

Trouble in Philippi (Acts 15:36-41; 16:1-40)

I. Introduction

A. *This Week in Clear Living*

1. Division of Paul and Barnabas over John Mark (15:36-41)
2. Enlistment of Timothy by Paul and Silas (16:1-5)
3. Conversion of the Philippian Jailer (16:19-40)

Question: Why did Paul and Barnabas split? Do you think that it was God's will for them to split?

- B. In Acts 15:36-41, Paul showed that he has a temper and that he can bear a grudge.
1. John Mark had deserted Paul and Barnabas during their first missionary journey (see Acts 13:13).
 - a. Dr. J. Vernon McGee wrote that Mark was afraid and was running for his life. The dangers were real.
 - b. Dr. Richard N. Longenecker wrote that Mark might have been homesick.
 - c. He may have been unprepared for the rigors of traveling so much.
 - d. He may have disagreed with Paul's sudden outreach to Gentiles. Remember that the Jerusalem Council convened shortly after to discuss the implications of circumcision.**
 - e. He may have been upset because Paul had suddenly become the boss. Barnabas and Mark were cousins.**
 2. The most logical explanation seems to be a disagreement with Paul about the Gentile objective and how it would be received in Jerusalem.
 3. The least logical is that Mark left because he was afraid. Had he been afraid during the first journey, why would he have been so eager to go on the second missionary journey?
 4. In verses 39-41, Paul and Barnabas split. Paul went with Silas, and Barnabas went with Mark.
 5. Apparently, Luke also went with Paul.
- C. How does the Lord feel about such happenings? How does He feel about the split in our church?
1. The Lord did not give up on Mark.
 2. When he returned to Jerusalem, he joined up with Peter.
 - 3. Peter could have consoled Mark with respect to a Gentile outreach because Peter had once felt the same way.**
 4. Mark wrote the Gospel of Mark, and Peter was his primary source.
 5. Paul continued building churches.
 6. Barnabas probably continued building churches, too. His efforts are not known because Luke traveled with Paul.
- D. The whole situation may have been ugly, but the Lord turned it to good in each main person's life.
1. Mark wrote the gospel and later returned to the mission field.

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2. The events placed two teams in the field.
 3. Peter was able to disciple and mentor Mark.
 4. The church had dealt with its first real crisis and settled the dispute in the Jerusalem Council.
 5. **Was it God's will for the negative events to happen? I do not think so, but He was able to build His church even through the personal difficulties.**
 6. Romans 8: 28 says, "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."
- E. He can do the same thing in our lives.

Question: Why did Paul have Timothy circumcised?

- II. In Acts 16:1-3, Paul met Timothy.
- A. Timothy was considered to be Jewish by the Jewish world.
 1. His father was Greek. His mother was Jewish.
 2. He had a good reputation among the Jewish brethren in Lystra and Iconium.
 - B. Paul wanted Timothy to go with him.
 - C. Paul had Timothy circumcised because of the Jews. Why did he do that, especially so soon after the Jerusalem Council?
 1. Dr. McGee wrote that Paul was trying to avoid offenses that would hinder his evangelical work. **If true, is that a good thing?**
 2. Dr. Longenecker wrote that Timothy was considered to be a Jew and that Paul was still an observant Jew.
 3. Being a good Christian did not mean being a bad Jew.

Question: Why did Paul cast the demonic spirit out of the woman? After the earthquake, why did the jailer want to get saved?

- III. In Acts 16:4-24, Paul and Silas left Lystra and travel to Philippi.
- A. The report from the Jerusalem Council was being disseminated.
 - B. People were getting saved.
 - C. In verses 9-10, **Paul was doing what he thought the Holy Spirit wanted him to do by immediately heading for Macedonia.**
 1. Philip did that in Acts 8:26, which says "And the angel of the Lord spake unto Philip, saying, Arise, and go toward the south unto the way that goeth down from Jerusalem unto Gaza, which is desert. And he arose and went: and, behold, a man of Ethiopia, an eunuch of great authority under Candace queen of the Ethiopians, who had the charge of all her treasure, and had come to Jerusalem for to worship,"

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2. Peter did that in Acts 10:23, which says, "Then called he them in, and lodged them. And on the morrow Peter went away with them, and certain brethren from Joppa accompanied him."
 3. John did that in Revelation 1:19, which says, "Write the things which thou hast seen, and the things which are, and the things which shall be hereafter;"
- D. Conclusion: We can do our part to build the church by remaining obedient to the Holy Spirit.**
1. **The book of Acts shows that the Lord can do mighty works when His people are willing to be used.**
 2. **But this book also shows the human side of God's saints and that He can even use our weaknesses to advance His causes.**
 3. **Notice that these men did not waste time once they felt that they had clear direction.**
- E.** In Acts 16:12-24, Paul and Silas reached Philippi, which was the chief part of Macedonia.
1. They met Lydia and stayed with her.
 2. Verses 14-15 imply that they were at Philippi for a while. Lydia had time to hear Paul, get saved, and be baptized.
 3. In verses 16-24, Paul and Silas cause a young damsel to get saved and that gets them in trouble.
 - a. She troubled them by walking behind them and constantly saying over many days that they were servants of the most High God.
 - b. Paul prayed and asked the Lord to cast the evil spirit out of her.
 - c. The damsel got saved, and that his the pocketbooks of those that has controlled her.
 - d. Her masters turned the town against them and had them put in jail.
 4. The jailer put them in the inner prison (similar to Peter in Acts 12), and he chained himself to them.
 5. They had been badly beaten (verse 23), but at midnight they began to sing praises to the Lord.
 6. Notice their peace, patience, and faith.
 - a. ***They had peace even though they were in mortal danger.***
 - b. ***They had patience even though they could have been blaming the Lord.***
 - c. ***They had faith that the Lord's will would be done, despite the situation.***

Question: When Paul and Silas were free to go, why was Paul so antagonistic? Is it possible that Paul perhaps had too great a temper?

- IV. In Acts 16:26-40, an earthquake occurred, the jailer got saved, and Paul and Silas were released.

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- A. In verse 26, an earthquake occurred late in the night. Most of the prisoners escaped, but Paul and Silas did not even try to get away.
1. If they had escaped, the jailer would have been killed.
 2. The jailer was relieved and shocked to still find them there.
 3. In verse 31, he asked them how he could get what they had.
 4. Paul told him to believe “**ON**” the Lord Jesus and be saved.
 - a. On (***epi***) - upon, on, at, by, before, of position
 - b. Believing “on” Jesus means to have the same confidence in Him concerning one’s salvation that a person might have in a chair that.
 - c. In John 3:16, the Greek word ***eis*** emphasizes the relationship that one has with the Lord.
 5. Salvation can be summed up by the two Greek words, ***epi*** and ***eis***.
- B. In verses 35-40, Paul and Silas express their anger before leaving Philippi.
1. The magistrates sent the keeper of the prison to let them go. They had not broken any laws, so they were released.
 2. Paul chastised the keeper and told him that the magistrates should come personally to apologize and to release them.
 - a. Paul was upset because they had been beaten without cause.
 - b. He was upset because he was a Roman citizen but had been treated like a common criminal.
 - c. He was angry because the magistrates were trying to sneak them out of prison before what had happened became widely known. Such an uproar could have brought reprisals from Rome.
 3. Paul and Silas said goodbye to Lydia and the other believers and left Philippi.

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Next week's lesson: "Paul in Trouble and on Trial" (Acts 21:1-40; 22:1-30; 25:1-28)

Five Day Recommended Reading:

Monday:	Acts 21:1-14
Tuesday:	Acts 21:15-40
Wednesday:	Acts 22:1-21
Thursday:	Acts 22:22-30
Friday:	Acts 25:1-27

Study questions:

1. Why was Paul willing to go to Jerusalem even though the trip might put him in grave danger?
2. Why were the Jews so upset with him?
3. Why was the guard willing to let Paul speak to the crowd from the stairs leading to the jail?
4. Why did Paul tell the guards that he was a Roman citizen?
5. How did Paul force a trip to Rome?
6. How was the Holy Spirit building Jesus' church in this lesson?
7. How was the Holy Spirit showing His deity in this lesson?