

***Journey Through Acts***  
***“The Place Of Prayer (And Praise)”***  
***Acts 16:9-40***

**Introduction:**

1. Please Turn Back In Your Bibles With Me:
  - To Acts 16 - As We Get Back To Our Sunday Night:
    - ***Journey Through Acts!***
      - Where - Paul & Silas & Timothy:
        - Continue On The Second Missionary Journey Through The Heart Of What Is Today The Modern Country Of Turkey!
2. But - If You Remember:
  - The Lord Was “Directing their Paths” By:
    - Preventing Them From:
      - Going - First - Into Asia:
        - And Then - Into Bithynia:
          - Until They Reached The Coastal City Of Troas - Where They Probably Wondered:
            - “Lord – What Next?”
              - If Not There – Where?
  - **Here Is A Map That Shows:**
    - The First Part Of That:
      - Second Missionary Journey!
3. Well - In The Verses We Come To Tonight:
  - Paul Gets His Answer:
    - In The Form Of A Midnight Vision:
      - Which Has Come To Be Known As:
        - The “Macedonian Call” - Which Brought The Gospel - For The First Time:
          - Into Europe - And Continuing To Expand The Reach Of The Gospel “Unto The Uttermost Part Of The Earth!”
  - And So - Picking Up In 16:9-12 - We Read:
    - “And a vision appeared to Paul in the night; There stood a man of Macedonia, and prayed him, saying, Come over into Macedonia, and help us. / 10 And after he had seen the vision, immediately we endeavoured to go into Macedonia, assuredly gathering that the Lord had called us for to preach the gospel unto them. / 11 Therefore loosing from Troas, we came with a straight course to Samothracia, and the next day to Neapolis; / 12 And from thence to Philippi, which is the chief city of that part of Macedonia, and a colony: and we were in that city abiding certain days!”
4. **Here Is A Map That Shows:**
  - The Next Stage Of The:
    - Second Missionary Journey:
      - As They Are Now Convinced Of God’s Direction!
        - Especially Since - With A “Straight Course” - God Sped Them On Their Way With Favorable Winds For Their Sails!
  - Upon Their Arrival:
    - In Neapolis - They Would Have Taken:
      - **The Via Egnatia - Or - The Egnation Highway** - An Ancient Roman Road:
        - That Led Directly To An Ancient Roman Colony:
          - Known As Philippi!
    - The Pavement On The Left:
      - Marks The Remains Of The Egnation Highway:
        - That Ran Right Through The City Of Philippi
5. But - As Paul & Silas & Timothy & Luke - By This Time:
  - Approached This Great & Important City:
    - They Would Have Seen A City:
      - With A Great Need:
        - Of Christ!
          - **This Is The Impressive** Footprint Of The Central Part Of Philippi - Which Was New Territory For All Of These Men!
  - And For A Number Of Days:

- They Probably Rested From Their Journey:
    - And Prayed To The Lord:
      - For Direction On How To Proceed!
      - Until What We Read Next In:
  - 16:13 - “And on the sabbath we went out of the city by a river side, where prayer was wont to be made; and we sat down, and spake unto the women which resorted thither!”
    - **Here Is A Photo Of The River:**
      - Not Too Far From The Place:
        - Where Those God-Fearing Women Would Have Gone For Prayer & Worship!
        - So - Even Though There Was Not Too Much Jewish Witness For God, There Was Some - By The Women We Meet In:
  - 16:14-15 - “And a certain woman named Lydia, a seller of purple, of the city of Thyatira, which worshipped God, heard us: whose heart the Lord opened, that she attended unto the things which were spoken of Paul. / 15 And when she was baptized, and her household, she besought us, saying, If ye have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come into my house, and abide there. And she constrained us!”
    - **Today - There Is A Church:**
      - That Was Built Near The Traditional Site:
        - Where Our Missionaries Met Lydia!
    - But God Graciously:
      - Opened Lydia’s Heart - As Well As Others Of Her Household:
        - To Both Hear & Believe In:
          - The Gospel - And A New Church Was Born!
    - This Would Have Been Very Exciting:
      - For Paul & Silas - So They Stayed In Philippi:
        - And Kept Sharing The Gospel!
6. But - In 16:16-18 - As They Would:
- **Walk Along The Streets Of That Great City:**
    - They Met Another Woman - “And it came to pass, as we went to prayer, a certain damsel possessed with a spirit of divination met us, which brought her masters much gain by soothsaying: / 17 The same followed Paul and us, and cried, saying, These men are the servants of the most high God, which shew unto us the way of salvation. / 18 And this did she many days. But Paul, being grieved, turned and said to the spirit, I command thee in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her. And he came out the same hour!”
      - Even Though What This Possessed Woman Said:
        - Was True - It Was Clear That:
          - It Was Not Being Said In A Genuine, Heart-Felt Way!
    - But Paul Understood That Satan:
      - Had Enslaved This Woman:
        - And She Needed To Be Rescued & Delivered:
          - As Well!
            - But - Those Who Profited From Her “Soothsaying” Were Not Happy!
7. And So - We Read From:
- 16:19-22 - “And when her masters saw that the hope of their gains was gone, they caught Paul and Silas, and drew them into the marketplace unto the rulers, / 20 And brought them to the magistrates, saying, These men, being Jews, do exceedingly trouble our city, / 21 And teach customs, which are not lawful for us to receive, neither to observe, being Romans. / 22 And the multitude rose up together against them: and the magistrates rent off their clothes, and commanded to beat them!”
    - We Don’t Know Exactly Where The Philippian Magistrates Met - But It Is Possible That:
      - When Paul & Silas Were Commanded To Be Beaten - That They Took Them Into:
        - **This Amphitheater** - Where It Would Have Been A Public Spectacle!
    - So - Without A Trial:
      - Paul & Silas Are Sent Of To Prison!
8. And So We Continue In:
- 16:23-24 - “And when they had laid many stripes upon them, they cast them into prison, charging the jailor to keep them safely: / 24 Who, having received such a charge, thrust them into the inner prison, and made their feet fast in the stocks!”
    - Here Is The Traditional Site:
      - In Philippi Of The Prison:
        - Where Paul & Silas Were Kept!

- It Is Possible That It Was Just A Water Cistern At That Time:  
- But It Still Dates To The Time They Were There!

- But - Even Though:

- They Were In Prison & In Stocks:

- 16:25-34 - "And at midnight Paul and Silas prayed, and sang praises unto God: and the prisoners heard them. / 26 And suddenly there was a great earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison were shaken: and immediately all the doors were opened, and every one's bands were loosed. / 27 And the keeper of the prison awaking out of his sleep, and seeing the prison doors open, he drew out his sword, and would have killed himself, supposing that the prisoners had been fled. / 28 But Paul cried with a loud voice, saying, Do thyself no harm: for we are all here. / 29 Then he called for a light, and sprang in, and came trembling, and fell down before Paul and Silas, / 30 And brought them out, and said, Sirs, what must I do to be saved? / 31 And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house. / 32 And they spake unto him the word of the Lord, and to all that were in his house. / 33 And he took them the same hour of the night, and washed their stripes; and was baptized, he and all his, straightway. / 34 And when he had brought them into his house, he set meat before them, and rejoiced, believing in God with all his house!"

- What A Great Deliverance!

- Not Just For Paul & Silas:

- But For The Jailor And The Members Of His Household!

9. But - The Philippian Authorities Still:

- Did Not Want Paul & His Team There!

- So - 16:35-40 - We Read - "And when it was day, the magistrates sent the serjeants, saying, Let those men go. / 36 And the keeper of the prison told this saying to Paul, The magistrates have sent to let you go: now therefore depart, and go in peace. / 37 But Paul said unto them, They have beaten us openly uncondemned, being Romans, and have cast us into prison; and now do they thrust us out privily? nay verily; but let them come themselves and fetch us out. / 38 And the serjeants told these words unto the magistrates: and they feared, when they heard that they were Romans. / 39 And they came and besought them, and brought them out, and desired them to depart out of the city. / 40 And they went out of the prison, and entered into the house of Lydia: and when they had seen the brethren, they comforted them, and departed!"

10. So - There In The City If Philippi:

- God Had Prepared A Great Reception:

- For The Preaching Of The Gospel!

- And There Are Three Sets Of Three:

- That I'd Like To Focus Our Attention On:

- As We Consider The Power Of The Gospel!

1. ***First – Three People!***

- God Used Paul & Silas & Their Team:

- To Bring The Gospel:

- To Three Different Kinds Of People!

- First Person - To A Woman:

- With An Impressionable Heart!

- Lydia - Who Knew Something Of The True God:

- Perhaps A Jew Or At Least:

- A Jewish Proselyte!

- But - She Was Pretty Much A Loner:

- In Her Religion!

- It Only Took 10 Jewish Men To Make Up A Synagogue - But There Is No Mention Of A Synagogue There - Just A Few Other Women!

- But This Woman:

- Had An Impressionable Heart!

- 16:14 - Because - She "Worshipped God, heard us: whose heart the Lord opened, that she attended unto the things which were spoken of Paul!"

- Lydia's Heart Had Been Already Prepared By The Lord:

- And Was Soft For The Message Of The Gospel:

- And So - She Was Delivered From Her Sin By The Grace Of God!

- Second Person - To A Girl:

- With An Imprisoned Heart!

- Not Only Was The Possessed Woman:

- A Slave To Men:
  - She Was Also A Slave To The Devil!
- 16:16 - She Was - “A certain damsel possessed with a spirit of divination met us!”
  - This Was A Seemingly Impossible Situation!
  - Yet - She Too Was Delivered:
    - Through The Name Of The Lord Jesus Christ!
- 16:18 - When Paul Said:
  - “I command thee in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her. And he came out the same hour!”
  - Jesus Christ Was Able To Set:
    - That Poor Captive Girl:
      - Free!
- Third Person - To A Man:
  - With An Ignorant Heart!
    - A Rough & Tough Roman Jailor:
      - Who Was Afraid Of Nothing!
      - But He’d Heard Of Some Strange Things Taking Place Around Town!
  - A New Religion!
    - A New Power!
      - And Now - He Was About To Experience:
        - It For Himself!
  - Through The Rumors!
    - Through The Singing Of His Prisoners!
    - Through The Earthquake!
      - This Fearless Soldier:
        - Became Afraid!
  - And - 16:29-30 - “Came trembling, and fell down before Paul and Silas, / And brought them out, and said, Sirs, what must I do to be saved?”
    - To Which Paul & Silas Replied:
      - 16:31 - “Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house!”
  - And They Did – Believe!
    - And So They Were – Saved!
- These Three People:
  - With Completely Different Hearts:
    - Show That The Gospel Can Reach Anyone!
    - But Then - Notice With Me:

## 2. *Second – Three Places!*

- First Place:
  - Was At A River:
    - Which For Lydia & Those Other Women:
      - Was A Place Of Prayer! (16:13)
- Second Place:
  - Was Along The Street:
    - As Paul & Silas Were Making Their Way:
      - To That Place Of Prayer! (16:16)
- Third Place:
  - Was In A Prison:
    - Where - In Spite Of The Pain:
      - 16:25 - “At midnight Paul and Silas prayed, and sang praises unto God: and the prisoners heard them!”
- These Three Places:
  - Became Places For Prayer:
    - And God Was Able To Use Those Prayers
      - To Reach Out To Those People!
  - This Shows That:
    - The Gospel Can Reach Anyone:
      - Anywhere!

- But Then - We Can Also See:

**3. Third – Three Praises!**

- God's Deliverance:
  - Through The Gospel:
    - Always Brings Joy!
- It Brought Joy:
  - And Praise:
    - To Lydia & Her Household!
      - 16:40 - Before Paul's Missionary Team Left Philippi:
        - They Returned To Lydia's House:
          - "And when they had seen the brethren, they comforted them!"
  - They All Would Have Been:
    - Encouraged In The Lord!
- It Brought Joy:
  - And Praise:
    - To Paul & Silas - Even As They Were:
      - Held In Prison!
        - Still - They - "Prayed & Sang Praises Unto God!" (16:25) - And:
- It Brought Joy:
  - And Praise:
    - To The Jailor And His Household:
      - In 16:34 - When They - "Rejoiced, believing in God with all his house!"
- And These Three:
  - Times Of Joy & Praise:
    - Show That God Will Always Receive The Glory:
      - For His Deliverance Of Grace!

**Conclusion:**

1. Philippi Became:
  - A Great Place Of Prayer & Praise:
    - Because There:
      - God Was Once Again:
        - Able To Demonstrate The Power Of The Gospel!
  - To Deliver & To Save:
    - Any One:
      - At Any Place:
        - And At Any Time!
2. Do We Believe This Still?
  - Do We Prepare For This Still?
    - Let Us Keep Looking For Opportunities:
      - To Tell Others About Jesus:
        - No Matter Who We Meet:
          - A No Matter Where We Go! - Always Seeking The Lord's Direction:
  - Through Prayer!

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