

## 7-25-21 The Enemies Tactics

### **Acts 16:16-24.**

Last week we looked at Paul, Silas, and Timothy's 380-450-mile trek through modern day Turkey. Everywhere they tried to preach the gospel, the Spirit of God said no. What I failed to mention is that God did permit the gospel into the area's that Paul attempted to go into. Paul visited many of these places during his third missionary trip, and other areas were visited by other apostles and disciples.

Peter mentions some of these places when writing to Christ following Jews.

**1 Peter 1:1-2, Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, To the pilgrims of the Dispersion in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, 2 elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, in sanctification of the Spirit, for obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ:**

In today's message I want us to notice just as God has a plan and agenda, so does Satan. Where God is all knowing, all powerful, Satan isn't and is limited.

Satan is a liar and murder according to God's Word. He is guilty of capping. His agenda is to distract, distort, discredit, deflect, and he is the author of confusion. If there are any facts, truth in him, it is only to be used to give credibility to his lies and agenda. He wants to destroy believers and unbelievers alike.

**Read verse 16.** First thing I want us to notice Paul, Silas, Timothy, and Dr. Luke were heading to a prayer meeting. Satan aims to distract, hinder, and will do anything to divert Christ followers from their purpose.

In the city of Philippi, the residents were polytheists, people who believed that there were many gods. They were also henotheist, they would worship one particular God, could be based on family, or tribe heritage, but they also accepted the existence of other gods.

Notice what the spirit of python agenda was. Satan tactics haven't changed. We can still his tactics being used today.

#### **I. Wording that appears welcoming.**

- **Read verse 17.**
- Public statements of many in the political arena.
- Satan played on words with Eve in the garden and attempted to do it with Jesus in the wilderness.
- Her words were spot on facts about God. Where her words appeared welcoming, she was attempting to lump Paul and Silas' God in with the rest of the gods.
- Also, Satan was using her to steal any honor from God. If Paul or Silas did any miracles, she was part of it.

#### **II. Garner approval.**

- If she was right about Paul, Silas, and Timothy, it would give more validity to her. (It would authenticate her and make her masters more money.)

- Satan uses some truth to make lies more palatable. It has gotten the best results.

### III. **Makes sure they are seen and heard.**

- **Read verse 18a.**
- She didn't just say it one time. She followed them around for days. She "cried out" she wasn't just telling people within ear shot. She was shouting.
- When something becomes trending, it is all we hear about.
- How many are over the news? Discussion about Politics, and all things Covid-19.
- I heard multiple teens say that it wasn't so bad not having their cell phones. They enjoyed not hearing all the doom and gloom in the world. It was nice to relax, have fun and hear about the hope found in Jesus.

### IV. **Driven to be important to gain control.**

- **Read verses 18 & 19.**
- Once the masters of this poor slave girl witnessed her set free, they rejoiced???
- Not hardly, they were angry! How dare Paul and his companions take their cash cow?!
- The human traffickers drag Paul, and Silas to the center of the city and to the authorities.

As believers we must be careful:

That our (Christian's) words are welcoming, loving, and always truthful. We should not be known to use words of flattery to advance an agenda, in the church or in the world. Our words must speak of the love, grace, truth, and righteousness of Jesus. We must speak the truth about sin, but in our lives first.

We shouldn't garner approval by watering down God's truths. Where we might not be out protesting certain sinful behaviors, because we are to be against ALL sinful behaviors. We must be steadfast in standing on God's truths.

If we are to be seen and heard, may we get seen doing something that brings God glory. If we are heard, may we be heard giving hope, encouragement, sharing about God's love for mankind. May we be seen and heard praying with others and correcting erring brethren in love.

Let none of us seek to be important or controlling. We have an important message and a God that has everything under control. He doesn't need us to take the controls.

The charges against Paul and Silas.

### **Read verses 20-21.**

#### **1. "These men, being Jews..."**

- They are not like us! They are not one of us.
- The people could worship any god they wanted, even if beliefs conflicted, and everyone got along, but advocate Jesus instead of these gods, and things get disrupted.

- It often seems like other beliefs and religions are not challenged, unless it is about Jesus...

## 2. “...exceedingly trouble our city...”

- Challenging our social norms. They are causing us problems.
- When Paul spoke out in the name of Jesus, he was claiming and demonstrating that there is one God. By doing this and demonstrating it through casting the demon out, it proved the local gods are false. The people love these gods!
- That certainly is not living in coexistence. That certainly is not celebrating diversity. Paul was guilty of not being tolerant.

## 3. “...they teach customs which are not lawful for us, being Romans, to receive or observe.”

- They are pushing an intolerant, incompatible lifestyle on us.
- By Paul casting out the spirit, he as a practical matter, is saying that the spirit in the girl was not a good thing. If it was a good thing, why would Paul cast the spirit out of the girl.
- Paul has done a bad thing, an offensive thing and so the crowd goes nuts too.
- How ironic that every god was welcomed and celebrated, but the ONE TRUE God. Sound any different today?

What happened next?

### **Read verses 22-24.**

Paul and Silas were dragged before the chief magistrates, the rulers of the area, they were stripped of their clothing and beaten.

The lictors got to work. Paul and Silas were thoroughly thrashed, beaten until their backs were a mass of cuts, welts, and bruises.

Paul and Silas were guilty of casting out a demon from a slave girl and causing her traffickers to lose money. They did this miracle by the power of the name of Jesus Christ. There has never been or never will a name more despised by Satan, than Jesus.

Only twice in the book of Acts are Gentiles seen spearheading an attack upon the church. Both times (at Philippi and Ephesus) money was involved. The gospel militated against profits made from trading on people’s weaknesses and sins. No wonder the Bible says, **“the love of money is the root of all evil” (1 Tim. 6:10) John Phillips**

Paul and Silas, no doubt, could hardly move from the injuries they received, still they are locked up by the jailer in the innermost cell and chained.

There Paul and Silas sit, beaten down and trapped in a corner with no way out - The local population says that they are part of the problem, not part of the solution. The local population says that they will just cause division with their ideas. Get rid of them. Quiet them.

From the garden Satan has been trying to hurt God where he thinks it hurts the most, mankind. Satan knows that God created us to worship, honor and bring glory to God. With Paul and Silas beaten and bloodied in prison, Satan thinks he won. If you have read your bible, you already know that God won.

## **Conclusion**

Are you on the winning side? One of God's followers? Not a fan, but a born-again follower.

If you are a born-again believer, are you living like you are on the winning side?

How about this week lets tell someone of God' winning record? How about this week you read the rest of chapter 16 and see how it ends?