

**Woodland Baptist Church**  
**May 9, 2012 - Wednesday Night in the Word**  
**Acts 16:11-24 - The Vision Manifested**

**I. INTRODUCTION**

**II. READ ACTS 16:11-24...A Vision from God brings...**

**III. VERSES 11 - 15 TRAVEL and ADVENTURE and NEW relationships**

**A. 11 So, setting sail from Troas, we made a direct voyage to Samothrace, and the following day to Neapolis, 12 and from there to Philippi, which is a leading city of the district of Macedonia and a Roman colony. We remained in this city some days. 13 And on the Sabbath day we went outside the gate to the riverside, where we supposed there was a place of prayer, and we sat down and spoke to the women who had come together. 14 One who heard us was a woman named Lydia, from the city of Thyatira, a seller of purple goods, who was a worshiper of God. The Lord opened her heart to pay attention to what was said by Paul. 15 And after she was baptized, and her household as well, she urged us, saying, "If you have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come to my house and stay." And she prevailed upon us.**

**B. Background**

1. Troas...Samothrace...Neapolis (Port of Philippi)...Philippi (Macedonia) - they most likely traveled to Philippi along the road called, "The Egnatian Way."
2. Philippi - the city received its name from Philip II, father of Alexander the Great; near Philippi the battle was fought between Mark Antony and Octavius against Brutus and Cassius, assassins of Julius Caesar; later Octavian colonized it after his victory over Antony and Cleopatra in 31 B.C. It was a Roman colony under Roman law.

**C. Question - Where does Paul normally go when he visits a town? The Synagogue. Where does he go first in Philippi? Outside the city gates - so there does not seem to be a synagogue in Philippi. (If there had been 10 Jewish men, they would have constituted a synagogue).**

1. On the Sabbath he went outside the gates to the riverside (Gangas River) with his travel companions, Silas, Timothy and Luke. (at least four including Paul).
2. Lydia - a woman that was well to do and was a business woman that specialized in "purple goods" and was a "worshipper of God."
3. Lydia's testimony
  - a) Public nature - "she was baptized"
  - b) Productive nature - "and her household"
  - c) Practical nature - "she invited them to stay at her home."
  - d) What about 4 male missionaries going to stay at a woman's home?
    - (1) If it had only been Paul, most likely he would have not have gone to her home, but in this case there are at least four missionaries that would be housed together - a rather safe number for accountability measures.
    - (2) We always need to be careful who we are alone with to not be put at risk for moral failure or accusation by the enemy.

#### IV. VERSES 16-18 **CONFLICT** with **SATANIC** forces

A. 16 As we were going to the place of prayer, we were met by a slave girl who had a spirit of divination and brought her owners much gain by fortune-telling. 17 She followed Paul and us, crying out, "These men are servants of the Most High God, who proclaim to you the way of salvation." 18 And this she kept doing for many days. Paul, having become greatly annoyed, turned and said to the spirit, "I command you in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her." And it came out that very hour.

1. 16 As we were going to the place of prayer, we were met by a slave girl who had a spirit of divination and brought her owners much gain by fortune-telling.
  - a) **Place of prayer** - isn't it always interesting how there are distractions when we are prompted to pray? (phone calls, loud noises...in this case...an annoying slave girl with a spirit of divination, a demonic spirit).
  - b) **spirit of divination** - this expression is literally "a spirit, a Python," in other words this demented girl was a *pythoness*, under the control of the demon Apollo. The shrine, famous for oracles, was located at Delphi in

Greece.

- c) **Gain by fortune telling** - she was able to make “inspired utterances,” which had become very profitable for her owners.

2. **17 She followed Paul and us, crying out, “These men are servants of the Most High God, who proclaim to you the way of salvation.”**

- a) Was there anything wrong with what she was doing? What she was saying was completely true...Paul and his men were *servants of the most high God and they were proclaiming the way of salvation*...yes, there was something wrong with it - it was being said by a demonic spirit, therefore it had to be stopped. Do we really want people affiliated with satanic cults shadowing us in Gospel ministry? Speaking on our behalf?? What about Christians involved in secret societies or fraternal organizations that have secret rites/ceremonies...etc?

- (1) **2 Corinthians 6:14** - Do not be unequally yoked with unbelievers. For what partnership does righteousness have with lawlessness? Or what fellowship has light with darkness?

3. **18 And this she kept doing for many days. Paul, having become greatly annoyed, turned and said to the spirit, “*I command you in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her.*” And it came out that very hour.**

- a) She kept doing this for many days - why did Paul wait?
  - (1) Perhaps knowing she was a “slave girl” that belonged to someone else, Paul feared for what may happen to her if he got involved.
  - (2) Perhaps it took a few days for him to realize exactly what was going on.
- b) Paul finally became greatly annoyed and casts out the spirit by Christ’s name.

V. VERSES 19-21 **PERSECUTION** for spreading the **GOSPEL**

**A. 19 But when her owners saw that their hope of gain was gone, they seized Paul and Silas and dragged them into the marketplace before the rulers. 20 And when they had brought them to the magistrates, they said, “These men are Jews, and they are disturbing our city. 21 They advocate customs that are not lawful for us as Romans to accept or practice.” 22 The crowd joined in attacking them, and the magistrates tore the garments off them and gave orders to beat them with rods. 23 And when they had inflicted many blows upon them, they threw them into prison, ordering the jailer to keep them safely. 24 Having received this order, he put them into the inner prison and fastened their feet in the stocks.**

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a) Paul gets involved with the slave girl, frees her from demonic control...and gets in big trouble with her owners.

(1) Owners - interesting that “owner” is plural - this slave girl had multiple people using her for financial profit through fortune telling and who knows what else.

(2) “Only twice in the book of Acts are Gentiles seen spearheading an attack upon the church and both times (Philippi and Ephesus) money was involved. The gospel militated against profits made from trading on people’s weaknesses and sins. No wonder the Bible says, “the love of money is the root of all evil.” (Phillips, Commentary on Acts).

b) What do these owners do? Play the **race card** - “these men are Jews!!” They are disturbing our city...the city erupts in anger and violence against them.

2. 22 The crowd joined in attacking them, and the magistrates tore the garments off them and gave orders to beat them with rods. 23 And when they had inflicted many blows upon them, they threw them into prison, ordering the jailer to keep them safely. 24 Having received this order, he

put them into the inner prison and fastened their feet in the stocks.

a) Magistrates and the crowd pounce on them and begin to beat them - first by stripping them down naked, then by beating them with rods.

(1) **Luke 21:12-19** - 12 But before all this they will lay their hands on you and persecute you, delivering you up to the synagogues and prisons, and you will be brought before kings and governors for my name's sake. 13 This will be your opportunity to bear witness. 14 Settle it therefore in your minds not to meditate beforehand how to answer, 15 for I will give you a mouth and wisdom, which none of your adversaries will be able to withstand or contradict. 16 You will be delivered up even by parents and brothers and relatives and friends, and some of you they will put to death. 17 You will be hated by all for my name's sake. 18 But not a hair of your head will perish. 19 By your endurance you will gain your lives.

b) After their beating, they are put into prison - most likely, Paul and Silas.

## VI. CLOSE

A. The Spirit had closed two doors for Paul - Asia and Bithynia...and a vision of a man called them to Macedonia.

B. The Vision redirected them to two forms of blessings:

1. The blessing of fellowship, rest and renewal - Lydia
2. The blessing of tribulation and persecution - Slave girl

C. What can we learn from this?

1. Lydia's conversion was relatively pain free and easy and resulted in her entire family coming to the Lord and multiplying the church in Philippi.
2. The Slave girl's exorcism was surrounded by grief, pain and imprisonment.

D. **Matthew 5:11-12** - 11 "Blessed are you when other revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. 12 Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you.