

THREE RESPONSES, THREE RESULTS (1-22-06)

(Can We Live Like This?)

Acts 16:13-18

Intro: As we have looked at the formation of the Philippian church, we have seen the Holy Spirit completely directing Paul and party, by various means. The Spirit has kept them from their own plans, interfered with their plans, and given them clear vision of God's plan. Constantly we see them as seeing things not as their doing, but as the Spirit's doing and their being responsive. The "Spirit prevented" us, the "Spirit did not allow" us, "a vision appeared" and "we immediately set out." The Spirit's call, their cooperation. What a plan!! Can we live like this? We will continue to look at three subjects, Lydia, the Damsel, and the Jailor in our passages.

Lydia Receiving: In verses 13-15 we find the story of Lydia. Verse 13 says they "resorted" or met there. They came together. There is something powerful about being together. With no temple in the area, they could have stayed home to watch television, they could have done something else, but they came together to pray and worship. "Five can chase a thousand, but one hundred can put ten thousand to flight (Lev. 26:8)." The disciples met in one accord, and something powerful happened to the world. Verse 14 says that Lydia **worshipped God.** That is "adored" or "revered" God. Imagine adoring God rather than paying respects to him. Now in order to grab something powerful out of this we need to look at something else in that same verse. "The Lord opened her heart." I mentioned before that *this is the word used when Christ "opened" the Scriptures to those on the Emmaus road.* It is always a revelation type word. It causes a burning in the heart. In this particular passage the voice tense and mood is aorist, indicative, active. In that combination it is the Lord doing it and in this case it is not a continuous action. The exact point in time of the action may be unclear but the action is accomplished. Now, in our context, previous in vs.14 it says: "who worshipped God." I thought for sure this would be active voice. It has to be. The boy hit the ball, Lydia worshipped God. This must be an act of Lydia, but of all things it is *in the passive voice*, where the subject is not acting upon itself. It is being done to them. The Lord opens the heart, and worship flows out of the being of the person, not just activity. *This is the definition of intimacy: a constant response in my life to the relationship with and revelation of God.* I know this is purposely set forth this way as the passage does give us an active part for Lydia. Vs. 14 she "heeded" the things spoken by Paul. That is in the active voice. She is doing this thing. I'm not saying there are not things we do as acts of worship, I am saying that it is tremendous insight here that this description is the Lord opening a heart and the *person being in a state of worship out of that activity of God.* Lydia's response to God resulted in a few women gathering, to a church in Philippi. I want my life like that. I want worship to be my state of existence out of what He has done or is doing to me, not just an act of worship.

The Damsel Restored: Now let's look at the damsel again. Vs. 16 says "possessed" with a spirit of divination. In the original language there is indication that she participated in this thing in an active way. That is not entirely clear but it regardless is not in the passive voice. She is not just being acted upon. The flavor of Scripture indicates that this was viewed as a gift by the society. This is why it brought financial gain to her masters. She has this ability to fortune tell and is subject to masters with the wrong motives. The ability of the damsel is clearly owning her, and she is not in control of her life. She needs to be restored to health. This is indicated by Paul's command to come out of her. The word for "come out" means not only depart, but also indicates a reversal of condition. There is another fascinating concept here when we compare with Lydia. With Lydia, the Greek word for Lord, in "The Lord opened" is the exact same word, **kurios**, as the word for the masters (kurios) of the damsel. **Kurios** means Supreme Authority. Men are the supreme authority in the life of the damsel, the Lord is the Supreme Authority in Lydia. It really does go back to not what the pastor is preaching, however correct in content,

it goes back to what is sourcing the pastor, the Sunday School teacher, the usher, the nursery worker, the singer, the greeter etc. In vs. 16, Paul through prayer is introduced to this damsel. Paul sees her state, and commands, which means “to declare or announce to,” “**come out**” of her. The Word says “and he came out.” Even the word out is totally different in the same sentence. “And he came “out” is literally an “issue”, like a decree. Paul spoke and a decree went forth that restored that damsel to her original state. Paul’s response to his discernment resulted in the restoration of a young lady. *She has been intimate with a “familiar spirit,” now she can be intimate with Christ.*

The Jailor Redeemed: This is rather different than the previous two people. Here is a man just doing his job. He’s not worshipping, he’s not possessed with an evil spirit. He’s just your average man with some authority. Paul and Silas land in his life due to an activity of God. *Doesn’t look like it.* There might have even been a lot of prayer to release them, but they are smack dab in the middle of God’s plan for another individual. They have been brought to Lydia, and through prayer, have been brought to the damsel, and now through the activity of God in the damsel’s life, they have been brought to the jailor. *Do you see the flow of this thing?* Paul and Silas do. That is why they are able to sing, after having been dragged, had their clothes torn off, been severely beaten, and thrown into the inner prison with their feet in shackles. Amazing, they are singing. That’s because their lives are not about their circumstance. They are wrapped up in the Lord’s purpose. God keeps involving Himself in their lives, and they keep responding to Him. I love this story. God performs a miracle that *could set them free, but that isn’t the purpose of the miracle*, in fact Paul refuses to leave the area when they beg him to. This miracle is to bring redemption, freedom to the jailor. Here it is midnight, and Paul and Silas decide to have a concert..for the other prisoners. Forget that Paul and Silas were prisoners because they don’t necessarily see it that way. They are ministers, not prisoners now. It was an earth shaking concert, and everyone’s chains fell off. What a visual. ALL their chains fell off, and that includes the other prisoners. *Wouldn’t it be something if my relationship with God resulted in God moving in my life to bring a response that would affect others like that?* Paul is redemptive with his life. The jailor is going to kill himself because he has failed, and Paul says: “don’t hurt yourself man, we are all in this with you.” Paul wasn’t going to run in the time of need and the working of God in this man’s life. How can I redeem you? How can my life change yours? Even if I can get away from you, will I stay in there with you? Paul isn’t processing the best thing for himself here. It is an immediate response. He lives in the place of sensing God’s heart, God’s purpose for others. *Intimacy; a constant response in my life to the relationship with and revelation of God.* This brings about a response from the jailor: vs. 30, “Sirs, what must I do to be saved?” Funny kind of. They should be saving their own skins, *but intimacy results in being more concerned with saving the jailor.* Sounds like someone else I know. Matthew 26:39 “Lord, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me, nevertheless, not my will but thy will be done.”

Application: Three lives are brought into closeness with the Father, through the revelation of Christ, and the responses to that revelation. A woman desiring God is lifted to a new level of understanding, a damsel is set free from slavery, and a man is prevented from suicide. In intimacy with the Father, the work of the Lord, results in a response in my life. My life has the possibility of being the heart, mind, hands and feet of Jesus in my world. Can we live like this?

How can my relationship with Jesus be displayed this week?

1. With my family?
2. On my job?
3. In my school?
4. With my friends?