospel message. She “worshiped God” (KJV) or “feared God.” This means that she was a Gentile who embraced the Jewish faith to some degree (a “proselyte of the gate”).

God opened her heart. We see here the mysterious combination of divine sovereignty and human responsibility. She needed to hear the Word and respond to the message in a positive way (human responsibility) and yet she also needed God to open her heart and give her understanding (divine sovereignty).

[God] Himself must open the doors of the hearts of the hearers. Human hands could not do this; the power belongs to Him alone, unless the Lord goes before and prepares the hearts for the reception of the truth and removes the bars, all efforts are in vain. May those who go forth to preach the Gospel look to the Lord to open the hearts of the hearers, and when precious souls accept the truth, let us give the praise and the glory to Him and not to the evangelists.¹³

God’s Part in our Salvation

He convicts us of our sins (John 16:7-11).
In lovingkindness He draws us to Himself (Jer. 31:3; John 6:44).
He reveals the truth about Jesus Christ to us (Matt. 16:17).
He opens our eyes to the truth (Acts 26:18).
Through grace God enables us to believe (Acts 18:27).

Dr. Whitcomb, in one of his Seminary lectures on the attributes of God, made this statement: “The story of our salvation is that we resisted God, fought Him every inch of the way, and finally He won, we lost, and we are His.”

¹³Arno C. Gaebelin, *The ACTS of the Apostles*, pages 285-286.

Acts 16:15

Lydia was baptized along with her household (perhaps children and servants), all of whom certainly professed faith in Christ. She was given to hospitality and constrained the gospel team to stay in her home. The verb “constrained” literally means “to compel by using force,” but here means “to constrain by entreaty, by asking earnestly and urgently.” The same word is used of the two disciples who constrained the risen Lord to stay with them (Luke 24:29). Lydia persuaded them to stay with her. These men gave her the gospel; she wanted to give them the use of her home, and no doubt she wanted to learn more from them. Her heart was opened by the Lord (verse 14) and then she opened her home to the missionary team (verse 15). Genuine salvation results in service to the saints.

Her home became the center of a great church, the church at Philippi. Often in the book of Acts attention is given to the ministry of women, Lydia being one example. We have already learned about Mary’s household in Jerusalem where believers met for prayer (Acts 12:12). Mary was the mother of John Mark. Lydia’s house became a worship center for believers and for others who were seeking the Lord. Lydia was not saved by good works (Eph. 2:8-9; Tit. 3:5), but she wonderfully performed good works as a saved person (Eph. 2:10; Titus 3:8,14; Phil. 2:12-13).

Acts 16:16

They went to a place of prayer, perhaps the same place by the river where they had met Lydia.

Here they met a young woman. The word "damsel" (KJV) as it is used in the New Testament refers to a young female slave. This demon possessed girl had a “spirit of divination” or literally a “spirit of Python.” A python is a powerful snake. A Greek legend said that in a mountain in southern Macedonia Apollo had a temple or shrine where people could come and worship him. He had a serpent or python who would protect him. One tradition says that Apollo killed the snake. People who were demon possessed were thought to have the spirit of this python in them. When a person had a “spirit of Python,” it meant that they were controlled by an evil force. Some may have believed that Apollo himself spoke to them through this woman and gave predictions about the future. The mythology of the people was mixed with demonism. It was not a healthy combination.

Demon-possessed people can do supernatural things. When the Lord Jesus carried out His earthly ministry, on more than one occasion demon-possessed people would come up to Him and say, “We know who You are! You are the Son of God and have come to torment us before the time” (compare Matt. 8:29). This appears to be an allusion to what happened to the disobedient demons at the time of the flood who were flung down into Tartarus, in pits and chains of darkness (“before the time,” and thus reserved there) until the great day of God’s judgment. Those evil demons had no further access to the world and were given a unique judgment. Both Jude and Peter (in 2 Peter) talk about angels who kept not their first estate but went after strange flesh. They were consigned to Tartarus and had no further connection with human beings. But the ones who were not cast down came to Jesus and said, “Do not cast us down into the abyss before the time, as You did with those evil angels before the Flood. We know who You are.” Demons knew who Jesus Christ was. They knew about the Triunity of the Godhead and about the deity of Christ, etc.

This young woman was dominated by a demon and her masters took advantage of this to enrich themselves. She had brought her masters much gain by soothsaying (divination), that is, telling

people about special things that only supernatural beings could know. Some translate the word “soothsayer” as “fortune teller” (NIV, ESV, NKJV, NASB, etc.). The word “soothsayer” (*manteuomai*) “is allied to *mainomai*, to rave, and *mania*, fury displayed by those who were possessed by the evil spirit while delivering their oracular messages.”¹⁴ People were willing to pay money for the information she provided, and her owners had quite a profitable business going.

This young woman was essentially a spiritualistic medium in contact with the world of demons. She resembled the spiritualistic medium which King Saul resorted to at Endor (1 Sam. 28:7-25). She had actual powers of oracular utterance by virtue of evil supernaturalism, as both ancient and modern spiritualistic mediums possess.

As a result of communication with the spirit world, this woman brought her masters (promoters) a great deal of financial gain by soothsaying—practicing divination. This was the art by which the medium was enabled to forecast the future by recourse to the superhuman knowledge possessed by evil spirits, working through the human agent.¹⁵

Acts 16:17

Would we want to have a demon possessed woman promoting our ministry? Of Paul, Silas, Timothy and Luke she said, “These men are the servants of the most high God, which show unto us the way of salvation.”¹⁶ She gave a free promotion for the gospel! It must have attracted enormous attention all over the city. She kept saying this day after day (v.18). “Her utterances, though true factually, were most likely delivered in a mocking or derisive manner, similar to the encounters of Jesus with demonics (Matt. 8:29; Mark 1:23-24, 3:11; Luke. 4:41; 8:28, etc.).”¹⁷ Demons recognize the one true God (“the most high God”) and they also recognize God’s true servants (compare Acts 19:15).

Acts 16:18

She kept on promoting these men for many days. The whole city must have been alerted to the fact that these men were a special team that had come from God. Paul was grieved and frustrated that he was being endorsed by a demon-dominated woman! He did not wish to be linked to her even though she spoke favorably of his message. “Even though she spoke the truth, it is easy to imagine the damage her cry did to Paul’s ministry simply because it would put his true message in the same

¹⁴*Vine’s Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words*, under “Soothsaying.”

¹⁵Merril F. Unger, *Commentary on the Acts of the Apostles* [Union Gospel Press], p. 69.

¹⁶It’s possible to translate as follows: “Who are proclaiming to you a way of salvation” (NASB). This would wrongly suggest that Christ is not the only way of salvation but only one of many ways. Notice also that the demon did not point to Christ but to the servants of Christ.

¹⁷Ron Merryman, *Verse By Verse Through ACTS*, Vol. III [Merryman Ministries], p. 14.

category in the minds of the people as all her false soothsaying.”¹⁸ He knew that this counterfeit publicity was coming from the wrong source, and he did not want his gospel ministry to be associated with a demon. Finally he had had enough. He commanded the demon, in the name of Christ, to come out of this girl. The demon obeyed and came out that same hour. It is curious why Paul waited for days before performing this exorcism, but we assume that he was being led by the Spirit in all these decisions.

It is very hard to find such cases of demon possession today. This does not mean that there are not any such cases, but they are hard to find. Although there are reports of such things on certain mission fields today, most demons employ other methods of deception. Paul told the Corinthians that Satan is like an angel of light and his ministers are as ministers of righteousness (2 Cor. 11:13-15). Many of them teach from pulpits in our land! Satan loves to win people over by more subtle ways. At the beginning of human history he appeared to Eve, not as a roaring lion, but as a very attractive and subtle serpent. Today demonic people are often very educated and very eloquent. Many stand behind pulpits and stand behind desks in great theological seminaries and influence millions of people in the direction of theological blasphemy and perversion (1 Tim. 4:1-2). This does not necessarily mean that these people are indwelt by demons, but certainly influenced by them in significant ways.

Some suggest that this formerly demon-possessed woman trusted in Christ, but the passage does not say one way or the other.

Acts 16:19

The girl without the demon offered her masters no hope of financial gain. She had lost her supernatural dynamic. The source of their income evaporated as soon as the demon left. Remember also the thousands of pigs that were drowned in the Sea of Galilee, causing great displeasure on the part of their owners (Mark chapter 5). The Lord did not usually go around destroying people’s property, but in this case these pig owners claimed to be Jews. However, they were in open defiance of the dietary restrictions that God laid down in the law of Moses and they were judged. Here in Acts 16, the girl’s masters saw that the hope of their monetary profits was gone. They did not care about this woman, but they cared greatly about their own money bags. “It is characteristic of men that if their pockets are touched, they are up in arms.”¹⁹ Thus they seized Paul and Silas and brought them to the authorities. Why Timothy and Luke were not seized as well is not stated.

Acts 16:20

They were brought to the magistrates; the Greek word *strategos* usually referred to men who were in charge of the legal aspects of the city. Magistrates were the highest officials in such cities as Philippi which were Roman colonies. What Pilate was to Judea, these men were to Philippi. These magistrates are mentioned frequently in this passage (Acts 16:20,22,35,36,38). The “serjeants” (Acts 16:35,38) were under their authority and carried out their orders.

¹⁸Charles Ryrie, *The Acts of the Apostles*, page 91.

¹⁹William Barclay, *The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 125.

“These men being Jews trouble our city.” In Philippi Jews were a very small minority, and they were a suspect group. They were assumed to be insurrectionists, against the government and against the Roman Empire. Apparently the Jews were especially disliked in Philippi, which may be one reason there was no synagogue there.

Acts 16:21

“We have a special relationship with the Roman Empire and these men are teaching customs which are contrary to the Roman government. These Jews are causing great problems in our city and they need to be punished.” Such charges made by the masters of this formerly demon-possessed girl were false. They were angry at Paul because he hurt their profits, not because he was a danger to Rome.

Acts 16:22-23

The crowd was riled up in opposition to Paul and Silas. The magistrates, who wanted to placate the crowd, tore off the clothes of Paul and Silas so that their flesh could be exposed to the flogging. They gave the command for the beating to be done by the sergeants (Acts 16:35).

They received quite a beating, with the effects of the punishment visibly seen on their skin in the form of stripes (visible bloody marks). This was a very painful form of torture. The verb “beat” (KJV) means to beat with a rod. The verb is used in one other place, 2 Corinthians 11:25, where Paul wrote that he was beaten with rods on three occasions. The beating he received here at Philippi was one of those occasions. The backs of Paul and Silas were bleeding from this cruel punishment. At this point, we wonder if Silas might have thought, “Who was that person who was calling us to come over and help in Macedonia? Paul, who gave us this message? Are we really in the right place?” Thankfully these servants of Christ did not question the will of God.

Those who beat them with rods are distinguished from the jailor who was given orders to keep them securely in jail and not allow them to escape. We learn from Acts 16:37 that this beating was an open or public beating.

Acts 16:24

The actions mentioned in this verse pertain to what the jailer did. He obeyed the charge that he was given and thrust Paul and Silas into the inner prison and their feet were bound (fastened) in stocks. The inner prison was probably the very secure inner dungeon where escape would be nearly impossible. The word “stock” refers to wood or a tree (Acts 5:30; 1 Pet. 2:24), and here refers to “a log or timber with holes in which the feet, hands, neck, of prisoners were inserted and fastened with thongs” (Thayer). It is possible that their feet were held fast in an uncomfortable position with their legs stretched far apart, the stocks serving to not only keep them secure but also to further their punishment. Paul later referred to these sufferings in 1 Thessalonians 2:2—“[we] were shamefully entreated, as ye know in Philippi.”

Acts 16:25

Paul and Silas had a spontaneous prayer meeting and song service at midnight! God gives His trusting people songs in the night (Psalm 77:6)! These men exemplified what Paul later wrote to the church in Philippi: “Rejoice in the Lord always, and again I say rejoice” (Phil. 4:4). Rejoice in every circumstance, even in horrible circumstances! No matter what God allows to happen to us, we can rejoice! Paul practiced what he later would preach! We all have problems and trials and difficulties. God knows all about such things and nothing comes into our lives apart from His knowledge and consent. We can trust the One who makes no mistakes, and we can rejoice in what the Lord is doing in us and for us. Our joy does not depend upon our circumstances. Our joy is in the Lord. “The Christian may find more true joy in a prison than the monarch on his throne.”²⁰ Truly their rejoicing in the midst of suffering reflected an inner peace “which passeth all understanding” (Phil. 4:6-7).

Someone commented, “If I had been Silas, Paul would have sung a solo!” It is easy to sing praises when you are released from prison, but quite another thing to sing praises while in prison, in pain and with no expectancy of release. Thankfully Silas knew the joy and peace that came from the Lord and Paul did not need to sing a solo. What a sound came forth from that dungeon! It was not the usual prison sounds of cursing and foul language. Also, what a testimony they were to the jailer and the other prisoners!

Ironside makes a fitting comment:

You may think it far-fetched, but I have an idea that if there were more joy in tribulation, more triumphing in trouble in our own day, we would see more shaking by the power of God. The world is watching Christians, and when they see Christians shaken by circumstances as they themselves, they conclude that after all there is very little to Christianity; but when they find Christians rising above circumstances and glorying in the Lord even in deepest trial, then even the unsaved realize the Christian has something in knowing Christ to which they are strangers.²¹

From the verb translated “sang praises” (KJV) we get our English word “hymn.” Paul and Silas were singing hymns of praise to God. Today in many churches the great hymns of the faith, with their beautiful melodies and rich Biblical messages, are sadly being replaced by shallow and repetitious choruses characterized by worldly musical styles. Worship, in many instances, has deteriorated into fleshly entertainment.

What the other prisoners witnessed in that prison made a lasting impression upon their souls. They were listening to these men praying and praising God! It was a unique and unusual experience.

Acts 16:26

God was very pleased and He responded with an “Amen” from heaven in the form of an earthquake. The same thing had happened back in Acts 4:31. After the release of the Apostles, they all gathered together for prayer and they thanked the Lord and Ruler of the world, and suddenly the house was

²⁰Albert Barnes, *Acts*, p. 245.

²¹Harry Ironside, *Acts*, p. 381.

shaken with an earthquake. This was an amazing endorsement coming from the third heaven! The believing, fervent, effectual and joyful prayers of these two men availed much!

The term “suddenly” was also used of the miraculous coming of the Holy Spirit on the Day of Pentecost (Acts 2:2). This term means suddenly or unexpectedly. Certainly the jailer was not expecting this sudden earthquake. It is described as a great [**megas**] earthquake, quite strong enough to accomplish its purpose. The result was that the prison doors were opened and every man’s bands were loosed. Indeed, this was a miracle of God. An earthquake by itself could not result in such fortuitous results for these prisoners. God’s hand was evident. He was able to shake things up in a way that accomplished His purposes.

It is not clear whether the prisoners were all together in the inner prison or if there were other rooms where these men were held. Whatever the case, the earthquake affected “every one” of them.

Acts 16:27

One man in particular was very unhappy about such a turn of events, namely the jailer. He had been asleep when the earthquake suddenly shook the area. He saw that the prison doors had been opened and he wrongly assumed that the prisoners had fled. He knew the law. If a prisoner under his watch should escape, then he could be punished by death. Remember that In Acts 12 the guards who were responsible to guard Peter’s cell were put to death (Acts 12:19). How ironic that the Roman soldiers guarding the tomb of Jesus were not put to death for allowing Jesus to escape from the tomb. Instead the Jewish leaders paid them money to spread fake news (Matt. 28:11-15).

This Philippian jailer was not going to wait for his own execution. Instead he decided to kill himself, but Paul quickly intervened.

Acts 16:28

“Do not harm yourself; we are all here. Everything is fine. We have not fled. We are not trying to escape.” We are not told why the other prisoners did not flee. Perhaps they were influenced by Paul and Silas to remain where they were. Paul, crying with a loud voice, prevented a sad suicide. How close the jailer came to entering hell and missing heaven! If the jailer had killed himself he would have been doomed, and would have never have heard Paul’s gospel message. How gracious the Lord is to keep us alive long enough to hear the good news of a crucified and risen Saviour. Paul saved this man’s physical life by preventing a suicide and then shared with him the gospel which saved him from an even greater death, the second death which is the lake of fire (Rev. 20:8).

Acts 16:29-30

The inner dungeon was dark and the jailer asked for lights, which were probably some kind of torches. The implication is that the jailer had an assistant whom he could call on to get torches. As

soon as he had the light, he rushed into the inner dungeon still in a terrified condition.²² He was shaking with fear and conviction. He fell down before Paul and Silas, casting and prostrating himself before them. This is a reminder that anyone who gets saved must humble himself, “for everyone that exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted” (Luke 18:14). The jailer recognized his sinful condition before a holy God.

“What must I do to be saved?” How did the jailer know enough to ask that question? What did he want to be saved from? Perhaps the jailer had heard the demon-possessed woman going around the city saying, “These men are showing us the way of salvation” (Acts 16:17, NASB). Perhaps he had heard Paul and Silas singing and praying in his prison. How much Paul and Silas had told him about Jesus Christ we do not know. Yet, this man was under deep conviction. He knew that he had an enormous sin problem and he wanted to know how to be saved and delivered from it.

Notice that in order to answer this man’s need, Paul did not set up a psychological counseling program! Nor did Paul talk about works of righteousness which this man would need to do in order to qualify to enter God’s holy heaven (Tit. 3:5)!

The jailer’s question implied that there must be something that a person must **DO** in order to be saved: “What must I **DO** to be saved?” Every religion in the world teaches that salvation is obtained by people doing certain things and fulfilling certain requirements. Consider the following article by C. H. Mackintosh entitled *Do or Done?*²³

“There is a wide difference between your religion and mine,” said a Christian lady to one in whose spiritual condition she had long been interested. “Indeed,” said he, “how is that?” “Your religion,” she replied, “has only **two letters** in it, and mine has **four**.”

It seems that this gentleman was one of that numerous class seeking to get to heaven by their **doings**, by attention to ordinances and ceremonies, by what the apostle, in the ninth of Hebrews, terms “dead works.” But he did not understand about the “**two letters**” or the “**four**.” His friend had often spoken to him, and on the occasion to which our anecdote refers she had called to take her leave of him for some time, as she was about to go from home.

“What do you mean,” said he, “by **two letters** and **four**?”

“Why, your religion,” said the lady, “is d-o, **DO**; whereas mine is **D-O-N-E**.” This was all that passed. The lady took her leave; but her words remained and did their work in the soul of her friend--a revolutionary work, verily. The entire current of his thoughts was changed. **Do** is one thing; **done** is quite another. The former is legalism; the latter is Christianity.

²²The verb “rushed in” is also used in Acts 14:14 of Paul and Barnabas rushing into the midst of the pagan people to try to prevent them from worshipping and offering sacrifices to mere men.

²³For this document, see <https://middletownbiblechurch.org/helpseek/doordone.htm>

It was a novel and very original mode of putting the gospel; but it was just the mode for a legalist, and the Spirit of God used it in the conversion of this gentleman. When he next met his friend, he said to her, "Well, I can now say with you that my religion is d-o-n-e, **DONE.**" He had learned to fling aside the deadly **doings**, and rest in the **finished work of Christ**. He was led to see that it was no longer what he **could do** for God, but what God **had done** for him.

This settled everything. The four golden letters shone under the gaze of his emancipated soul, "**d-o-n-e.**" Precious letters! Precious word! Who can tell the relief to a burdened heart when it discovers that **all is done**? What joy to know that what I have been toiling for, it may be many a long year, was all **done** nearly 2000 years ago on the cross! **Christ has done all**. He has put away sin; magnified the claims of divine justice; vanquished Satan; taken the sting from death and the victory from the grave; glorified God in the very scene in which He had been dishonored; brought in everlasting righteousness. All this is wrapped up in these four golden letters, "**d-o-n-e.**" Oh, who would not give up the **two** for the **four**? Who would not exchange "**do**" for "**done**"?

Reader, what say you to this? What of your religion? Does it consist of **two letters** or **four**? Is it still "**do**" with you? or have you found your happy portion and rest in "**done**"? Do you think of it, dear friend--think deeply--think seriously--and may God's Spirit lead you, this moment, to cease from your own "**do**," and to rest in Christ's eternal "**done.**"

(by C.H.Mackintosh, 1820-1896)

In addition to these good words of Mackintosh, consider the following:

When the Lord Jesus Christ died on the cross He cried out, "It is finished" (John 19:30). The work of our salvation was finished, done, accomplished and completed. We simply need to trust and rest in what the Saviour has accomplished.

Salvation is not working; it is **resting on the work of Another**, even the Lord Jesus Christ: "But to him that **worketh not**, but believeth on Him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness" (Romans 4:5).

Religion is man trying to bring himself to God by human effort, by good works, by ritualism, by traditionalism, by sacraments, etc. Salvation is Christ bringing us to God on the basis of what He did for us on the cross: "For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, **that He might bring us to God**" (1 Peter 3:18).

God's holiness utterly condemns the best man. ("As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one"--Romans 3:10.) God's grace freely justifies the worst. ("For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; Being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus"--Romans 3:23-24.)

The gospel message brings to man not a work to do, but **a word to believe about a work done**: "But

the word of the Lord endureth for ever. And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you" (1 Peter 1:25).

We are saved, not because of what we have done, but because of the **mercy of God** based upon what Christ has done on the cross: "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost" (Titus 3:5).

A person can never be saved by his own good works: "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast" (Ephesians 2:8-9).

Good works done by sinful man can never please a holy God. The greatest good work is **God's work** accomplished by Jesus Christ who offered Himself on the cross as the sinner's Substitute. Thus, we are not saved by good works but we are saved unto good works: "For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them" (Ephesians 2:10). "For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure" (Philippians 2:13).

Are you resting fully on the finished work of Christ? Are you trusting in Jesus Christ, **who He is, what He has done for you and what He has said in His Word**? "Look unto Me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth: for I am God, and there is none else" (Isaiah 45:22).

Once when the Jewish people asked Jesus what they could **do**, the Lord responded that they needed to **believe**: "Then said they unto Him, **What shall we do**, that we might work the works of God? Jesus answered and said unto them, **This is the work of God, that ye believe on Him whom He hath sent**" (John 6:28-29, emphasis mine). Likewise, when the jailer asked what he must do, the answer was to believe.

Acts 16:31

Man's responsibility when it comes to salvation could not be more clearly stated: "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved." How was this jailer saved? It was by faith, and not by works of righteousness which he had done. He merely believed the gospel of the grace of God and its provision through Christ's death, burial and resurrection from the dead. If a person believes in his heart that God raised Him from the dead, that person will be saved (Rom. 10:9-10). Luke does not give a full account of everything that was said, but we know from verse 32 that Paul and Silas spoke to him the Word of God and gave him the basic facts of the gospel (1 Cor. 15:1-4). To believe on the Lord Jesus Christ a person must have a basic understanding of who He is and what He has done.²⁴

²⁴There are teachers in certain "free grace" circles who openly deny that belief in Jesus' deity, substitutionary death for our sins, and bodily resurrection is necessary to be saved. They claim that the lost must simply know the name of "Jesus" and believe in His promise of everlasting life in order to be born again. This false teaching is analyzed and refuted in Tom Stegall's 826 page book entitled *The Gospel of the Christ—A Biblical Response to the Crossless Gospel Regarding the Contents of Saving Faith*, published by Grace Gospel Press.

Such a verse should impress upon us the simplicity of the gospel message. Even the devil understands the true plan of salvation, that a person must “believe and be saved” and he devotes his energies in preventing this from happening (Luke 8:12). In this simple verse (Acts 16:31) there is a conditional promise. If a person believes on Christ, that person will be saved, and God always keeps His promises. We do the believing; God does the saving. When we do our part, God will most certainly do His part. God has done all the work; our part is to simply believe and rest upon His finished work.

The verb “believe” is in the imperative mood; it is a command. All men everywhere are commanded to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ. If they obey this command they will be saved; if they disobey they will be lost. This is the “obedience of faith” that is often spoken of in the New Testament (Acts 5:32; 6:7; Heb. 5:9; John 3:36; Rom. 1:5; 6:17-18; 10:16-17; 2 Thess. 1:8; 1 Pet. 2:7-8; 4:17; 2 Pet. 2:21). Believing on the Lord Jesus Christ unto forgiveness of sins and eternal life is an obedient response to the imperative of the gospel of His grace which calls upon totally lost and ruined men (who are fully responsible) to believe and repent.

What does it mean to believe in the Lord? John Paton served the Lord for thirty years seeking to reach South Sea Cannibals with the good news of Christ. It was needful to provide a translation of the Bible in their language. One of his greatest difficulties was trying to find the equivalent for the word “faith.” His discovery of the right term is fascinating:

One day I was in the mission house anxiously pondering. I sat on an ordinary kitchen chair, my feet resting on the floor. An intelligent native woman entered the room, and the thought flashed through my mind to ask the all-absorbing question once again, in a new light. Was I not resting on the chair? Would that attitude lend itself to the discovery? I said, “What am I doing now?” “*Koikai ana, Misi*. [You’re sitting down, Missi.]” Then I drew up my feet and placed them on the rung of the chair. Leaning back in an attitude of repose, I asked, “What am I doing now?” “*Fakarongrongo, Misi*. [You are leaning *wholly*, Missi. You have lifted yourself from every other support.]” “That’s it!” I shouted exultantly. “A sense of holy joy awed me as I realized that my prayer had been answered. To lean on Jesus wholly and only is surely the true meaning of saving faith. And now ‘*Fakarongrongo Jesu ea anea mour* [leaning on Jesus unto eternal life]’ is the happy experience of all who cast themselves unreservedly on the Saviour of the world for salvation.”²⁵

May we lean fully upon Him, resting all of our weight on the Person [*who He is*], Work [*what He has done*] and Word [*what He has said*] of Jesus Christ. He can save to the uttermost all those who cast themselves upon Him and upon Him alone! “He that believeth on Me hath everlasting life” (John 6:47).

Oh the simplicity of the gospel! God has done all the work of salvation. Our responsibility is to simply believe. Ask religious people or cultists what they must do in order to be saved, and you will get all kinds of different answers, usually involving some kind of meritorious acts or deeds that the sinner must do. It might be helpful to ask a question such as this: “If a soldier were seriously wounded in battle and only had three minutes to live, what message of good news could you give

²⁵John Paton, *Thirty Years With South Sea Cannibals*, pages 276-277.

him?” Explain also that this wounded man had lived a terribly sinful life. If the person you are talking to is unable to give this man a message of hope, based upon what Christ has accomplished, then he is revealing his complete ignorance of the gospel message. Obviously, it is too late for this dying soldier to start performing good works or to start following certain church ordinances such as baptism.

The expression “and thy house” is often misunderstood. It certainly does not mean that if a person believes on Christ that his household (children and servants) will automatically be saved. This kind of “household salvation” is nowhere taught in Scripture, nor is it taught in this chapter. The jailer’s household did get saved, thank the Lord, but it was because they heard the gospel message (Acts 16:32) and they believed in God also (Acts 16:34). The full meaning of this verse may be amplified as follows: “Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved, and if your household believes on the Lord Jesus Christ, then your household will be saved also.” This is exactly what happened. No one can believe for another person. Every individual must do business with God himself. All unbelievers are condemned without exception (John 3:18; 2 Thess. 1:8-9; Mark 16:16).

This verse is a good reminder to all of us that God is not only concerned about our spiritual needs but also those of our families. When a person is truly saved, he has a strong desire that his family and loved ones might come to know the Lord also.

Acts 16:32-34

The jailer showed compassion for Paul and Silas and washed their stripes (wounds from being beaten with rods). “He washed them from their stripes, and he himself was washed from his sins” (Chrysostom). He also showed them warm hospitality and fed them (Acts 16:34). It’s puzzling why the jailer would take these prisoners out of the prison to his own home. Apparently they were still under his custody. He was not told to release them until later (Acts 16:35). It seems as though Paul and Silas had really gained his trust and he was not worried that they would try to escape. It is possible that the jailer’s home was adjoining the prison or perhaps above the prison. “The jailor was guilty of no breach of duty in thus taking Paul and Silas into his house; his responsibility was to produce his prisoners when called upon to do so. He had now no reason to fear that they would run away!”²⁶

Those belonging to the jailer’s house (wife, servants, children) were baptized. These verses do not justify either infant baptism or household salvation. Those belonging to the jailer’s household were old enough to hear the word of the Lord and understand it (v. 32), and they were old enough to believe in God (v. 34). On that basis they were baptized (v. 33). Infants are not capable of understanding the gospel message and they are too young to believe that message. This passage reinforces the New Testament teaching that only those professing faith in Christ should be baptized. “The baptisms may have been performed in a Roman bath, which was common in all cities. Those who were wealthy had their own bath in the courtyard, and this jailer may have had one.”²⁷

Along with Lydia (v. 15), this marked the beginning of God’s church in the city of Philippi. It was

²⁶F. F. Bruce, *The Book of the Acts*, pages 338-339.

²⁷Arnold G. Fruchtenbaum, *The Book of Acts*, p. 354.

a time of great rejoicing (v. 34).

Acts 16:35

This verse seems to be saying that Paul and Silas were released the very day after they were imprisoned: “when it was day.” That previous night, from midnight (verse 25) until dawn (verse 35) was extremely busy. Here are the events that took place during that time: 1) Paul and Silas prayed and sang praises; 2) God caused an earthquake; 3) The jailer was prevented from killing himself and instead heard the gospel; 4) The word of God was preached to the jailer and to those who belonged to his household; 5) They believed and were saved; 6) The jailer washed their stripes; 7) A baptismal service took place for the jailer and his household; 8) The jailer provided a meal for them in his house. It was quite an eventful night and there was joy in heaven over each person who was saved during those hours (Luke 15:7,10).²⁸

The serjeants (KJV) were literally the “rod bearers.” Many translations render the word “officers” or “police.” They were subordinate to the magistrates. These are the men who had beaten Paul and Silas. They were told to let these prisoners go. Why was this order given? We are not told. The arrest started as a mob operation, and Romans do not ordinarily operate in such a way. Those who lived in Philippi were supposed to live and act like Romans, not like an enraged, chaotic mob. The Roman officials must have thought through this entire operation and concluded that they did not have any valid basis for treating those men the way they did. Thus, “let them go!” Could it be that they also got word of the miracle that took place in that dungeon and they did not wish to further challenge the God of Paul and Silas? Others suppose that they felt the earthquake and it made them question what they had done. There are two ancient Greek manuscripts which support this understanding. They read, “The magistrates who were alarmed by the earthquake, sent...”²⁹

Acts 16:36

The jailkeeper bid farewell to Paul, having become a new creature in Christ. What an amazing prison ministry Paul and Silas had!

²⁸The baptism took place right away (“straightway”—verse 33). This was the pattern in the book of Acts. Water baptism followed soon after belief in Christ is professed. In the time of the book of Acts people understood what baptism meant. It was an outward, public demonstration that they belonged to Jesus Christ and were committed to following Him, even at great cost. Sadly, today there is great confusion about baptism. Some teach that baptism saves. Others baptize babies, etc. Many churches baptize by sprinkling or pouring, rather than immersion. In light of these problems, it is probably wise to give new believers instructions about baptism before they take part in this ordinance. Not that we want to unnecessarily delay their baptism, but we do want them to understand the Biblical significance of water baptism and what it pictures.

²⁹See Albert Barnes, *Acts*, p. 249.

Acts 16:37

In this verse Paul is talking to the serjeants, not just to the jailer (“Paul said unto **them...**”). Paul knew that the treatment he had received was totally unjust and inappropriate, especially since Paul and Silas were Roman citizens. The beating they had received was open and public. It was not done privately. Paul drew attention to the contrast between their beating which was public and their release which was private. The authorities had made a public scene but they wanted Paul and Silas to walk away quietly. They had put Paul and Silas in jail in a very public manner and later wanted to release them in a very private manner. Paul also called out the serjeants because the punishment was severe even though they were “uncondemned.” This means they had never had a proper trial and were never allowed to give a defense. Paul stated that the men who did this to them should be the ones who should come and release them. Paul’s desire was fulfilled in verse 39 as the magistrates did in fact come to release them.

Acts 16:38

These authorities did not realize that Paul and Silas were Roman citizens and they feared once they learned this fact. The Emperor could have punished that city and its leadership for treating Roman citizens in such a way. The Roman government was very protective of Roman citizens. “Immunity from corporal punishment was one of the most valued privileges of Roman citizenship.”³⁰ Later, in the book of Acts, we will see how Paul’s Roman citizenship saved his life.

Why did not Paul and Silas mention that they were Roman citizens before they were beaten? We are not told. It was possibly because they were shouted down by the mob and not even given a chance to speak. It was clearly an illegal action which the Roman government was ashamed of in retrospect.

God was graciously taking care of His little fragile church in Philippi.

Another question that could be asked is why were not Timothy and Luke beaten and put in the dungeon? Did they see what was coming and quickly escape? Probably not. Perhaps it was because Timothy and Luke looked, talked and acted like Greeks, whereas Paul and Silas looked, talked and acted like Jews. Timothy and Luke were probably desperately discouraged to see what had happened to their fellow workers. Only God knows for sure what Timothy and Luke were doing while all these things were taking place.

Acts 16:39

The magistrates came and tried to make things right as much as possible. We can imagine what might have been said: “If we had only known that you were Roman citizens, this could have been avoided. Why didn’t you tell us? We are ashamed and terrified. Please do not tell anybody. Just go away and leave our city.”

And so Philippi seems about to close its doors to the gospel. The first city in Europe

³⁰Arno C. Gaebelin, *The ACTS of the Apostles*, p. 294.

to which the message came! Instead of the magistrates saying, “Now we have set you free, go throughout our city and proclaim the glorious message,” they said, “Please leave our city. We do not want your message.”³¹

Acts 16:40

Lydia was the hostess who opened her home for the brethren. Apparently the church in Philippi first met in her home. We are not told how long Paul stayed at the home of Lydia. It was probably a brief visit but long enough to see the brethren and comfort and encourage them in the things of God. The term “brethren” indicates that others had been saved in Philippi, not just Lydia and the jailer and their households.

Notice that it says, “**they** departed.” Luke did not say, “**we** departed.” Apparently Luke stayed in Philippi while Paul and the others left. Luke may have remained in Philippi for years, helping the church in that city. Later, on his third missionary journey, Paul returned to this region and picked up Luke again who joined Paul for his final trip to Jerusalem and Rome.

Lord, thank You for this fascinating insight here in chapter 16 of how the gospel expanded to Europe with painful confrontations and afflictions along the way. Yet it was done with no compromise of the precious gospel of the Lord Jesus, apart from which no one can be saved!

³¹Harry Ironside, *Acts*, p. 387.