

Acts 095
Salvation Elements
Acts 16:11-15
February 18, 2026
Dr. Andy Woods

Let us open our Bibles this evening to Acts 16:11. We are continuing our verse-by-verse teaching through the Book of Acts. Jesus, in Acts 1:8, gave the outline of the book where He said to the disciples, "You will be My witnesses in Jerusalem (that is part one, Acts 1-7), Judea and Samaria (that is part two, Acts 8-12), then to the remote parts of the earth (that is Acts 13-28)." That is the section that we are in.

It started with Paul's first missionary journey (Acts 13-14), and then a big ruling from the Jerusalem Council (Acts 15) that we have studied. Then Acts 15:36-18:22 is the second missionary journey.

Structure (Acts 1:8)

- Jerusalem (Acts 1–7)
- Judea and Samaria (Acts 8–12)
- **Remotest part of the earth (Acts 13–28)**
 - 1st missionary journey (Acts 13–14)
 - Jerusalem council (Acts 15:1-35)
 - **2nd missionary journey (Acts 15:36–18:22)**
 - 3rd missionary journey (Acts 18:23–21:17)
 - Trip to Rome (Acts 21:18–28:31)



All the missionary journeys start from Antioch up north. It is called Syrian Antioch, or the church at Antioch. That is where Paul went. That is what we are looking at, The section of Scripture dealing with that.

The second missionary journey began with this good old-fashioned split between Paul and Barnabas over whether they were going to take John Mark on the second missionary journey. Paul said no; Barnabas said yes, and it caused a schism between the two. So Barnabas and John Mark go to the island of Cyprus. They drop off the radar screen in terms of who Luke is tracking. Paul and Silas go on missionary journey number two. Then they travel through, as we studied last time, Syria and Cilicia. This is where Timothy joins the group.

On the first missionary journey it was Paul, Barnabas, and Mark. Paul does not have Barnabas and Mark anymore, because they want a different direction. Silas has replaced Barnabas and Timothy in Lystra, replaces Mark. We read about that, the circumcision of Timothy, and why that was done. Then the third part of the second missionary journey is the Macedonian call, where the Holy Spirit told the missionaries, "Do not go to Asia. Do not go to Bithynia. But keep moving into Macedonia."

That is what they did. They now penetrate Macedonia. The gospel has penetrated Europe for the very first time. Much of Christian history took place in Europe for over the last 2,000 years. As you might know, you might wonder how the gospel got into Europe. This is how it got into Europe through this Macedonian vision. That is where these three missionary missionaries go. It is at this point that the story starts saying, "we."

"When he had seen the vision, immediately we sought to go into Macedonia, concluding that God had called us to preach the gospel to them" (Acts 16:10).

This is one of the "we" sections of the Book of Acts. It goes from Acts 16:10-40. Once you get to Acts 16:40, he starts saying "they," and he does not say "we" again until Acts 20:5 on the third missionary journey. This is where we believe Luke himself joined the group. Luke, our author of the Book of Acts, joined the group. Now we have four missionaries moving into Macedonia.

- V. Philippians ministry (16:11-40)
 - A. Lydia's conversion (11-15)
 - 1. Journey to Neapolis (11)
 - 2. Arrival and Philippia (12)
 - 3. Jewish Sabbath meeting (13)
 - 4. Lydia's conversion (14)
 - 5. Results of conversion (15)
 - B. Demonized slave girl (16-18)
 - C. Paul and Silas' imprisonment (19-34)
 - D. Departure from Philippi (35-40)

The first place they hit when they get into Macedonia is a place called Philippi. This starts a section called the Philippian ministry (Acts 16:11-40), and it has four parts to it. You have the conversion of Lydia, Paul's first European convert (Acts 16:11-15). Then he has this encounter with the demonized girl (Acts 16:16-18). He casts the demon out of the girl, which did not make the owners of the slave girl happy, because she was making a lot of money for the owners through fortune-telling. No more demon, no more predictions, and the gravy train disappears.

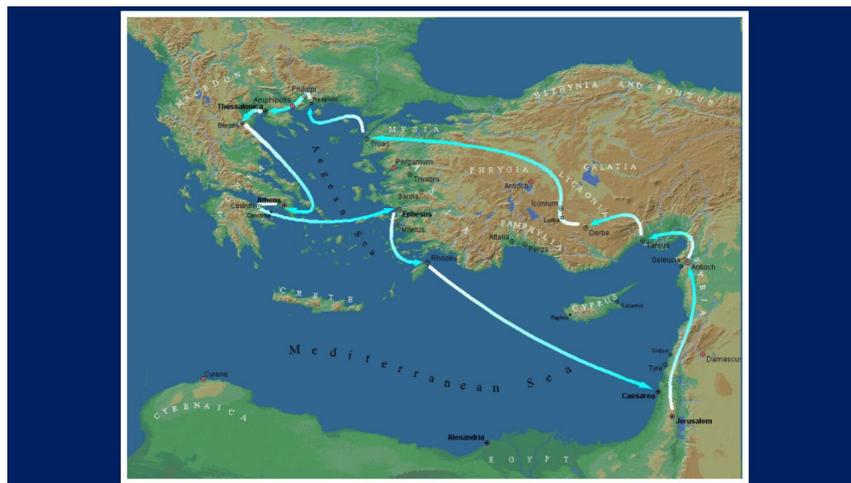
That is what gets Paul and Silas incarcerated in Philippi (Acts 16:19-34), where God works miraculously, supernaturally, providentially leading to Paul's second convert in Philippi, the conversion of the Philippian jailer (Acts 16:19-34). Then the last part of the chapter is Paul departing from Philippi.

They realize that they have abused him, they have flogged him, they have incarcerated him without a trial. He says, "I am a Roman citizen," and they get real nervous because you are in big trouble with Rome if you violate the rights of a Roman citizen. They want him to disappear in the middle of the night, but Paul would not let them do that to him. He says, "We are going to make this public. You have the authorities come and publicly take me out of prison, and then I will leave."

That is the first time in the Book of Acts that Paul tips his hand as to how he is going to get the gospel to Rome. That is where the Book of Acts ends in Acts 28, with Paul getting the gospel to Rome. You wonder, "How in the world did Paul get the gospel to Rome?" He used his legal rights as a Roman citizen. One of his rights was a trial before Caesar in Rome. He kept demanding that his rights be respected until he got all the way to Rome.

The Book of Acts ends with him under house arrest, and Luke stops recording at that point, because it is assumed that once the gospel gets to Rome, it is going to go everywhere, because "all roads lead to Rome." It is not until the end of the Philippian ministry that we get a hint as to what Paul is going to do. That is the first time he starts to insist on these rights that he has as a Roman.

That is a broad brush overview of Acts 16, the Philippian ministry. Tonight we are only going to make it through Acts 16:11-15 where we read of Lydia's conversion. Here is an outline as we look at Acts 16:11-15. First, we have the journey to Neapolis, which is near Philippi, but not quite there yet (Acts 16:11). Remember, it is in Troas that he saw the Macedonian vision of the man that said, "Come over and help us."



"So putting out to sea from Troas, we ran a straight course to Samothrace and on the day following to Neapolis" (Acts 16:11).

Here goes Paul. He is in Troas, and he leaves Troas. There is a little island in the Aegean Sea, midway between Troas and Neapolis. Paul is briefly on this little island, but he keeps moving upwards to right here to Neapolis.

Then you get to Acts 16:12 and he arrives in Philippi: "and from there to Philippi." I forgot to mention at the beginning of Acts 16:11 it says, "so." In the Greek that means, "therefore." That is just a translation, but in Greek it is "therefore." Therefore what? Therefore, after the vision that he saw of the Macedonian man described in Acts 16:10:

"When he had seen the vision, immediately we sought to go into Macedonia, concluding that God had called us to preach the gospel to them" (Acts 16:10).

Therefore he is moving this direction because he is obeying what the Holy Spirit told him to do: "Do not go to Asia. Do not go to Bithynia. Keep moving into Macedonia." He is doing what the vision by the Holy Spirit instructed him to do. As he is making this trajectory, he arrives in Philippi.

"And from there to Philippi, which is a leading city of the district of Macedonia, a Roman colony; and we were staying in this city for some days" (Acts 16:12).

What do we know about Philippi? Arnold Fruchtenbaum gives us a little bit of background information about the city of Philippi. He writes:.

"Macedonia had been a Roman province since the year 146 BC. In 167 BC, the Romans divided the region into four administrative districts, and this was the first of four districts. Philippi was merely a city of the first district of Macedonia. In 42 BC, Antony and Octavian (Augustus) won an important battle over the assassins of Julius Caesar in the vicinity of Philippi. In honor of this victory, Philippi was made a Roman colony. At first, it was named Antoni Iussu Colonia Victrix Philippensium after the battle. About a decade later, it received the honorary title of Colonia Iulia Augusta Philippensis, indicating its status as a Roman colony. People living in such a colony were automatically given Roman citizenship and therefore lived under the same laws and rights as the citizens of Rome. It was like a piece of Rome 'transplanted' abroad. Philippi was settled by the Romans, mostly retired or active military men. Other Roman colonies mentioned in the New Testament include Antioch of Pisidia, Lystra, Troas, and Corinth."¹

What does this mean, "Rome transplanted abroad"? It means you were part of this. You had Roman privileges even though you did not live in Rome. Once you see that, all of a

¹ Dr. Arnold G. Fruchtenbaum, *The Book of Acts*, 345-46.

sudden Philippians 3:20 starts making sense because he is using an analogy. What would Paul later say to the Philippian church?

"For our citizenship is in heaven, from which we also eagerly await for a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ" (Philippians 3:20).

In other words, the Christian is, for lack of a better expression, a dual citizen. I am an American, I am a Texan, but my ultimate citizenship is in heaven. People living in a Roman colony would get that, because they were enjoying the rights of Rome even though they were not in Rome. The better you understand the background of some of these books, the more it makes sense why Paul would bring up the issues that he does later on.

I think that is kind of a neat analogy. This is something that a straightforward reading of the Bible will not give you. You have to get into the background and the history of the book, and suddenly the things Paul is mentioning start to jump off the page. He does not talk. He uses illustrations and analogies from their own lives that they would understand. Jesus did this all the time with parables—the Parable of the Talents, the Parable of the Tenants, the Parable of the Vine Dresser, and on and on. He is using things from their own Jewish agrarian lifestyle that they could get and they could understand. That is what Paul is doing in the Book of Philippians.

Then what Paul typically does when he hits a new spot, and he did this all the way through the first missionary journey, is he looks for a synagogue. The reason he looks for a synagogue is because he laid out a principle in the Book of Romans to be written later: to the Jew first (Romans 1:16). They are the chosen nation, so they get the first bite of the apple in terms of whether they are going to trust Christ or not. Typically, they do not want anything to do with Christ, although there are some Jewish converts. They end up kicking him out of the synagogue, and then he reaps a great harvest amongst the Gentiles.

When he goes to the synagogue, he is going to the place where he has common ground. He has what we call "Old Testament," called Tanakh (Torah, Neviim, Ketuvim, meaning law, prophets, writings). This was Hebrew Bible. He typically goes to the synagogue first because he is trying to show them that Jesus is the fulfillment of Hebrew Bible, or what we would call Old Testament. In the next city he goes to, which is Thessalonica, that is what he does (Acts 17:1-3).

"Now when they had traveled through Amphipolis and Apollonia, they came to Thessalonica, where there was a synagogue of the Jews. And according to Paul's custom, he went to them, and for three Sabbaths reasoned with them from the Scriptures" (Acts 17:1-2).

What Scriptures would those be? That is Hebrew Bible, because we do not even have a New Testament at this point.

"Explaining and giving evidence that the Christ had to suffer and rise again from the dead, saying, 'This is Jesus whom I am proclaiming to you is the Christ'" (Acts 17:3).

That is what he always does: he goes to these synagogues first. We would expect that to happen in Philippi, and you will see Paul making that effort in Acts 16:13.

"And on the Sabbath day we went outside the gate to a riverside, where we were supposing that there would be a place of prayer and as we sat down and began speaking to the women who had assembled" (Acts 16:13).

Why does he not go to the synagogue first in Philippi like he does everywhere else? Answer: there is no synagogue in Philippi. You cannot go to a synagogue that does not exist. Why would he go to this river on the Sabbath and start conversing with what looks like Hebrew or Jewish women? Arnold Fruchtenbaum explains it as follows:

"Verse 13 deals with the Jewish Sabbath meeting. On the Sabbath day, Paul's group went outside the gate, meaning they left the city, to go to a river side. The river was the Gangites, also known as the Angites, and is about one-and-a-half miles outside of town. By Jewish law, a minyan of at least ten Jewish men from the age of thirteen are required to maintain a public synagogue and worship. If there were not enough adult men, then the worship must take place outside, preferably by a river side. Knowing this Jewish custom and law, Paul supposed that if he went to the Gangites, he would find a Jewish prayer meeting. And indeed he found a place of prayer, an open-air enclosure by the river. He and his men sat down, and spoke unto the women that were come together. Only women were present on this occasion."²

You need ten people to get a synagogue going in any city. The people that are the leaders are thirteen and up. Now, what if you did not have ten men? Well, then you could not have a synagogue.

That is why he goes to the river looking for a Jewish prayer meeting. Why a prayer meeting? Because that is what you did if you did not have ten men to start a synagogue. "There is no synagogue in Philippi. This is my next best option," Paul says, "I can fulfill my mandate to the Jew first." This is what Paul found; this was his substitute for the synagogue.

² Dr. Arnold G. Fruchtenbaum, *The Book of Acts*, 346.

That is where Paul went. This is where he met Lydia. This leads to Lydia's conversion. That is there in Acts 16:14. This is your first European conversion right here, and she was listening.

"A woman named Lydia, from the city of Thyatira, a seller of purple fabrics, a worshiper of God, was listening; and the Lord opened her heart to respond to the things spoken by Paul" (Acts 16:14).

I am giving you the three steps of conversion. She was listening, number one; the Lord opened her heart, number two; and number three, she responded to the things spoken by Paul. The word goes out; God prepares the heart; and then the lost sinner believes the truth. Then you have a conversion.

You should probably have noticed by now, as we have gone through the Book of Acts, that Luke is focused on the universality of the gospel. All of the people that you would never think would believe the gospel and are interested in the gospel in the Book of Acts are the people that are getting saved. It is not God's elect nation getting saved; it is the Gentiles.

There is a huge focus in Luke's gospel and in Acts, as the sequel to Luke's gospel, on women. You have to understand that women in this culture were treated like dirt. That is why I really get tired of feminists blaming the plight of women on Christianity. I am thinking to myself, "Have you read the Bible?" Women have a very high role in Scripture. In fact, Jesus in John 4 is talking to a Samaritan woman, to the point where the disciples say, "What are you talking to her for? What are you wasting your time with her for?"

She had a lot going against her. She was a female, so she was treated as a lower class citizen. The rabbis would say, "Thank God I am not a Gentile. Thank God I was not born a woman." That was a common Hebraic prayer in the time of Christ. Number one, she was female. Number two, she was immoral because she had had five husbands and her current partner she was not married to. Number three, she was the wrong race—she was a Samaritan, which was a half-breed race that the Jews hated going back seven centuries.

Three strikes and you are out. But here is Jesus, the incarnate Son of God, ministering to her, saying things to her like, "If you drink from that water, you will thirst again. But if you drink from the water that I give, you will never thirst again" (John 4:13-14). These were powerful statements that lead to her salvation, to the disappointment of the disciples who were saying, "Why are you wasting your time with her?"

When people want to blame the plight of women on Christianity, it is the opposite. I am not promoting some big feminist agenda. I believe in traditional headship and marriage, traditional male headship in the church and all of that stuff. I am just saying that sometimes we overstate the case and make it look like women are the dregs of society.

If you want to see a world where women are mistreated, go to a culture where the gospel has had no influence, like in Islam, and even as Islam grows in our local area here. I was out on a walk the other day and I saw a man, and the woman was, I do not know, a good 6-8 feet behind him, dressed in full regalia, for lack of a better term, full garb in the hot Houston sun. A Christian person following the Bible would never treat his wife that way, because the Bible says we are to love our wives as Christ loved the church.

Here Paul is going to a flock of women, and his first convert in Europe is Lydia. Luke has various themes, but one of his themes is the universality of the gospel. That comes out here.



Who is Lydia? She is from Thyatira. You will read about Thyatira in the Book of Revelation. That is a church that is yet to be born in Thyatira. Jesus, through John, would address the church at Thyatira in Revelation 2.

The Holy Spirit said to Paul, "Do not go into Asia." How did all these churches in Asia get brought to Christ? You cannot have churches without Christians. How did all these people get saved to start churches in Asia Minor? The Holy Spirit knew that Paul would set up shop in Ephesus for three years, not on missionary journey two, but missionary journey three, lecturing.

All these Christian educators say God cannot use the lecture method. You have got to do one-on-one stuff and get everybody in groups and group projects. They are always talking down the lecture method. It is funny as they are talking down the lecture method, they are giving you a lecture on why the lecture method does not work. Go figure that one.

Here is Paul in Ephesus for three years, lecturing in the school of Tyrannus for two of the three years. Acts 19:10 says that everyone in Asia heard the word of the Lord. That is how all these churches in Asia that we read about in the Book of Revelation got their

start. It was when Paul, on the second missionary journey, was specifically told by the Holy Spirit, "Do not go into Asia," because the Holy Spirit knew things. Paul did not know that he would go to Ephesus on the third missionary journey, and all of those people groups and inhabitants would be reached.

That is where Lydia came from. She was not a Christian. There was not a church in Thyatira. Thyatira was famous for dyes, purple dyes. It says here that Lydia was a seller of purple (Acts 16:13). Purple was used in the Roman toga, so she was entrepreneurial. It shows you that women are given God-given business acumen just like men. She had some kind of business making money, apparently, with these purple dyes which were needed for the Roman togas. She had apparently migrated from Thyatira to Philippi for business purposes.

It says here that she was a worshiper of God (Acts 16:13). What does that mean? It could mean that she was Jewish. I think that is a theory that is interesting. It is not something you can prove. I think a better option is that she was what is called a proselyte, meaning she was like Ruth in the Book of Ruth, who was from Moab, modern-day Jordan. Moab and Jordan being adjacent to Israel, east of the Jordan River. Ruth said to her mother-in-law, Naomi, "Your people will be my people. Your God will be my God" (Ruth 1:16). That is how it worked in Old Testament times. If you wanted to grow in your relationship with Yahweh if you were a Gentile, you had to convert to Judaism.

That is who the Ethiopian eunuch was in Acts 8, that was seeking God traveling to Jerusalem, and just happened to have his Hebrew Bible, what we call Old Testament, open to Isaiah 53. That is where you remember the Lord stationed the deacon Philip, at just the right place, at the right time to shout to the Ethiopian eunuch traveling, "Do you know what you are reading?" That is when the Ethiopian eunuch says, "How can I know unless someone teaches me?" So the eunuch brought Philip up onto the chariot. Philip, from that very section of Scripture (Isaiah 53, which is a prophecy about Jesus made 700 years before), leads the Ethiopian eunuch to Christ. The Ethiopian eunuch at that point gets baptized. Baptism comes after conversion, not before it. That is who the Ethiopian eunuch was: he was probably a proselyte.

We think Lydia was like that. Look at the second part of Acts 16:14 and you see her conversion:

"A woman named Lydia, from the city of Thyatira, a seller of purple fabrics, a worshiper of God, was listening; and the Lord opened her heart to respond to the things spoken by Paul" (Acts 16:14).

What are the three elements of salvation? Number one, she heard the word of the Lord from Paul, the missionary who came to Philippi to preach Jesus. She was listening to what he was saying at this little gathering by the river. Paul would write later:

"So faith comes from hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ" (Romans 10:17).

That is how salvation occurs: through the Word of God. Paul would later write to Timothy and explain to him that the Scriptures which you have known from infancy are capable of making you wise unto salvation (2 Timothy 3:15). If you want to see conversions, give people the Word of God. Do not give them your opinion. If you are witnessing to somebody, have a few verses memorized—John 3:16 or others—because that is the tool that the Holy Spirit uses to lead lost men and women to salvation. Paul did his part: he was preaching. Lydia did her part: she was listening.

"The Lord opened her heart to respond to the things spoken by Paul" (Acts 16:14).

God was doing something on His end. That is the divine side. What was God doing? He was doing John 16:7-11. Jesus made this statement in the Upper Room:

"But I tell you the truth, it is to your advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away, the Helper ["Paraclete" the one who comes alongside to assist] will not come to you; but if I go, I will send Him to you" (John 16:7).

In other words, as the disciples, in the Upper Room, are panicked about Him leaving because He kept saying, "I am leaving." He says, "It is actually advantageous to you that I am leaving, because when I go, the Holy Spirit comes and He is going to help you. One of the things He is going to do is to start a ministry in the whole world. When He comes, He will convict (that means persuade) the world, unsaved people concerning sin." "Sin" is a singular noun ("hamartia"), not a plural noun. He will also convict the world of righteousness and judgment (John 16:8). Fortunately, those three things are unpacked for us.

"Concerning sin, because they do not believe in Me" (John 16:9).

That is a very important thing to understand. The Holy Spirit is not convicting unsaved people of sins. He is convicting them of sin; and the sin that they are committing against God that will send them into eternal damnation if this is not changed, is unbelief. That is the only sin that sends someone to hell. It is not drinking, profanity, divorce, spousal abuse, and all of that stuff. Those are an outworking of an inward problem. The inward problem is that they do not know Jesus because they have not believed in Him. That is what the Holy Spirit is doing over and over again in the lives of unsaved people.

I was listening to Hal Lindsey, and he was talking about what he was like when he was unsaved. He was going to all these bars and things where they do Mardi Gras and all that stuff. There were religious people, denominational people that would march around and talk about how they were against alcohol—boycotting, protesting, and all this stuff.

He says, "Those people had zero influence on me because my drinking had to do with the fact that I did not know Jesus. If they had just come and talked to me and told me that my problem was unbelief, rather than focusing on the symptom of a problem which was alcohol, I could have come to Christ much sooner."

That is one of the problems that we have as Christians. We are kind of upset about abortion and pornography, and the legalization of drugs, and rightly so. That can become our crusade, but all of that stuff is just a symptom of a bigger issue. The bigger issue is unbelief.

The Holy Spirit is not bothering the world about all those other sins that we are very concerned about. Do not get me wrong, when the Holy Spirit comes into you, He will start to deal with you on those other sins. But that is not His number one goal pre-salvation.

"And He [the Spirit], when He comes, will convict the world concerning sin and righteousness and judgment" (John 16:8).

The world is what the Spirit is doing in the unsaved around us. The Holy Spirit has ministries in the Christian; He has ministries in the church; and He has ministries in the world. One of the ministries that He has in the world is convicting the world of sin.

"Concerning sin because they do not believe in Me; and concerning righteousness, because I go to the Father and you no longer see Me" (John 16:9-10).

He is showing the world that they do not have the righteousness of Jesus Christ, which is the only righteousness that matters. When you trust Christ, the Son's righteousness is immediately imputed to you. That is the only righteousness that is going to stand on the Day of Judgment. If you do not have that transferred righteousness that is given to someone at the point of faith alone in Christ alone, then you are left with your own self-righteousness, which is not going to get you very far. The Holy Spirit is convincing the world that Jesus is going back to the Father, and as Jesus goes back to the Father, the world is on their own. They do not have the righteousness of the Son.

"And concerning judgment, because the ruler of this world [the devil] has already been judged" (John 16:11).

Satan is going down, but he has not gone down yet. He is convicted, but the penalty has not been imposed. If you stay in this unbelieving condition, without the transfer of the righteousness of the Son, then you are on a losing team. You are going down with your commander in chief who is already going down.

It is like that movie "Frequency," where the guy went forward in time, found a criminal, and said something like, "You went down ten years ago." That is the devil. He is done;

he just does not know it. (He actually does know it, but the people that follow him do not know it.)

When you evangelize to lost people, those are the three things you focus on. "What about Noah's Ark and the age of the Earth?" You say something like, "That is an interesting topic, but let me direct the discussion back to these three things: you do not believe; you do not have the righteousness of the Son; and you are moving into judgment with the devil."

"But how do you explain dinosaurs?" "We will have that discussion, but let me direct the conversation back to these three things: you do not believe; you do not have the righteousness of the Son; and you are facing judgment."

As much as people try to talk about this or ask, "What do you think about abortion?", "What do you think about this issue or that issue?", "What do you think about pornography?", "Is it okay to gamble?", "Can I get a tattoo?", and all these kinds of things. Just keep focusing the conversation back to those three biggies: you do not believe; you do not have the righteousness of the Son; and you are moving into judgment. You will notice that your evangelism has more fruit that way, because you are talking about the stuff that the Holy Spirit is already convicting the world of. You are not off on some tangential subject.

We have a tract rack on the wall there, and we work really hard (it is not easy to do this) putting tracts out there that you can use with lost people that focus on these three things. Most evangelistic tracts today tell you that you are saved by grace and not by works, but then they give you five works to do: repent of all your sins, join the church, get baptized, and comb your hair a certain way. It is just bizarre how people constantly insert their own works mentality into the gospel.

When it talks about how the Lord opened the heart of Lydia, that is how it got opened: it was this worldwide convicting ministry of the Spirit. Paul did his part, and God did His part. Notice that the Holy Spirit does not believe for people, He convicts the world because they do not believe. He will not believe for you. He will bring you to the point of decision, but He will not believe for you. If you do not want to believe and you want to go to hell, then the Holy Spirit will respect your decision. It is pretty spooky when you think about it. We are made in His image, meaning that we must have volition in this.

You will notice that in Lydia's conversion, the Lord does not override her. He brings her to the point of decision and she responds to the message. This is where the Calvinistic system has the whole thing messed up, because what they teach is that God gave Lydia the gift of faith—God believed for her because she was not capable of believing on her own. Do not get me wrong, people need to be brought to the Lord through conviction, but the Lord is not going to override people and believe for them. He will not give them the gift of faith.

My classmate, Rene Lopez, in a great article published in "Biblioteca Sacra," titled "Is Faith a Gift from God or a Human Exercise?", correctly says of Acts 16:14:

"The Greek...('opened') refers to 'opening of the eyes to make understanding possible and enable perception.' Many of the New Testament occurrences of...('heart') refer to the mind, as it does here; God opened Lydia's 'eyes of the heart,' as if removing a mental veil (2 Cor. 4:3-4), so that she could understand and be saved. But opening her heart (or understanding) is not the same as giving her faith. Acts 16 does not say God gave her faith. Instead He enabled her to understand so that she could exercise faith...Paul wrote in Romans 3:11, 'There is no one who understands, there is none who seeks for God.' However, God was drawing Lydia (cf. John 6:44-45) Lydia to Himself before Paul arrived. Nevertheless giving a person the ability to understand differs from giving him or her faith to believe. God enlightened (a type of drawing) Lydia so that she could believe, but it was still her faith, not God's gift of faith."³

When you cross-reference that with John 12:32, this drawing is something that God does for the whole world. It is the same verb there in Greek, "drawing." It says over there:

"And I, if I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all men to Myself" (John 12:32).

Some people respond to it, some people do not.

He has got it exactly correct on this. Paul's part was preaching; the divine side was conviction; and the human side was believing. You have those three things going: you have the word; you have conviction; and you have a human response—you have a conversion.

It is what Jesus talked about in the Parable of the Sower, where it says:

"And others fell on the good soil and yielded a crop, some a hundredfold, some sixty, and some thirty" (Matthew 13:8).

Then He interprets this parable for us a few verses later in Matthew 13:23, where He says:

³ René A. Lopez, "Is Faith a Gift From God or a Human Exercise?," *Bibliotheca Sacra* 164 (July–September 2007): 264 and n. 20.

"And the one on whom seed was sown on the good soil, this is the man who hears the word and understands it; who indeed bears fruit and brings forth, some a hundredfold, some sixty, and some thirty" (Matthew 13:23).

The good seed is agriculture. These are all agrarian examples. Good seed falls on the right soil and there is a conversion. You get the Word of God falling on a prepared heart. A person responds, and up comes the tree of salvation. It is a beautiful and simple thing that happened here. Yet without this, we would not have a Philippian church. We would not have any Christianity in Europe. The whole thing starts with a woman. It is amazing.

We will end with Acts 16:15. What are the results of this conversion? There are two things: number one, baptism.

"And when she and her household had been baptized—" (Acts 16:15).

Apparently the message spread. Do you see a pattern here? What is baptism? It is an outward symbol of an inward reality. Baptism does not save anybody. To the thief on the cross Jesus did not say, "Quick, throw water on him before he dies." He said, *"Today you will be with Me in Paradise"* (Luke 23:43). There was no opportunity for baptism being nailed to a cross.

Baptism does not save anybody, but it is a step of obedience. It is a good thing to do. A lot of people get saved and want to get baptized every time we offer baptism. It is like, "Why are you doing that?" They think that if they get baptized they are going to go to heaven. What does getting baptized multiple times do for you? It sends you into hell, waterlogged, basically.

In the Scripture what you will see is a pattern: first salvation, then water baptism. Look at the order here in Matthew 28:19:

"Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them—" (Matthew 28:19).

Do you see the order? Discipleship and then baptism. Baptism is an outward symbol of an inward reality.

We saw this in Acts 8:12 with the Samaritans:

"But when they believed Philip preaching the good news about the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, men and women alike" (Acts 8:12).

First comes belief, then comes baptism.

Concerning the Ethiopian eunuch:

"And he [the Ethiopian eunuch] answered and said, 'I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.' And he ordered the chariot to stop; and they both went down into the water, Philip as well as the eunuch, and he baptized him" (Acts 8:37-38).

Of Cornelius, the first full-fledged Gentile saved in the Church Age, it says in Acts 10:43:

"Of Him all the prophets bear witness that through His name everyone who believes in Him receives the forgiveness of sins' While Peter was still speaking these words, the Holy Spirit fell upon those who were listening to the message" (Acts 10:43-44).

Later on in Acts 10:47 it says:

"Surely no one can refuse the water for these to be baptized who have received the Holy Spirit as we did, can he?' And he ordered them to be baptized—" (Acts 10:47-48).

Here it is in our passage after Lydia responded to the message: *"And when she and her household had been baptized" (Acts 16:15).*

Then the Philippian jailer, whose conversion coming in this chapter:

"Sirs, what must I do to be saved? They said, 'Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved, you and your household'" (Acts 16:30-31).

"...and immediately he was baptized." (Acts 16:33).

Acts 18:8 at the conversion of Crispus, the synagogue leader, it says:

"Crispus, the leader of the synagogue, believed in the Lord with all his household, and many of the Corinthians when they heard were believing and being baptized" (Acts 18:8).

It is an unmistakable order here. "You will not you baptize infants, Pastor?" I will baptize any infant that can come forward and give me their testimony on how they believed in Jesus. That is an infant that we will baptize.

I was baptized as an infant when I was raised Episcopalian. Then about the age of 16, I got saved. I told my father at the time, living under his roof, that I wanted to get baptized. He said, "Are you crazy? You have already been baptized." He pulled out the

family photos of the priests pouring the water on me, and I looked very unhappy. I was just screaming at the top of my lungs as they were pouring this water on me.

This caused a little bit of internal tension in his house, so I waited. I think I made the right decision, but some would say I did not. However, I waited till I got out of his house. Then I got baptized in a jacuzzi by the guy that led me to Christ. I did notice that when I fulfilled that step of obedience and got baptized, a lot of doors started to open for me that were closed. It was almost like God was waiting for me to take a step of faith. The step of obedience did not save me. It is part of growth. What saves is faith alone in Christ alone.

Here is the order again: she believes and then she is baptized. She is also hospitable. You see that at the end of Acts 16:15:

"...she urged us, saying, 'If you have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come into my house and stay,' And she prevailed upon us" (Acts 16:15).

Here is a lady that will not take no for an answer. She says, "You guys are going to come over." This is how the Philippian church started. Her family is saved and then you are going to get thrown into the mix, the jailer, who is also going to get saved. That is how the church at Philippi starts—the church that Paul would write to about ten years later.

She seems to have the gift of hospitality. Hebrews 13:2 says:

"Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for by this some have entertained angels without knowing it" (Hebrews 13:2).

Her house becomes the base of Paul's ministry operations in Philippi. Do you think Satan is happy about this? No, because a demonized slave girl starts to harass Paul at this point. Whenever you make any progress with Jesus, expect opposition.

Even this week, as I was getting ready for this prophecy conference, I witnessed the different types of spiritual warfare that our family experienced, that our church experienced (which is sort of encouraging because that means God is getting ready to do something big). Satan does not like it.