

HOW GOD TESTS THOSE WHO ARE LED BY THE HOLY SPIRIT
Acts 16:16-24

Introduction:

- A. Paul and his fellow laborers are in the place God wants them
 - 1) They are in Philippi, of Macedonia
 - 2) They have seen God's blessings

- B. They're commitment to God's will is to be tested. They will have opposition.
 - 1) They may doubt God's wisdom
 - 2) They may have serious doubts about the circumstances that have brought them here.
 - 3) They could return to Antioch

I. The Instrument of Testing Vs. 16

- A. "A certain damsel" = paidiske = "slave girl"
 - 1) "possessed" = echo = "to have"
 - 2) "spirit", "python of divination"

Python, divination, prophecy. The word was used for the serpent that guarded the Delphic oracle and later was slain by Apollo. The word came to designate spirit of divination, then also a ventriloquist, who was believed to have such a spirit dwelling in his belly (BAG;LC). The word is in opposition to "spirit".
 - 3) She "met" them = apantao = "to come or to go from a place towards a person", "and so to meet face to face from opposite directions; to meet and come back with the person met."
 - 4) She brought in, "much gain" = ergasia = "work", "daily labour", "business"
 - 5) "soothsaying", "she was a psychic" - Vanteuomai

To Soothsay, to give an oracle. It refers to the tumult of the mind, the fury, the temporary madness, under which those were, who were supposed to be possessed by the god during the time they delivered their oracles (Trench, Synonyms, 22). In the LXX it always is employed of lying prophets (EGT). This is the instrumental us of the part.

- 6) "as we went to prayer"
- 7) They were not on their way to a movie!

B. She identified the Preachers Vs. 17,18a

- 1) "She followed Paul, and us"
- 2) "These men are servants of the most high God"
- 3) "which shew unto us the way of salvation"
- 4) "And this did she many days"

II. The Response of Those Tested Vs. 18b

A. Paul delayed in casting out the, "demon"

- 1) "this she did many days"
- 2) Paul was "grieved" by her plight. diaponeo = "to labour through", "to produce or effect with labour", "to pain one's self" Paul's conscience bothered him!
- 3) Paul knew the consequences, the healing of the lame man at Lystra 14:19
- 4) Paul's motives were twofold, to do God's will, but to not stir-up so much trouble that God's will could not be done.
- 5) I Timothy 2:1-2

B. Paul did what his conscience taught

- 1) "I command thee in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her"
- 2) "And he came out the same hour"

C. These "gifts" are not in the church at this time

- 1) Antichrists will use them again

III. Satan Moves Against the Preachers Vs. 19-25

A. The owners dragged them to court

- 1) This had been seen by the Lord 9:16
- 2) "marketplace" = agora = "the courthouse"
- 3) Their motive was money. This is true of every advertisement on T.V., radio, and print media. A.M., F.M., V.H.F., U.H.F.
- 4) "the hope of their gains was gone"

B. They appealed to prejudice Vs. 20

- 1) "These men, being Jews"
- 2) "exceeding trouble our city"

C. They appealed to Patriotism Vs. 21

- 1) "and teach customs" = ethos
- 2) "which are not lawful for us "to receive"
"lawful" = exestiu = "it is allowed"
- 3) "receive" = paradechesthai = "to adopt"
- 4) "observe" = peitharcho = "to obey or to follow one's advice"
- 5) "being Romans"

D. The incident examined

- 1) They preached, "Jesus Christ Lord"
- 2) They violated the union that existed between the Roman Empire and Paganism. It was not lawful to proselyte. They were free to be Jews, but not free to preach to others.
- 3) "magistrates" = "The two rulers"
- 4) They were charged with creating a riot and the introduction of an alien religion.

E. They were convicted by a mob Vs. 22

- 1) "rose up together" = sunephisemi = "to rise up together", "to join an attack"
- 2) Their clothes were stripped off

F. They were punished by the federal government and it's representatives

- 1) They had not received a trial Vs. 37-38
- 2) The command was given. "go, lictors; strip off their garments, let them be scourged"
- 3) "stripes" = plege = "a stroke", "a blow"

G. They were cast into prison Vs. 23-24

- 1) "cast" = ballo = "to throw"
- 2) "charging" = paraggelia = "a general order, as from a military commander"

- 3) make safe, to secure. xulon wood, stock. A Roman instrument of torture w. more than two holes for the legs so that they could be forced widely apart unto a position which soon became intolerably painful (LC).

IV. The Preacher's Response Vs. 25

A. They prayed!

- 1) This is what they set out to do before they were arrested.
- 2) It had been a long day!

B. They sang praises!

Proseuchomai to pray. Umnoun impf. umneo to sing a hymn of praise addressed directly to God (Trench, Synonyms, 297f.; TDNT). The impf. pictures continual singing. Epekroonto impf. epakroaomai to listen to. Employed in medical language for the placing of the ear to the human body, in order to detect the nature of internal disease by the sound (MLL, 234). The prep. compound is directive.