**Before we begin our study of Paul’s letter to the church at Philippi, it would be helpful to review the establishment of the Philippian church. It’s recorded in the book of Acts, chapter 16. Paul’s visit to Philippi came on his second missionary journey, which got off to a rocky start when he and Barnabas fell out over whether John Mark would accompany them. Paul decided to take Silas with him, while Mark accompanied Barnabas to Cyprus (Acts 15:36-40). It was during this mission that Paul met Timothy and decided to bring him along (Acts 16:1-5). In a vision, the Lord sent Paul and his company (which now included Luke as well as Silas and Timothy) into Macedonia (part of modern Greece) for the first time. The first place that they stopped to preach was the city of Philippi, which was the major city of Macedonia, and a Roman colony. The narrative begins at Acts 16:12 and continues to the end of the chapter.**

1. **Read Acts 16 verses 12-15. On what day did Paul and his group go to the river side, and why? Answer: It was on the and this was the place where people (mostly women) went to .**
2. **One of the women who listened to Paul was named ; she was a businesswoman from the city of . (v.14; see Revelation 2:18)**
3. **After her baptism, what did this woman offer to do? (v. 15)**
4. **Read verses 16-18. Who did Paul and the disciples meet when they were on their way to pray? (v. 16) Answer: a (young woman) who was possessed by a spirit of (soothsaying or fortune-telling).**
5. **What did she say about them? Was it true? (v. 17)**
6. **What was Paul’s reaction to the young woman’s actions? (v.18) Answer: Paul turned and said to the , “I command you in the name of Jesus Christ to of her.”**
7. **Read verses 19-24. What happened to Paul and Silas as an immediate consequence of Paul’s action?**
8. **Read verses 25-28. What did Paul and Silas do “at midnight”? (v. 25) Answer: Paul and Silas , and to . (See also James 5:10-11, 13; I Peter 3:14-16; 4:12-14) Who was listening to them? Who ELSE was listening?**
9. **How did the Lord answer their prayers? (v. 26)**
10. **When the jailor saw what had happened, what was he going to do, and why? (v. 27) (See Acts 27:42-44)**
11. **Who stopped him and what did He tell him? (v. 28)**
12. **Read verses 29-34. How did the jailor respond to the miracle? What did he ask Paul and Silas? (v. 29-30)**
13. **What was Paul and Silas’ response? (v.31-32)**
14. **What did the jailor do after hearing “the word of the Lord”? (v. 33-34)**
15. **Read verses 35-40. Who came to the jailor’s house the next morning? What did they tell the jailor to say to Paul and Silas? (v. 35-36)**
16. **What did Paul say to THEM? Why were they afraid? (v. 37-38)**
17. **When Paul and Silas were released from prison, where did they go?**
18. **After comforting the believers, what did Paul and Silas do?**

**The Churches of Philippi and Corinth: a Study in Contrasts**

**As we have seen in our study of I Corinthians, the church that Paul founded there faced many challenges, due mainly to its environment. Corinth was one of the largest and wealthiest cities of the first century, due mainly to its location along the major routes of sea trade. Corinth had a significant Jewish population, as well as other nationalities from throughout the Roman Empire. It was an intellectual, religious and cultural center as well.**

**In contrast, Philippi was smaller and less diverse. It was a Roman colony; many of its residents were veterans of the Roman army and other colonists. It was governed by military officers who were appointed by the Roman government. There were very few Jews in Philippi when Paul got there, as evidenced by the place that they met for prayer – by the side of a river. There was probably no synagogue in Philippi at that time.**

**These differences may account for the observation that Corinth was a disorderly and divided church, despite its material wealth and abundance of powerful spiritual gifts (I Corinthians 1:4-9) – much of Paul’s first letter to them addressed these serious problems. Their greatest need was for a “more excellent way” (I Corinthians 12:31), which was to grow in Christian love (called charity in the King James Bible).**

**On the other hand, the church in Philippi, as we will see, excelled in love – for the Lord, for Paul, and for each other. It was by no means a perfect church; Paul’s letter makes that clear. Even so, it was a church that is worth imitating, and we shall see why in our study.**