

be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.

Paul and Silas released from Prison

Next in ACTS 16:35 we read: *And when it was day, the magistrates sent the serjeants, saying, Let those men go.*

I am always amazed at how much information is packaged in small portions of scripture, if we only will let the Holy Ghost reveal this to our open hearts of faith. While meditating upon these last few verses in ACTS 16, I realized that there is a significant amount of change that is recorded here from one day to the next. PROVERBS 27:1 even tells us: *Boast not thyself of to morrow; for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth.* So we know that none of us know what a day will bring forth. A lot of things changed in Philippi from one day unto the next here in scripture in the life of the Apostle Paul. Let's examine these changes a little closer.

Here in ACTS 16:35 we read first come upon the phrase "when it was day." The phrase "when it was day" is found five times in scripture, and by now we should all know that five is the number of GRACE. There isn't a day that goes by that we are not shown the GRACE of God, nor is there a day that goes by that we don't need the GRACE of God. There is another five letter word that defines GRACE, and the GRACE of God to us, and that five letter word is JESUS. (Of course we all know that JESUS is far more than a five letter word, and no disrespect toward JESUS is intended here, as will become evident as you read on.) GRACE then should point us to Jesus, and we can not, and should not think of GRACE without thinking of Jesus. The Apostle John couldn't tell us who Jesus was without using the word GRACE either. The Apostle John wrote in JOHN 1 the following words about Jesus being the epitome of GRACE. In JOHN 1:14 we read: *And the Word (JESUS) was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.* Never before, and never since has anyone come into this world "full of GRACE and truth." Yet we can all accept Jesus as our own personal Saviour, and have Him "full of GRACE and truth" dwelling with in us. JOHN 1:17 further tells us this about Jesus: *For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ.* The point I am trying to emphasize here is that GRACE and Jesus are words that depend upon each other. GRACE can not exist without Jesus, and Jesus is GRACE, full of GRACE and truth. No wonder the Apostle Paul expressed his thankfulness for Jesus, and the GRACE of Jesus like this in 2 CORINTHIANS 9:15 *Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift.* Note also in the following verses penned by Paul that we see GRACE and Jesus inseparable. ROMANS 3:24 *Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus:...* . EPHESIANS 2:8 *For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God:...* . These are just a couple of many such scriptures. The Apostle Paul too couldn't tell us who Jesus was without using the word GRACE either. On you own take the time to research the following: the Apostle Paul started his introductions, and ended all of his epistles conclusions with the mention of Jesus, and with the mention of GRACE, again showing that these two five letter words go hand in hand. (The first mention of the name of Jesus in HEBREWS is in HEBREWS 2:9, where we also find the word GRACE mentioned in HEBREWS for the first time; HEBREWS 2:9 *But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man.*)

The phrase "when it was day" (ACTS 16:35) should also trigger another five letter word to come to mind: LIGHT. Here again we can not think of LIGHT without also thinking of Jesus. JOHN 8:12 and 9:5 both tell us that Jesus is the LIGHT of the world. We first read of LIGHT in GENESIS 1. In GENESIS 1 we read: *3 And God said, Let there be light: and there was light. 4 And God saw the light, that it was good: and God divided the light from the darkness. 5 And God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night.* Sister Bodie notes here that LIGHT was not created that day, but rather was manifest upon the earth on that first day, and that darkness had to flee from the LIGHT. She goes on to note here in verse 4 that God divides LIGHT from darkness. We all also know that the rising of the sun separates light from darkness, night from day. There is a Greek

word which means the direction of the sun's rising (number 395 in the Strong's Greek Concordance), and this word is translated "dayspring" in LUKE 1:78. In LUKE 1:68-79 we find Zacharias, the father of John the Baptist, under the power of the Holy Ghost giving a prophecy mainly concerning Jesus. And in LUKE 1:78 & 79 we read these words spoke of Jesus by Zacharias: *78 Through the tender mercy of our God; whereby the dayspring from on high hath visited us, 79 To give light to them that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace.* Note here that the dayspring (Jesus) was sent to give LIGHT to them that sit in darkness, and in the shadow of death. In other words Jesus is the Son rise. Here in LUKE 1 we see that God sent Jesus to divided the LIGHT from the darkness of this old world. The Apostle John expressed these same thoughts this way: In JOHN 1:4 the Apostle John tells us that In Jesus was life; and the life was the LIGHT of men. In JOHN 1:5 we find: *And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not...* indicating to us how dark a world we live in. Then in JOHN 1:9 John writes that Jesus *...was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world.*

Now put all of these thoughts together with what we have been reading and studying here in ACTS 16. We have found Paul and Silas during the darkest hour of the night, midnight, praying and singing praises unto God even though their circumstances didn't warrant this kind of behaviour, and the other prisoners heard them rejoicing, and wondered what was going on, and God heard Paul and Silas, and set them free with the power of an earthquake. This very same earthquake awoke Philippi, and got everyone's attention. The jailor fearing that all of the prisoners had escaped nearly killed himself, but was stopped by the loud voice of Paul. The Philippian jailor then called for a light, (see verse 29), and Paul and Silas led him to the true LIGHT, Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour. Truly the dayspring from on high gave LIGHT that midnight to the Philippian Jailor, and his house, who were before this time living in darkness. To him and his house that night, old things passed away, and all things became new. {Study 2 CORINTHIANS 5:17}. And "when it was day" the perspective of the rulers at Philippi had changed also. Thus we next read: ACTS 16:35 *And when it was day, the magistrates sent the serjeants, saying, Let those men go.*

This 35th verse raises some questions that can not really be answered in this verse. Why did the magistrates, who the day before had rushed to beat Paul and Silas, all of a sudden decide to let Paul and Silas go? Did the earthquake alarm the superstitious magistrates into thinking that the gods were upset with them? Was their conscience then convicted of the wrongful treatment that they had ordered upon Paul and Silas? Did someone convince the magistrates that they were wrong? None of these questions are answered specifically for us here in scripture. However we do know that a mighty movement of the power of the Holy Ghost took place at Philippi in the preceding night hours before it was day. Souls that were lost, were now saved. True LIGHT had come to many that night at Philippi, specifically to those of the Philippian jailors household. And now we find that for reasons unknown, the magistrates had a change of heart concerning Paul and Silas. Truly the Lord has His way.

The following scriptures shed some more LIGHT, and may help us better answer why God does things the way He does.

In ISAIAH 46:9 & 10 we read: *Remember the former things of old: for I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like me, 10 Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure:...* Applying this statement to Paul and Silas' situation, we can clearly see that God can, at anytime, by any means, declare the end of their imprisonment, for He knows the end from the beginning. God can harden the heart of Pharaoh so he would not let the children of Israel go, as noted in EXODUS 9:12; 10:20; 10:27; 11:10 and 14:8. Or God can soften the heart of the Philippian magistrates to let Paul and Silas go free.

Being children of God, Paul and Silas knew that they were as the apple of His eye, which David recorded in PSALMS 17. PSALMS 17 is a prayer of David, and reads: *Hear the right, O LORD, attend unto my cry, give ear unto my prayer, that goeth not out of feigned lips. 2 Let my sentence come forth from thy presence; let thine eyes behold the things that are equal. 3 Thou hast proved mine heart; thou hast visited me in the night; thou*

hast tried me, and shalt find nothing: I am purposed that my mouth shall not transgress. 4 Concerning the works of men, by the word of thy lips I have kept me from the paths of the destroyer. 5 Hold up my goings in thy paths, that my footsteps slip not. 6 I have called upon thee, for thou wilt hear me, O God: incline thine ear unto me, and hear my speech. 7 Shew thy marvellous lovingkindness, O thou that savest by thy right hand them which put their trust in thee from those that rise up against them. 8 Keep me as the apple of the eye, hide me under the shadow of thy wings. 9 From the wicked that oppress me, from my deadly enemies, who compass me about. 10 They are inclosed in their own fat: with their mouth they speak proudly. 11 They have now compassed us in our steps: they have set their eyes bowing down to the earth; 12 Like as a lion that is greedy of his prey, and as it were a young lion lurking in secret places. 13 Arise, O LORD, disappoint him, cast him down: deliver my soul from the wicked, which is thy sword: 14 From men which are thy hand, O LORD, from men of the world, which have their portion in this life, and whose belly thou fillest with thy hid treasure: they are full of children, and leave the rest of their substance to their babes. 15 As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness: I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness.

Perhaps Paul and Silas had recited this very PSALM during their dark midnight hour, for again ACTS 16:25 tells us: And at midnight Paul and Silas prayed, and sang praises unto God:... The book of PSALMS was Israel's song book, and Paul and Silas knew these Psalms well. Perhaps Paul and Silas even continued into PSALMS 18, which gives further evidence on whom their deliverer was.

PSALMS 18:1 I will love thee, O LORD, my strength. 2 The LORD is my rock, and my fortress, and my deliverer; my God, my strength, in whom I will trust; my buckler, and the horn of my salvation, and my high tower. 3 I will call upon the LORD, who is worthy to be praised: so shall I be saved from mine enemies. 4 The sorrows of death compassed me, and the floods of ungodly men made me afraid. 5 The sorrows of hell compassed me about: the snares of death prevented me. 6 In my distress I called upon the LORD, and cried unto my God: he heard my voice out of his temple, and my cry came before him, even into his ears. 7 Then the earth shook and trembled; the foundations also of the hills moved and were shaken, because he was wroth. 8 There went up a smoke out of his nostrils, and fire out of his mouth devoured: coals were kindled by it. 9 He bowed the heavens also, and came down: and darkness was under his feet. 10 And he rode upon a cherub, and did fly: yea, he did fly upon the wings of the wind. 11 He made darkness his secret place; his pavilion round about him were dark waters and thick clouds of the skies. 12 At the brightness that was before him his thick clouds passed, hail stones and coals of fire. 13 The LORD also thundered in the heavens, and the Highest gave his voice; hail stones and coals of fire. 14 Yea, he sent out his arrows, and scattered them; and he shot out lightnings, and discomfited them. 15 Then the channels of waters were seen, and the foundations of the world were discovered at thy rebuke, O LORD, at the blast of the breath of thy nostrils. 16 He sent from above, he took me, he drew me out of many waters. 17 He delivered me from my strong enemy, and from them which hated me: for they were too strong for me. 18 They prevented me in the day of my calamity: but the LORD was my stay. 19 He brought me forth also into a large place; he delivered me, because he delighted in me. 20 The LORD rewarded me according to my righteousness; according to the cleanness of my hands hath he recompensed me. 21 For I have kept the ways of the LORD, and have not wickedly departed from my God. 22 For all his judgments were before me, and I did not put away his statutes from me. 23 I was also upright before him, and I kept myself from mine iniquity. 24 Therefore hath the LORD recompensed me according to my righteousness, according to the cleanness of my hands in his eyesight. 25 With the merciful thou wilt shew thyself merciful; with an upright man thou wilt shew thyself upright; 26 With the pure thou wilt shew thyself pure; and with the froward thou wilt shew thyself froward. 27 For thou wilt save the afflicted people; but wilt bring down high looks. 28 For thou wilt light my candle: the LORD my God will enlighten my darkness. 29 For by thee I have run through a troop; and by my God have I leaped over a wall. 30 As for God, his way is perfect: the word of the LORD is tried: he is a buckler to all those that trust in him. 31 For who is God save the LORD? or who is a rock save our God? 32 It is God that girdeth me with strength, and maketh my way perfect. 33

He maketh my feet like hinds' feet, and setteth me upon my high places. 34 He teacheth my hands to war, so that a bow of steel is broken by mine arms. 35 Thou hast also given me the shield of thy salvation: and thy right hand hath holden me up, and thy gentleness hath made me great. 36 Thou hast enlarged my steps under me, that my feet did not slip. 37 I have pursued mine enemies, and overtaken them: neither did I turn again till they were consumed. 38 I have wounded them that they were not able to rise: they are fallen under my feet. 39 For thou hast girded me with strength unto the battle: thou hast subdued under me those that rose up against me. 40 Thou hast also given me the necks of mine enemies; that I might destroy them that hate me. 41 They cried, but there was none to save them: even unto the LORD, but he answered them not. 42 Then did I beat them small as the dust before the wind: I did cast them out as the dirt in the streets. 43 Thou hast delivered me from the strivings of the people; and thou hast made me the head of the heathen: a people whom I have not known shall serve me. 44 As soon as they hear of me, they shall obey me: the strangers shall submit themselves unto me. 45 The strangers shall fade away, and be afraid out of their close places. 46 The LORD liveth; and blessed be my rock; and let the God of my salvation be exalted. 47 It is God that avengeth me, and subdueth the people under me. 48 He delivereth me from mine enemies: yea, thou liftest me up above those that rise up against me: thou hast delivered me from the violent man. 49 Therefore will I give thanks unto thee, O LORD, among the heathen, and sing praises unto thy name. 50 Great deliverance giveth he to his king; and sheweth mercy to his anointed, to David, and to his seed for evermore.

Experiences like this Philippian jail experience enabled the Apostle Paul to later write with confidence statements like this on found in HEBREWS 13:5 & 6: Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee. 6 So that we may boldly say, The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me.

So for reasons only known to God, and having completed the work at the prison in Philippi, we find in ACTS 16:35 that ...when it was day, the magistrates sent the serjeants, saying, Let those men go.

We next read in ACTS 16:36 And the keeper of the prison told this saying to Paul, The magistrates have sent to let you go: now therefore depart, and go in peace. Note who it was that said "go in peace." It was not the magistrates, but rather the Philippian jailor. The Philippian jailor was a brand new born again Christian here, and had just himself experienced the peace of God that can only be found in a believer. Jesus told His disciples in JOHN 14:27 Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid. At the midnight hour this very same Philippian jailor had found this peace that only Jesus can give. We all know by now that before being saved this very same Philippian jailor had no peace in his heart, and was about to kill himself when he heard the urgent cry of the Apostle Paul to "Do thyself no harm." {ACTS 16:28}. However now, as a born again believer, the Philippian jailor can with all confidence in Christ Jesus say to Paul and Silas, "go in peace," meaning: "go in the peace of our mutual friend, and Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, who has not only set me free, but has set you free too." And I am sure he was glad to utter these words to his new found friends. The Philippian jailor was expressing the same new found freedom he had in Christ Jesus, to Paul and Silas whom he too was glad to set free from prison. Years later the Apostle Paul would from another prison address this very same Philippian jailor, and those saints of Philippi, and write the following words, which would have deep meaning especially for this Philippian jailor: PHILIPPIANS 4:6 Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. 7 And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.

We have thus far focused on the heart attitudes here of Paul and Silas, and the Philippian jailor, and the good work of the Lord that was accomplished here at Philippi because of this imprisonment. Our focus will now change to a farther reaching perspective, that being the perception of the sinful world we live in. When we get through looking at this next portion of scripture in greater detail, we will find that as Christian we have certain God given rights that are not to be randomly violated by the

rulers of this dark old world that we live in. One of these rights is again found in JOHN 8:36, which we have emphasized in this portion of our study, and again reads: *If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed.* Some more principles of Christian freedom are expressed in the following portion of scripture found in ROMANS 8. ROMANS 8:28 *And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.* 29 *For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren.* 30 *Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified.* 31 *What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us?* 32 *He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?* 33 *Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth.* 34 *Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us.* 35 *Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?* 36 *As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter.* 37 *Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us.* 38 *For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, 39 Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

Let's now examine the following verses from ACTS 16, especially 37-40, a little closer. ACTS 16:35 *And when it was day, the magistrates sent the serjeants, saying, Let those men go.* 36 *And the keeper of the prison told this saying to Paul, The magistrates have sent to let you go: now therefore depart, and go in peace.* 37 *But Paul said unto them, They have beaten us openly uncondemned, being Romans, and have cast us into prison; and now do they thrust us out privily? nay verily; but let them come themselves and fetch us out.* 38 *And the serjeants told these words unto the magistrates: and they feared, when they heard that they were Romans.* 39 *And they came and besought them, and brought them out, and desired them to depart out of the city.* 40 *And they went out of the prison, and entered into the house of Lydia: and when they had seen the brethren, they comforted them, and departed.*

In verse 37 Paul no longer addresses the Philippian jailor, who he has been a testimony to since midnight, but rather Paul is addressing the serjeants that were sent by the magistrates. Paul, of all people, knows the difference between law and grace, and the freedom that we have in Christ Jesus. Paul wrote in GALATIANS 5:1 *Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage.* Paul wrote this verse to the Galatian Saints that were entangling themselves with the law of Moses, though as Christians they were free from the law of Moses. Here in ACTS 16 at Philippi we find the Roman rulers who were familiar with the law of the land, Roman law in other words, not following Roman law. Paul and Silas were Roman citizens. As Roman citizens they had certain legal rights which had not been followed by the magistrates. As a Roman citizen, and as a citizen of heaven, Paul knew that he had every right to "stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of Roman bondage," paraphrasing from GALATIANS 5:1. As a Christian, and as an Ambassador for Christ, and as an Apostle of Jesus Christ, the Apostle Paul used his God given authority here to establish a precedent to the rulers of this world as to how a Christian should, and must be treated. He did this for the sake of all believers, and he did this as a testimony to all unbelievers! Let me try to explain this further.

There is a Greek word found 47 times in New Testament scripture that comes from a Greek military term meaning "to arrange [troop divisions] in a military fashion under the command of a leader." In non-military use, it was "a voluntary attitude of giving in, cooperating, assuming responsibility, and carrying a burden." This Greek word is *hupotasso* {hoop-ot-as'-so}, (number 5293 in the Strong's Greek Concordance), and translates into English as: "be subject to, put under, be subject unto, submit (one's) self unto, submit (one's) self to, be in subjection unto, put in subjection under, and subdue." This word *hupotasso* means: (1) to arrange under, to subordinate; (2) to subject, put in

subjection; (3) to subject one's self, obey; (4) to submit to one's control; (5) to yield to one's admonition or advice; and (6) to obey, be subject. Paul himself uses this word 37 times in his writings, 37 being the number that has to do with THE WORD OF GOD. Here is some of the ways Paul uses this word: ROMANS 13:1 *Let every soul be subject <5293> unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God.* Applying this to the Greek military term we just learned, we find that the Apostle Paul here is admonishing the reader to understand that we all are to be under the command of a leader, and our leader is God, who has ordained the powers that we are to be in subjection to. The same thought applies to this next verse: TITUS 3:1 *Put them in mind to be subject <5293> to principalities and powers, to obey magistrates, to be ready to every good work.* In the following verses we see that we are really to be in subjection to God. PHILIPPIANS 3:21 *Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue <5293> all things unto himself.* 1 CORINTHIANS 15:27 *For he hath put <5293> all things under his feet. But when he saith all things are put under <5293> him, it is manifest that he is excepted, which did put <5293> all things under <5293> him.* 28 *And when all things shall be subdued <5293> unto him, then shall <5293> the Son also himself be subject <5293> unto him that put <5293> all things under <5293> him, that God may be all in all.* HEBREWS 2:8 *Thou hast put <5293> all things in subjection <5293> under his feet. For in that he put <5293> all in subjection under <5293> him, he left nothing that is not put under him. But now we see not yet all things put under <5293> him.*

In the above illustration we see that the leader we are to be in subjection to is Jesus Christ, as He is in agreement with God the Father. When Paul writes in ROMANS 13:1 *Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God....*, we see that the ultimate authority that we are in subjection to is God. When Paul writes, as he does in TITUS 3:1 *Put them in mind to be subject to principalities and powers, to obey magistrates, to be ready to every good work....*, the assumption here is that the reader knows that these lesser authorities are also in subjection to the ultimate authority of God Himself. However, as the case is here in ACTS 16, if the magistrates are wrong, for whatever reason, the Christian is still to be under the subjection of the Lord. And the magistrates in ACTS 16 are still obligated to follow the Roman law themselves. So Paul states in ACTS 16:37 *...They have beaten us openly uncondemned, being Romans, and have cast us into prison; and now do they thrust us out privily? nay verily; but let them come themselves and fetch us out.*

There are several points the Apostle Paul was making known here. First of all he was a Christian, and he wasn't ashamed that this was his testimony. Secondly, he was a Roman citizen, and had been punished contrary to Roman law because he was a Christian. Thirdly, his and Silas' punishment had been administered before the multitude in Philippi, without a trial, also contrary to Roman law, thus their release should be made know unto the multitude, which would also show their unjust treatment, and announce their innocence publicly. Forth, this would also strengthen the new converts at Philippi, and show them that God was indeed in control of all situations, and that they shouldn't fear what man could do to them.

We then read in ACTS 16:38 & 39 -- *And the serjeants told these words unto the magistrates: and they feared, when they heard that they were Romans. 39 And they came and besought them, and brought them out, and desired them to depart out of the city.* Note that the magistrates now feared Paul and Silas, and came themselves as Paul had demanded to fetch Paul and Silas out of town. The fear of the magistrates was justified, for according to Roman law, the magistrates at Philippi who had administered this unjust treatment of Paul and Silas where now due the same treatment themselves. Actually Roman law stated that the punishment for those who transgressed the Roman law in such a manner was death, and the confiscation of his property. Additionally there was a potential loss of freedom for the families of these magistrates. No wonder then that these Philippian magistrates feared Paul and Silas when they heard they were Roman citizens. No wonder they were trying to keep Paul and Silas silent.

Note that verse 39 doesn't state that Paul and Silas made the magistrates apologize publicly. However the magistrates did bring Paul and Silas out of the prison themselves, and set them free in front of all who were there to witness this event. The Philippian jailor would be one such witness, and he now was a Christian witness. No doubt word got

around quickly about their release. And don't you know that Paul and Silas were also a testimony to these very same magistrates. In addition Paul and Silas were a testimony to all of Philippi. Still the request of the magistrates of Paul and Silas was for them *...to depart out of the city*. No doubt the main reason that the magistrates wanted Paul and Silas out of their city, was to save their own face, so to speak, both figuratively and literally. Don't you know that these magistrates were trying to protect their own lives, and save their own jobs? Paul and Silas were now seen by the magistrates as a threat unto them. So the magistrates begged Paul and Silas to leave Philippi. We find in verse 40 that Paul and Silas heeded this request after a fashion. In heeding this urgent request of the magistrates, Paul and Silas were themselves showing the heart attitude of full overcomers, much the same as Stephen had shown at his death when he cried out in ACTS 7:60 *...Lord, lay not this sin to their charge*. Such an overcoming attitude must have spoken volumes to the Saints at Philippi, and have even reached down to even the lowest of sinners, (figuratively speaking), which may have been the magistrates themselves.

Let's examine a little closer the heart attitude of the full overcomer displayed here by both Paul and Silas, but focus on especially our Apostle Paul. As we go through this consider that the events from ACTS 16:18 through ACTS 16:39 took place in less than a twenty-four hour time span! In other words we have been reading since verse 18 on one day in the life of the Apostle Paul. And what an eventful day it was. He has been falsely accused of a crime, beaten, violently thrust into the inner Philippian prison where he has been bound in the stocks, and has survived a dark cold pain filled night, experienced a violent earth quake, has been set free by the Lord, has led the Philippian jailor and his house to the Lord, has been set free from prison, and has been told to leave town! Again, all of this has happened in less than a twenty-four hour time period. Not once do we find the Apostle Paul complaining through all of this, but rather his focus has remained fixed on the goodness of the Lord. His worst day as a Christian has been far better than his best day as a sinner, for he has inner peace; the kind of peace which one can only obtain from the prince of Peace Himself, Jesus Christ. {Study ISAIAH 9:6}. Jesus made the following statements unto His disciples in JOHN 14:27 *Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid*. JOHN 16:33 *These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world*. The Apostle Paul was here at Philippi experiencing this kind of peace, and enjoying the overcoming victory that the peace of Jesus gives. The full overcomer finds the peace of Jesus in all things.

Consider the phrase "all things," and it's importance to the full overcomer. The phrase "all things" is found in over 200 scriptures, and the Apostle Paul uses this phrase "all things" in 80 scriptures that he wrote. The first time we read this phrase "all things" in the Apostle Paul's writings is in ROMANS 8:28, which again reads: *And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose*. In our study here of ACTS 16 we have seen in this twenty-four hour time period in the life of the Apostle Paul how that he was learning *...that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose*. All full overcomers learn and know this scripture to be a fact in their own life. Paul wrote in 1 CORINTHIANS 13:7 that love *...Beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things*. Certainly the Apostle Paul experienced this kind of the love of God in the twenty-four hour time period we are examining in ACTS 16:18-39. To these very same Philippians Paul would later write: PHILIPPIANS 4:13 *I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me*. Unto Timothy who was also apart of this missionary journey of Paul's would Paul later write in 2 TIMOTHY 2:10 *Therefore I endure all things for the elect's sakes, that they may also obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory*. 2 TIMOTHY 4:5 *But watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry*. Timothy had watched Paul be this kind of testimony unto those at Philippi. In REVELATION 4:11 we read this statement made by all the full overcomers: *Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created*. In this trial of the Apostle Paul that we have been studying about in ACTS 16 we find that he too has been crying out *...Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power:*

for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created. As potential full overcomers ourselves we need to also cry out ...Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created. We do this by first latching on to the truth of ROMANS 8:28 And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.

We are still not through examining the heart attitude of the full overcomer displayed here by the Apostle Paul. The magistrates who unjustly had Paul and Silas beaten some twenty-four hours before, have now requested that Paul and Silas depart out of the city of Philippi. {Study ACTS 16:36 & 39}. And we see in ACTS 16:40 that Paul and Silas heeded this request, though they didn't by law have too. However as an example to us of full overcomers, and what a full overcomer is to be, Paul and Silas heeded this request. Again we review a couple of scriptures that we just read earlier, (see again page 356 of these notes). ROMANS 13:1 *Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God.* TITUS 3:1 *Put them in mind to be subject to principalities and powers, to obey magistrates, to be ready to every good work.* Let's now read a portion from 1 CORINTHIANS 9 that helps better explain the heart attitude of a full overcomer, which Paul himself was displaying here at Philippi in ACTS 16. 1 CORINTHIANS 9:14 *Even so hath the Lord ordained that they which preach the gospel should live of the gospel.* 15 *But I have used none of these things: neither have I written these things, that it should be so done unto me: for it were better for me to die, than that any man should make my glorying void.* 16 *For though I preach the gospel, I have nothing to glory of: for necessity is laid upon me; yea, woe is unto me, if I preach not the gospel!* 17 *For if I do this thing willingly, I have a reward: but if against my will, a dispensation of the gospel is committed unto me.* 18 *What is my reward then? Verily that, when I preach the gospel, I may make the gospel of Christ without charge, that I abuse not my power in the gospel.* 19 *For though I be free from all men, yet have I made myself servant unto all, that I might gain the more.* 20 *And unto the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might gain the Jews; to them that are under the law, as under the law, that I might gain them that are under the law;* 21 *To them that are without law, as without law, (being not without law to God, but under the law to Christ,) that I might gain them that are without law.* 22 *To the weak became I as weak, that I might gain the weak: I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some.* Here apply verse 21 & 22 to the Philippian magistrates. Paul was trying to gain the Philippian magistrates for the kingdom of God. And even if they never accepted the things he preached for themselves, they were learning to respect those who believed the word of God for themselves. We don't ever read of there being any more persecution of the Saints there at Philippi. Obviously the Apostle Paul had gotten the magistrates attention by his words, and by his actions. As for the Apostle Paul he then goes on to write in 1 CORINTHIANS 9:23 *And this I do for the gospel's sake, that I might be partaker thereof with you.* 24 *Know ye not that they which run in a race run all, but one receiveth the prize? So run, that ye may obtain.* 25 *And every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown; but we an incorruptible.* This is then Paul's encouragement to all potential full overcomers: *So run, that ye may obtain.*

ACTS 16:40 *And they went out of the prison, and entered into the house of Lydia: and when they had seen the brethren, they comforted them, and departed.* With this verse we find the conclusion of the establishment of the church at Philippi! Two characters have emerged as being the main part of the church that Paul had now established at Philippi; Lydia, and the Philippian jailor. Two is the number of SUFFICIENT WITNESS, or SUFFICIENT TESTIMONY. But Lydia herself was more than just one woman named Lydia, who opened her heart to hear the things that we spoken of Paul. Lydia had a household, who also heard the things spoken of Paul. The Philippian jailor too had a household that received the gospel message of the Apostle Paul, so with Lydia and her household, and the Philippian jailor and his household was the church at Philippi established.

Note that Paul and Silas "comforted" the Philippian Saints in verse 40. This word "comforted" means: consolation, encouragement, exhortation, and entreaty. In other words Paul and Silas preached an encouraging sermon unto the believers there at

Philippi. Then after these words of encouragement, and satisfied that their work there was done, we find that Paul and Silas departed.

It doesn't seem quite right to us that at this point in time Paul and Silas departed Philippi. But Paul and Silas didn't leave the Saints at Philippi on their own. Recall that Paul and Silas had added unto themselves on this journey Timothy, and Luke. Timothy and Luke remained behind here at Philippi, without any fan fare, and without any mention per se in scripture as to their staying at Philippi! Luke will stay at Philippi until ACTS 20:4-6 time frame, and Timothy will rejoin Paul and Silas by ACTS 17:14. Both of these disciples of Paul can further help establish the church at Philippi, and teach these Philippian Saints the doctrines of Paul. With this kind of teaching, and with the help and power of the Holy Ghost was the church at Philippi really established. In your own life it wasn't the Apostle Paul himself who established you in the truth, but rather the Holy Ghost who used teachers of Paul's gospel, and by revelation showed you the truth of Paul's gospel, that you too were established in the truth of Paul's gospel, if in fact you are solid in Paul's teachings. It was the same way here at Philippi. Later in life to the church at Corinth the Apostle Paul would write a little about the establishment of a church, stating in 1 CORINTHIANS 3:5 *Who then is Paul, and who is Apollos, but ministers by whom ye believed, even as the Lord gave to every man? 6 I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase. 7 So then neither is he that planteth any thing, neither he that watereth; but God that giveth the increase. 8 Now he that planteth and he that watereth are one: and every man shall receive his own reward according to his own labour. 9 For we are labourers together with God: ye are God's husbandry, ye are God's building. 10 According to the grace of God which is given unto me, as a wise masterbuilder, I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon. But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon. 11 For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.* Thus we see once again the Apostle Paul commending Saints unto God, like he would later state in ACTS 20:32 *And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified.*

Before we leave these Saints at Philippi, and move on unto the 17th chapter of ACTS, let's read some of the things Paul would later write unto these very same Saints at Philippi some ten or so years later. As we read the following verses from PHILIPPIANS, keep in mind that the Apostle Paul paid one more visit to these very same saints of Philippi in the ACTS 20:6 time frame.

PHILIPPIANS 1:1 *Paul and Timotheus, the servants of Jesus Christ, to all the saints in Christ Jesus which are at Philippi, with the bishops and deacons: 2 Grace be unto you, and peace, from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ. 3 I thank my God upon every remembrance of you, 4 Always in every prayer of mine for you all making request with joy, 5 For your fellowship in the gospel from the first day until now; 6 Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ: 7 Even as it is meet for me to think this of you all, because I have you in my heart; inasmuch as both in my bonds, and in the defence and confirmation of the gospel, ye all are partakers of my grace. 8 For God is my record, how greatly I long after you all in the bowels of Jesus Christ. 9 And this I pray, that your love may abound yet more and more in knowledge and in all judgment; 10 That ye may approve things that are excellent; that ye may be sincere and without offence till the day of Christ; 11 Being filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ, unto the glory and praise of God. 12 But I would ye should understand, brethren, that the things which happened unto me have fallen out rather unto the furtherance of the gospel; 13 So that my bonds in Christ are manifest in all the palace, and in all other places; 14 And many of the brethren in the Lord, waxing confident by my bonds, are much more bold to speak the word without fear.27 Only let your conversation be as it becometh the gospel of Christ: that whether I come and see you, or else be absent, I may hear of your affairs, that ye stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel; 28 And in nothing terrified by your adversaries: which is to them an evident token of perdition, but to you of salvation, and that of God. 29 For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake; 30 Having the same conflict which ye saw in me, and now hear to be in me.*

....2:14 *Do all things without murmuring and disputings: 15 That ye may be*

blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world; 16 Holding forth the word of life; that I may rejoice in the day of Christ, that I have not run in vain, neither laboured in vain. 17 Yea, and if I be offered upon the sacrifice and service of your faith, I joy, and rejoice with you all. 18 For the same cause also do ye joy, and rejoice with me. 19 But I trust in the Lord Jesus to send Timotheus shortly unto you, that I also may be of good comfort, when I know your state. 20 For I have no man likeminded, who will naturally care for your state. 21 For all seek their own, not the things which are Jesus Christ's. 22 But ye know the proof of him, that, as a son with the father, he hath served with me in the gospel. 23 Him therefore I hope to send presently, so soon as I shall see how it will go with me. 24 But I trust in the Lord that I also myself shall come shortly. 25 Yet I supposed it necessary to send to you Epaphroditus, my brother, and companion in labour, and fellowsoldier, but your messenger, and he that ministered to my wants. 26 For he longed after you all, and was full of heaviness, because that ye had heard that he had been sick. 27 For indeed he was sick nigh unto death: but God had mercy on him; and not on him only, but on me also, lest I should have sorrow upon sorrow. 28 I sent him therefore the more carefully, that, when ye see him again, ye may rejoice, and that I may be the less sorrowful. 29 Receive him therefore in the Lord with all gladness; and hold such in reputation: 30 Because for the work of Christ he was nigh unto death, not regarding his life, to supply your lack of service toward me.

...3:1 Finally, my brethren, rejoice in the Lord. To write the same things to you, to me indeed is not grievous, but for you it is safe. 2 Beware of dogs, beware of evil workers, beware of the concision. 3 For we are the circumcision, which worship God in the spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh. ...8 Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ, 9 And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith: 10 That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death; 11 If by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead. 12 Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect: but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus. 13 Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, 14 I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. ...17 Brethren, be followers together of me, and mark them which walk so as ye have us for an ensample. 18 (For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ: 19 Whose end is destruction, whose God is their belly, and whose glory is in their shame, who mind earthly things.) 20 For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ: 21 Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself.

...4:1 Therefore, my brethren dearly beloved and longed for, my joy and crown, so stand fast in the Lord, my dearly beloved.4 Rejoice in the Lord alway: and again I say, Rejoice. 5 Let your moderation be known unto all men. The Lord is at hand. 6 Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. 7 And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. 8 Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things. 9 Those things, which ye have both learned, and received, and heard, and seen in me, do: and the God of peace shall be with you. ...15 Now ye Philippians know also, that in the beginning of the gospel, when I departed from Macedonia, no church communicated with me as concerning giving and receiving, but ye only. 16 For even in Thessalonica ye sent once and again unto my necessity. 17 Not because I desire a gift: but I desire fruit that may abound to your account. 18 But I have all, and abound: I am full, having received of Epaphroditus the things which were sent from you, an odour of

a sweet smell, a sacrifice acceptable, wellpleasing to God. 19 But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus. 20 Now unto God and our Father be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

The Establishment of the church at Thessalonica

ACTS 17:1 Now when they had passed through Amphipolis and Apollonia, they came to Thessalonica, where was a synagogue of the Jews: 2 And Paul, as his manner was, went in unto them, and three sabbath days reasoned with them out of the scriptures, 3 Opening and alleging, that Christ must needs have suffered, and risen again from the dead; and that this Jesus, whom I preach unto you, is Christ.

As we start the 17th chapter of ACTS we find the Apostle Paul again on the move in this his second missionary journey that was sponsored in part by the church at Antioch, Syria. Paul once again is traveling with Silas, having left Timothy and Luke behind at Philippi to continue the work he had begun there. In ACTS 17:1 we find mention of Amphipolis and Apollonia, which were probably overnight stops of Paul and Silas as they traveled west from Philippi toward Thessalonica. Both Amphipolis and Apollonia are ancient cities of Macedonia. Amphipolis means: "a city surrounded by the sea." Amphipolis was located on the east bank of the Strymon River, and was famous for commanding a bridge over the Strymon River, which connected northern Greece unto the sea, and became an important depot for the mining industry, as well as the timber industry that was closely connected with the shipbuilding trade. Apollonia, Macedonia was located about half way between Amphipolis and Thessalonica. Apollonia means: "utter destruction." According to the research of Conybeare and Howson the distance from Philippi to Amphipolis was 33 miles; Amphipolis to Apollonia was 30 miles, and the distance from Apollonia to Thessalonica was 37 miles. This means that the total distance from Philippi to Thessalonica was about a hundred miles by the route they took. If Paul and Silas traveled each of these distances in one day it would mean a couple of things. First that Paul and Silas were in good shape, and second, in order for them to be in such good shape the Lord would of had to come in for them and heal them from the severe beatings they had received at Philippi just days before.

So now in ACTS 17:1 we find Paul and Silas coming into Thessalonica. Thessalonica means: "victory over the tossing of law, or falsity." Any full overcomer must have this kind of victory. Brother Copley also notes that "such a victory is required to become an overcoming assembly as the Saints in Thessalonica grew to be." We find Thessalonica or the sister term Thessalonians in nine scriptures. Paul's first two epistles were written to the church of the Thessalonians, thus we get a little better idea of the kind of Saints that Paul established there, which was overcoming type Saints, who were instructed to look of the soon coming of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

Note in ACTS 17:1 mention is made as to there being a synagogue of the Jews at Thessalonica. This gives us a little better idea of the size, and make up of the city. We did not find a synagogue of the Jews in Philippi, for no doubt it was a much smaller town. Thessalonica was the largest city in Northern Macedonia, and is located on the Aegean Sea in the Gulf of Thermai. Thessalonica was on a northern trade route that went from Rome eastward. Conybeare and Howson further note that Thessalonica was the most populous town of Macedonia. It was large enough to have a synagogue of the Jews there, showing us further that Thessalonica had a substantial population of Jews in it.

Acts 17:2 note that Paul had a certain manner about him, a certain thing that he did in every city he came to. This certain thing Paul did in every city he came to was to find out if they had a synagogue, and if they did, he made sure he attended the sabbath day services at these synagogues. We have found this true in tracing his life up to now. Back in ACTS 9:20 after being saved we find Paul preaching for the first time at a synagogue in Damascus. ACTS 9:20 reads: *And straightway he preached Christ in the synagogues, that he is the Son of God.* This was always Paul's opening theme in every synagogue we find him preaching. In ACTS 13:5 when Paul and Barnabas started their missionary journey we find them arriving at the city of Salamis, and ACTS 13:5 reads: *And when they were at Salamis, they preached the word of God in the synagogues of the Jews:...* A few weeks later Paul and Barnabas ...came to Antioch in Pisidia, and went into