

THE INTERVENTION OF GOD

Text: Acts 16:11-34

Key Word: Intervention

Key Thought: What Kind of People Does God Want to Save

God has intervened in the affairs of men to change the course of history. This chapter in the lives of those involved came about because God ordained it to be so. Paul and his companions were kept from preaching the gospel in both Asia and Bythnia by the Holy Spirit. As they attempted to enter these regions again the Bible says,

" . . . the Spirit of Jesus would not allow them to."

Acts 16:7b

They were given another route which led them to the coastal city of Troas. They would either have to turn back or make their way by sea. During the night, Paul had a vision. He saw a man of Macedonia begging him,

" . . . Come over to Macedonia and help us."

Acts 16:9b

Here is a picture of God's Church today. We have travelled far and wide proclaiming the gospel to anyone who would listen. **In recent years the Holy Spirit has been changing the direction and focus of His Church.** We stand today, as it were, at the banks of Troas, with God directing us to launch out into the deep. We are convinced that it is the leading of God. **God is calling us to bring the gospel to those who will receive it.**

The LORD is linking up His resources to bring in a great harvest of souls. [Who are some that are vastly different that God wants to save?](#)

I. THE LYDIAS - DEALERS IN PURPLE CLOTH (Acts 16:11-15)

II. THE JAILERS - KEEPERS OF PRISONERS (Acts 16:16-34)

I. THE LYDIAS - DEALERS IN PURPLE CLOTH (Acts 16:11-15)

Lydia lived in Philippi, a proud city which was known for its school of medicine.

Patient: *"What kind of doctor are you?"*

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Doctor: *"A naval surgeon."*

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Patient: *"My, how you doctors specialize."*

I. THE LYDIAS - DEALERS IN PURPLE CLOTH (Acts 16:11-15) (Contd.)

**** Dentist: "What kind of filling would you like in your tooth?" ****
Boy: "Chocolate!"

Philippi was the first European city to hear a Christian missionary. Acts 16 records Paul's second missionary journey and his first visit to this region.

We are told that on the Sabbath, Paul and his companions went to the river to find a place of prayer. This seems to indicate that there was not a synagogue in Philippi at this time. It was here that Paul met with Lydia, and after he presented the gospel, she opened up her heart even more to God.

Who does Lydia represent to us today? We know that she was a worshipper of God but had never come to a saving knowledge of God. **She was like those today that have an authentic outward Christlike character and yet lack the salvation of her soul.**

She was a seller of purple. Purple was the colour of royalty. It was a very costly dye. People who wore purple clothing were recognized as the upper class of society. **It was an outward covering, yet it could divert one's attention from the owner's true state of heart.**

It also could speak of some of the outward forms of religion which can often cover its worshippers with a beauty that is ONLY outward. **It is appealing to the eye, but not capable of changing one's attitude of heart.**

Lydia came from Thyatira. The apostle John was told to write a message of warning to this church in His Revelation of Jesus Christ.

*"Nevertheless, I have this against you: You tolerate that woman Jezebel, who calls herself a prophetess. By her teaching she misleads many servants into sexual immorality and the eating of food sacrificed to idols.
21. I gave her time to repent of her immorality, but she was unwilling."*

Revelation 2:20-21

The church at Thyatira was compromised by a religious system that was full of idolatry. It led to all kinds of sin. They seemed to even feel secure in their sinfulness. It was going to take drastic measures to get the attention of those trapped by its evil clutches.

I. THE LYDIAS - DEALERS IN PURPLE CLOTH (Acts 16:11-15) (Contd.)

"I have given her time to repent of her immorality, but she was unwilling.

22. So I cast her on a bed of suffering, and I will make those who commit adultery with her suffer intensely, unless they repent of her ways.

23. I will strike her children dead. Then all the churches will know that I am he who searches the hearts and minds, and I will repay each of you according to your deeds."

Revelation 2:21-23

It was this group of people that Lydia represented. They were satisfied with their form of worship. God is calling His Church to go to them; where they are living; where they are worshipping and bring them the message of the gospel. We need to go with an expectation in our hearts that God will bring about a change in their hearts.

5888 Rader Just in Time

Paul Rader had urged a banker in New York many times to receive Christ but he did not respond. One day the preacher sensed that God had wanted him to go immediately and speak to this man again.

Obediently he took the train and went with all speed to the town where the man lived. He hurried to the bank and found his friend standing in the doorway.

"Rader," he said, "I'm so glad to see you! I wrote a telegram begging you to come, but later changed my mind and didn't send it."

"That's all right," said the evangelist, "your message came through anyhow by way of Heaven."

Under deep conviction of sin, the banker was impressed by Rader's earnestness and his special effort to reach him with the Gospel. He accepted the Lord that same hour. Suddenly the banker gave a strange gasp and fell into the arms of the evangelist - DEAD! He had been saved on the very brink of eternity.

What if Paul Rader had delayed or failed to stress the urgent need of turning to the LORD immediately??? Do you have soul-winner's heart???

H.G. Bosch

II. THE JAILERS - KEEPERS OF PRISONERS (Acts 16:16-34)

Paul and Silas were cast into prison because they had confronted an evil spirit and cast it out. They were improperly beaten and imprisoned. Paul and Silas were Roman citizens. They could have caused a great deal of problems for the magistrates and the Roman guards. Instead they were singing and praising God.

"and the other prisoners were listening to them."

Acts 16:25b

Paul allowed himself to be a prisoner for the cause of Christ in order that a household could be saved. He had already seen both Lydia and her household accept the LORD and be baptized. Now it was time to move onto the **Keeper of Prisoners and his family.**

This jailer represented a group of the medium class of trained people who had been ordered to guard God's messengers so they couldn't be effective in their witnessing. These same types of jailers have infiltrated every aspect of our society. They continue in their ways to keep God's people in captivity. The jailer . . .

"Upon receiving such orders, he put them in the inner cell and fastened their feet in the stocks."

Acts 16:24

The magistrates, owners of the slave girl and the jailer thought they could imprison Paul and Silas. **But the captives were about to become the captors.** God supernaturally intervened as Paul and Silas entered into a glorious worship service. They were beaten, stripped of their dignity and severely flogged, yet NOT shaken in their spirit. The main one who was about to be shaken in this chapter was the jailer.

Through a violent earthquake God not only swung open the prison doors, and removed ALL the chains of the prisoners, He also made a way for a greater miracle to take place. **The door to the jailer's heart swung wide open because God's servants were to be used as witnesses.** It was another **INTERVENTION OF GOD.**

Is this not what God is wanting to do through His Church? It may very well take a supernatural act to deliver the Church from its captors. God is beginning to place a deep concern into the hearts of His people. It is giving us an intensified desire for the salvation of souls. These people may well include those who may seem to be our captors. The result will be the salvation of many souls. There will definitely be an interaction of appreciation and love. Joy will flow like a river. There will also be a flood of peace. We will be very encouraged with what God is beginning to do through our lives.

II. THE JAILERS - KEEPERS OF PRISONERS (Acts 16:16-34) (Contd.)

Witness, by Life

*** Some years ago, upon returning from a business trip, a man bought his wife some souvenirs. Among them was a matchbox that would glow in the dark. After giving it to her, he turned out the light, but the object was not visible.

"This must be a joke!" she said.

Disappointed, the husband commented, *"I've been cheated!"*

Then his wife noticed some French words on the box. Taking it to a friend who knew the language, she was told that the directions read: **"If you want me to shine at night, keep me in the sunlight all day."**

So she put her gift in a south window. That evening when she turned out the light, the matchbox had a brilliant glow. The surprised husband asked, *"What did you do?"*

"Oh, I found the secret," she said. "Before it can shine in the dark, it must be exposed to the light."

Just as the matchbox, having been exposed to the sun, it took on the nature of the sun and began to shine, so Christians should constantly expose themselves to the Son, that they may take on His nature and shine forth as lights in a dark world. ***

Michael Green

"Illustrations for Biblical Preaching"

#1468, p. 397

I encourage you to welcome God to intervene in ALL of the affairs of your life in order to bring about the salvation of souls. I am convinced there are plenty of people like Lydia and the jailer that you know whom God is focussing upon this morning. Lets reach them for Christ.

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Date: June 27/21

Place: FCA

Time: 10:30 Am

Song: We Want to See Jesus Lifted High - G

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