

## THE CHURCH OF CHRIST AT PHILIPPI

Acts 16:11-15

### Introduction:

1. Every missionary has a favorite church he helped establish and every preacher has a favorite congregation he served.
2. There seems to have been a special bond between Paul and the church at Philippi.
3. Paul established this church on his second missionary journey.
  - a. Silas, Luke and Timothy accompanied Paul.
  - b. The Holy Spirit forbade the missionaries to preach in Asia, Mysia and Bithynia (Acts 16:6,7).
  - c. At Troas (Troy) a man of Macedonia appeared to Paul in a vision saying, "Come over into Macedonia and help us" (Acts 16:9,10).
4. Paul and his co-workers sailed to Macedonia in Northern Greece.
  - a. They landed at Neapolis and went overland to Philippi.
  - b. This was Paul's first mission work in Europe.
5. Philippi was named after King Philip, father of Alexander the Great.
6. A battle for control of the Roman Empire had been fought on the plains of Philippi a century before.
  - a. Anthony and Cleopatra fought against Octavian (Augustus) in this conflict.
  - b. Octavian's forces won and Philippi became a Roman colony.
  - c. Latin was spoken and Roman customs and laws enforced.

### Discussion:

- I. LYDIA AMD HER HOUSEHOLD WERE THE FIRST CONVERTS.
  - A. On the sabbath, Paul and his company found a place of prayer by the riverside.

(1)

1. Wherever there were ten Jewish men, a synagogue was established.
  2. There were no men present, but a number of God-fearing women met for worship.
  3. Godly women have established many congregations while respecting God's roles for men and women.
  4. The missionaries "spoke to the women who were there."
- B. Lydia, "a seller of purple," was the first convert.
1. She was from Thyatira in Asia where a purple dye was extracted from small fish in the waters in the area.
  2. This was used to dye clothing for royalty and the rich.
  3. The Lord opened her heart by the preaching of the Word so she heeded the things spoken by Paul (Romans 10:17).
  4. Lydia was baptized along with those in her household.
- C. Pedobaptists (those who practice infant baptism) claim this example supports their cause.
1. They assume Lydia's household included infant children.
  2. There is no mention of Lydia's children or even that she was married.
  3. The household likely have included relatives, slaves and employees of Lydia.

## II. THE PHILIPPIAN JAILOR'S FAMILY WAS ALSO CONVERTED.

- A. Paul and Silas were followed by a slave girl who had a spirit of divination.
1. Her owners made money by using her to tell fortunes.
  2. This girl followed the missionaries crying out, "These men are the servants of the Most High God who proclaim to us the way of salvation."
  3. Paul was annoyed and cast the evil spirit out of the girl.
- B. When her owners saw they had lost their means of income, they dragged Paul and Silas before the authorities.

1. They accused the missionaries of teaching customs which it was not lawful for Romans to observe.
2. Without giving them a hearing, the multitude and the magistrates had them beaten severely.
3. The Jailor then put them in the inner prison with their feet fastened in the stocks.

C. At midnight a great earthquake came.

1. Paul and Silas were singing and praying and the other prisoners were listening.
2. The foundations of the prison were shaken, the doors were opened, and everyone's chains were loosed.
3. The Jailor was awakened by the commotion, thought the prisoners had escaped, and was about to commit suicide.
4. Paul called out, "Do yourself no harm for we are all here."

D. The Jailor fell down before Paul and Silas and asked, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" (v. 30).

1. He was told, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you will be saved, you and your family" (v. 31).
2. Then they spoke the Word to him so that he could believe for "faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God" (Romans 10:17).
3. He showed his repentance by washing the stripes he had laid on Paul and Silas earlier.
4. Then the Jailor and all his family were baptized:

"And he took them the same hour of the night and washed their stripes. And immediately, he and all his family were baptized" (v. 33).

E. Notice the relevant facts about this case of conversion.

1. They were told to believe in Jesus, but had to have the Gospel taught to them so they could believe.
2. There were no infants for they had to be capable of being taught the Gospel.

3. The Jailer showed the fruit of repentance when he washed their stripes (Luke 3:8).
4. They were baptized “immediately,” and “the same hour of the night.”
  - a. The earthquake had come after midnight.
  - b. No one whose conversion is recorded in the New Testament ate, drank or slept until he had been baptized.
  - c. They correctly understood that baptism is for the remission of sins; therefore no one is saved until he is baptized.

- F. Verse 34 is a summary of the conversion of the Jailer and his family.

“Now when he had brought them into his house, he set food before them, and he rejoiced, having believed in God, with all his household.”

1. The phrase “having believed in God” is a synecdoche, a figure of speech where the part stands for the whole.
2. Belief in Christ is the leading or first step toward salvation and all the others are built upon it.
3. “Having believed” includes all they did in obeying the Gospel in order to be saved.

Conclusion:

1. When the day dawned, the magistrates sent officers to release Paul and Silas from prison.
2. The officers begged Paul and Silas to depart in peace.
3. Paul knew that to do so would be an admission of guilt and would leave a stigma on the church.
4. He said: “They have beaten us openly, uncondemned Romans, and now they want us to leave secretly! No indeed! Let them come and escort us out.”
5. The magistrates were afraid when they learned Paul and Silas were Romans for they could be prosecuted for what they had done.
6. The magistrates had to come and publicly escort them from the jail.

