

## The Acts of the Apostles, Part 35: Disturbing the Peace

Key Verse: Acts 16:16-25

“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.

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.

25 About midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the prisoners were listening to them.”

### **Good & Evil**

“Righteous actions in an unrighteous world will disturb some and free others.”

#### ❖ Confusion Silenced

- Demon Possessed Woman
- Silenced

#### ❖ Truth and Confusion

- Good Vs Evil
- Truth Amidst Confusion

#### ❖ Divination Forbidden by God

- Deut. 18:10, “There shall not be found among you anyone who burns his son or his daughter as an offering, anyone who practices divination or tells fortunes or interprets omens, or a sorcerer.”

- 2 Kings 17:17, “And they burned their sons and their daughters as offerings and used divination and omens and sold themselves to do evil in the sight of the Lord, provoking him to anger.”
- ❖ The Woman Set Free!
  - Good overcame Evil!
- ❖ Disturbed
  - “Righteous actions in an unrighteous world will disturb some and free others.”
- ❖ Good VS Evil
  - Right and wrong
  - Legal and illegal
- ❖ Paul and Silas Imprisoned
  - They disturbed the peace with the truth.

### **Disrupting Hard Time!**

- ❖ Praises in the Prison! Acts 16:25-34
  - Praises turned the Big House into God’s House!
  - Foundations shook
  - Doors opened
  - Enemies become allies
  - The lost are saved!
- ❖ **Go in Peace** (Acts 16:35-40)
  - Freedom???
  - Wait just a minute!
  - Public vindication = A Good Witness Today and Tomorrow

### **Wrapping it Up**

- ❖ Lessons from Philippi

- 1 Thessalonians 2:2, “But though we had already suffered and been shamefully treated at Philippi, as you know, we had boldness in our God to declare to you the gospel of God in the midst of much conflict.”
- ❖ First, Paul and Silas did not seek out disruption.
  - Christians need to understand that actions have consequences.
    - And
    - Put the needs of the Gospel over your personal feelings.
- ❖ Second, Paul and Silas did NOT resist the punishment, even though it was unfair.
  - Christians need to be sensitive to their public witness.
    - *Sometimes* your personal rights must be set aside for the glory of God and the sake of the Gospel message.
    - Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave it to the wrath of God, for it is written, “Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord.” (Romans 12:19)
    - God will provide you with opportunities to give Him glory even *through* hardships.
- ❖ Finally, giving God praise in ALL circumstances is VERY powerful!
  - Foundations are shook
  - Closed doors are opened
  - Enemies become allies
  - The lost get saved!
  - Righteous actions in an unrighteous world will disturb some and free others.