

Ministry of The Holy Spirit
A Man of Macedonia
Acts 16:6-34

The world has changed since we met last...it is the same, but it is different

- same
 - corrupt...absolutely corrupt, corrupt to the core
 - run by criminals, puppets of spiritual wickedness in high places (Eph 6:12)
 - home to the enemies of the Cross whose end is destruction, whose glory is in their shame, who mind earthly things
 - different
 - the enemies of the Cross have the power in this nation
 - the professional politicians that rule over us
 - Blue and Red
 - The Blue are seeing Red
 - The Red are Blue
 - All saturated with the corruption that thrives in Washington DC
 - All feverishly holding onto the power and money
 - Blue head hailed as has “healed the brokenhearted and bound up their wounds”, something that God alone does (Ps 147:3)
 - Big Tech
 - Media
 - ruling on a God-mocking platform/agenda
 - abortion
 - “shedding innocent blood”
2 Kings 24:1-4
 - “pass thru the fire”
2 Kings 23:10
Deut 18:10-12
- In a White House statement on Friday 1/22/21, the administration threatened to codify current federal abortion (“health care”) laws. This would effectively allow for legal abortions even if the Supreme Court overturned Roe v. Wade.
- anti-Israel
 - globalism/Babel-ism
 - socialism
 - Marxism

- those who oppose their platform/agenda are
 - considered criminals and domestic terrorists
 - said to be in a cult that must be censored/silenced/cleansed/purged and their children re-educated/de-programmed
 - blamed for the plague upon this nation (COVID-19)
 - labeled...Nazis and KKKsmen
 - those who hold Christian values

The situation in this nation is eerily like Germany in the 1930s

Though the world may be different, the Lord our God is the same...yesterday, today, forever

Is 9:6-7 For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. Of the increase of *his* government and peace *there shall be* no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this.

Dan 2:47 God of gods, and a Lord of kings, and a revealer of secrets (testimony of the most powerful man in the world who learned the hard way that “the most High rules in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will, and sets up over it the basest of men.”)

And our mission is the same

- let our lights shine
- to be about The Father’s business seeking and saving the lost
- invite those in darkness to come into the Light
- preach the Gospel of Grace, the forgiveness of sins and newness of life in Jesus Christ

And our objective is the same

- Finish well our course in a hostile environment (John 15:18-21)
- Phil 3:7-14

And Truth remains unchanged

- we have a blessed hope – Jesus returning for us
- our names are written in heaven (Luke 10:20b)

While some are all wrapped up in conspiracy theories...worldly plots and schemes since Gen 3... we have not so learned Christ (Eph 4:20)

- We walk by faith, not by fear
- We walk in the Light, not in the darkness
- Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ (Col 2:8)

Instead, we are in “con-Spirit-cy” with Jesus Christ!

[slide/pdf]

Come what may, we walk with Jesus

Gen 50:20 ye/they thought evil against me/us; *but* God meant it unto good, to bring to pass, as *it is* this day, to save much people alive.

Rom 8:28 And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to *his* purpose

John 20:19 (to His disciples hiding in fear), “Peace be unto you.”

Therefore, we open up our Bibles for the edification, exhortation, and comfort the Lord has for us today in Acts 16!

Last time...the Church in Antioch was strengthened by the decision of the 1st Church Council
Then, Paul’s 2nd Missionary Journey begins, accompanied by Silas and Timothy
We were comforted with God’s peace and encouragement/strengthening of our faith

This time...a very timely message for the Body of Christ as Paul’s 2nd Missionary Journey continues in Acts 16

v6-8 forbidden of the Holy Ghost...suffered them not:

[map]

Paul, Silas, and Timothy

- set out from Lystra
- ministered the Church Council’s letter reaffirming the Gospel of Grace in Iconium and Antioch in Pisidia (Acts 15:36)
- kept moving, heading W/NW

The next logical step in their minds was to preach the Gospel in Asia
But...the Holy Spirit prevented them

So they kept moving, westward to Mysia, from which point they thought to go north to Bithynia

But...the Holy Spirit did not permit them to go that way

So they kept moving west to land’s end, Troas

As we learn to walk with the Lord, what do we learn from this?

1. The itinerary belongs to the Lord, not to His servants
2. PST are walking in the Spirit, being Spirit-led, in con-Spirit-cy with the Lord
3. As we walk in the Spirit, in con-Spirit-cy with the Lord, knock on the door before us
 - If the Lord (Rev 3:7) opens the door, walk thru it, by faith (only He knows what is on the other side)
 - If the Lord does not open the door, keep moving
 - Do not try to beat down a closed door the Lord has not opened; it will result in self-inflicted pain

v9-10 vision...man of Macedonia:

Not stopping anywhere to preach the Gospel since leaving Antioch in Pisidia,
PST are now on the coast of the Aegean Sea, undoubtedly seeking the
Lord's direction

Which comes to Paul in the form of a vision: a man of Macedonia calling them to
come there to help them

The Lord's servants rightly discern that the door the Lord has opened to the
Gospel is in Macedonia (Europe)

So they immediately set out to go to Macedonia

As we learn to walk in the Spirit, in con-Spirit-cy with the Lord,
what do we learn from this?

Wait on the Lord, but do not keep the Lord waiting

Speaking of "we", notice the "we" and "us" in v10

Who is "we"?

Who is the recorder of the Acts of the Apostles?

Luke

So, the missionary team is PST&L

v11-12 straight course...Philippi:

[map]

PST sail from Troas on a straight course

- the shortest distance from any 2 points is a straight line
- no time and energy wasting sight-seeing side trips

to the mainland and then to Philippi, where the Holy Spirit is leading them

- the nearest important Macedonian city
- named after Philip of Macedon, the father of Alexander the Great
- the launching point of Alexander's military campaigns to conquer the world
- in the civil war after the death of Julius Caesar, Augustus and Mark Anthony defeated Brutus and Cassius
- made a Roman colony
 - all citizens became Roman citizens
 - all born there are Roman citizens

v13 sabbath...river side...women:

PST, being Jews (not Luke), they observe the sabbath

A synagogue would be established in a town if there were 10 or more Jewish men
If there were not at least 10 men, the Jews would gather outside of town,
usually by a river, to pray

Therefore, there is not a synagogue in town so PSTL go to the river outside town,
where they joined some women who had gathered to observe the sabbath

v14-15 Lydia...whose heart the Lord opened:

At the river, PSTL meet Lydia

- a business woman, a merchant of expensive cloth (purple)
- from Thyatira, back in central western Asia (far from home)
- devout believer in the God of AI&J, not of the Roman/Greek gods
- attentive to Paul's preaching of the Gospel
- whose heart the Lord had opened

In the Lord's work of seeking and saving the lost,

- The Lord opened hearts to the Gospel of salvation – Lydia's and her family's

John 6:37

All that the **Father** giveth me shall come to me

John 6:44

No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him

John 8:47a

He that is of God heareth God's words

(which are spoken by **Jesus**)

John 15:26

the **Spirit of truth**, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me

- Paul, the servant of Jesus abiding in the True Vine, was the messenger of the Gospel
- Lydia believed, the 1st soul saved in Europe, followed by her family
- The Lord saved them by grace thru faith, His work was fruitful
 John 15:4-5 *Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me. I am the vine, ye *are* the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing.*
- They were all baptized in the river (Matt 28:19-20)

Then, Lydia invited PSTL to come to her house for fellowship, she insisted upon it

v16-17 damsel possessed with a spirit of divination:

On a subsequent sabbath, as PSTL were on their way to the place of prayer by the river, a demon possessed female servant bears witness of who they are and what their message is

She is possessed by a spirit of divination...soothsaying, magic, lying wonders, divination, witchcraft

Ex 22:18 insufferable

Deut 18:10 an abomination to the Lord

And with her “unholy spiritual gift” she makes a lot of money for her masters

The demon possessing the damsel knows

- who these “sealed by God” (Eph 1:13-14, Eph 4:30) men are; demons can see the seal we cannot
- the condition of mankind – lost and condemned, marching into hell
- God’s way of salvation from condemnation – John 14:6, Acts 4:12

v18 many days...grieved...in the name of Jesus Christ:

Not just this sabbath day but for many days the demon tagged along behind PSTL as a herald for them

Why would Satan have one of his minions do that?

Because Satan hinders the Word of God by getting involved in its going forth, mocking and corrupting and twisting it and introducing false doctrine

Case in point: the false gospel in Antioch

Jesus always “shut up” the demons who proclaimed Who He was
Now, Paul, who patiently tolerates this irritation for a few days, is finally fed up,
or moved by the Holy Spirit, to deal with this unholy spirit

“I command you in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her!”

The demon did, instantly/immediately...for it must

1 John 4:4

Matt 28:18

The Holy Spirit and Paul in con-Spirit-cy with the Lord put an end to this false
fellowship

2 Cor 6:14-15 Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for
what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness?
and what communion hath light with darkness? And what
concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that
believeth with an infidel?

And what Paul is empowered to do, so are all believers in Jesus Christ

Mark 16:17a **And these signs shall follow them that believe; In my name
shall they cast out devils**

v19-21 trouble...teach...not lawful:

Also instantly gone is the revenue stream of the damsel’s masters

And if you want to upset a citizen of the world, you hit them in the wallet

The masters, feverishly holding onto the money and the power, saturated with
spiritual corruption

- seize Paul and Silas...not gently, I’m sure
- drag them into the marketplace...the center of town
- bring them before the magistrates...the military governors
- level an inflammatory...and false...charge against them
 - Jews...the people of the Living God, born-again evangelicals,
“cultists and terrorists!”
 - teach customs...a different worldview (based on the Bible),
a worldview contrary to that of the godless ruling class
 - which are not lawful for us to receive/accept...against the Law,
separation of Church and State, hate speech
 - neither to do, being Romans...the anti-Semite, godless
ruling class does not obey the Word of God, being all about
power and money

Such is the situation facing the Body of Christ now in USA
But...the Church does not need the Govt's permission to exist and operate,
it has the Almighty God's permission and power to exist and operate!

What happens next in Philippi?

v22-24 the multitude...against...beat...into prison...stocks:

The inflammatory rhetoric stirred up the populace against Paul and Silas

The military governors flew into a rage against them

- the “due process” of Roman Law is dismissed (no *Lex Rex* now)
- strip Paul and Silas of their clothes
- commanded them to be beaten with rods

The multitude becomes a lawless mob, rioting against the ambassadors of God

After being beaten/wounded, Paul and Silas are thrown into a “maximum security cell” in the prison and chained to the wall

Notice: Paul did not “cry foul” and play the “I am a Roman citizen” card

Paul's reward for Acts 15:36 and for being in con-Spirit-cy with the Lord?

Silas' reward for Acts 15:33-34, 40?

Was God really in this, did PSTL rightly discern the voice of the Lord in v9-10?

News Flash: God allows His children to be beaten and thrown into prison

e.g. Joseph, Jeremiah, now ministers of the Gospel

But why?

Let's keep reading

v25 prayed and sang praises:

Paul and Silas respond not in the flesh but in the Spirit!

prayed and sang praises...worshipped God in prayer and song (Psalms?),
which lift our heads and spirits

Ps 42

Ps 3:1-3

LORD, how are they increased that trouble me! many *are* they that rise up against me. Many *there be* which say of my soul, *There is* no help for him in God. But thou, O LORD, *art* a shield for me; my glory, and the lifter up of mine head.

Acts 5:41

rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for his name

Rom 12:1 present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto
God, *which is* your reasonable service

And the prisoners heard them!

Paul and Silas were Spirit-filled witnesses of Jesus Christ, even in a very ugly
circumstance

They were...in con-Spirit-cy with the Lord

And...Paul and Silas were not alone (Heb 13:5b)

v26 suddenly...great earthquake...foundations...opened...loosed:
Suddenly...when the Lord moves, He moves suddenly

a great earthquake...the earth moved, the world moved

the foundations of the prison were shaken...destroyed, thus the prison too
The foundation of man's prison keeping God's children turns out to be not
so sure!

immediately...linked with "suddenly"

all the doors were opened...the risen Lord can open ANY door shut by man,
by ANY enemy of the Cross!

Every one's bands were loosed...the risen Lord can break ANY chain shackling
His disciples and any man!

v27-28 keeper of the prison:

The jailor, charged with making sure these criminals and cultists and terrorists are
securely bound, is like every other Roman jailer:
If any prisoner escapes, they pay the sentence for the criminal's crime

The Philippian jailer, suddenly roused out of his peaceful sleep by the great
earthquake, sees what the earthquake did to the jail
He, naturally, assumed all the prisoners have escaped...which means he will pay
for all the crimes of all the prisoners

Driven by fear and not willing to face the wrath of the ruling class, he opts to
commit suicide

But Paul...in con-Spirit-cy with the Lord...has not escaped (nor have any of the
prisoners) and calls upon the terrified jailer to not take his own life

Paul has God's love for his "enemy"

Matt 5:44 But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that
curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them
which despitefully use you, and persecute you

2 Tim 2:24-26

All the other prisoners are drawn by such love...witnessed by Paul and Silas as
they prayed and sang praises

They stay put, even when given the opportunity to flee

v29-31 sprang in...what must I do to be saved:

The Philippian jailer, shocked, puts down his sword and picks up a light/torch

He rushed into the destroyed prison, terrified but drawn by Love

Rather than Paul and Silas fleeing the prison, the jailer leads them out of prison
and asks the Question for all eternity

Sirs...an expression of submission to an authority

What must I do to be saved?

Had he heard the testimony of the demon-possessed damsel? (v17)

We hear the echo of John 6:28

Paul and Silas answer the Question for all eternity:

Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ

Echoing Jesus in John 6:29

Believe...trust, lean on

Jesus Christ...the Son of the Living God, the Sure Foundation that will
never collapse like the prison foundation did

Is 28:16 thus saith the Lord GOD, Behold, I lay in Zion for a
foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner
stone, a sure foundation

v32-34 spake unto him the word of the Lord:

Having given the jailer the direct and simple answer to his question,

Paul and Silas then preach the Gospel to him and to his family,
his heart being opened by the Lord

James 1:21 the engrafted word, which is able to save your souls.

Rom 10:9-17

And the jailer and his entire family believed the testimony of the Living God!

Evidence: an opened and changed heart

- washed/cleansed Paul's and Silas' wounds...
serving, loving them
- was baptized...obeying the word of the Lord
- brought them into his house to feed them...
fellowship and hospitality

The jailer and his family are set free from condemnation and the bondage of sin and death

THIS is why God allows His children to be beaten and thrown into prison!

To be His witnesses to jailers and other prisoners, Whom God so loved

The "man of Macedonia" calling for help (v9)...

in fact shown to Paul by the Lord...

is a Roman jailer and his family

Application/Lessons

Highlight or underline in your Bibles:

v6 forbidden by the Holy Ghost

Learn to walk in the Spirit, to be in con-Spirit-cy with the Lord

v14 whose heart the Lord opened

Salvation is a work of God in hearts that He opens

Pray the Lord open the hearts of your lost loved ones!

The most important work of evangelism is prayer

v18 I command you in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her

Fear not!

1 John 4:4

Use His power when needed!

v30-31 What must I do to be saved...Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ

In times like these, people are hurting and without hope

Be ever-ready with the simplicity of the Gospel of Christ

Consider Paul and Silas, in con-Spirit-cy with the Lord

Very difficult and painful circumstances in our lives are God-given opportunities to be a part of what God is doing in an ugly, dying world/nation

Rom 8:18 For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time *are* not worthy *to be compared* with the glory which shall be revealed in us

Eph 6:10-13 Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high *places*. Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.

Look up, not around (v25)

Let's dare to be a part of what God is doing in these days

[con-Spirit-cy]

Fear not to be in con-Spirit-cy with the Lord!

Walk in the Spirit

Be Spirit-led

We will never be alone!