

“...walk worthily...” from the Book of Philipians

Scripture Block:	n/a
Theme:	Introductory Comments
Life verse:	n/a
Today's passage:	Acts 16:9-40

Notes

Comments

The background to the book of Philipians is important to us because of its extremely strong evangelistic message.

Consider first the vision in Ac 16:9-10, which prompted Paul to change his plans and head to Philippi.

1. When God looks at mankind, he sees a field that is ready for harvest, i.e. people who are ready to hear the gospel and become children of God (Jn 4:35). In other words, he sees the spiritual dimension associated with what our eyes see physically.

2. Have you developed your spiritual sensitivity to the point that you see the same things? Do you see neighbors, relatives, even routine encounters as something in which the Lord wants to use you to reveal himself. Do you see these people as lost and needy—begging you to “come over to Macedonia and help us”? Oh, that the Lord would develop our spiritual sight!

Second, the dialogue with the Philippian jailor in Ac 16:29-34 reveals much about the thinking of the unbeliever; as well as reinforces key principles associated with standing for the faith.

1. The jailor, on the brink of suicide, is desperate as he falls on his knees before Paul. He typifies the completely desperate situation of every member of the human race who is without a saving relationship with Christ.

2. However the jailor, who is familiar with religion, frames his request for help in religious terms. The present tense verb of verse 30 reveals that the jailor is really asking, “what works (of religion) must I keep on doing (in your religious system) in order to be saved?” (parenthesis mine)

3. The jailor is just about to get his second shock for the evening—for Christianity is not a religion!¹ Paul is going to use the aorist tense in verse 31, which simply refers to a moment of time, and the verb “believe” has nothing to do with religious works. In vs. 33 Paul and Silas go on to explain the details of the Gospel to the jailor, i.e. Christ’s substitutionary payment for sin on the cross, the free gift of eternal life and relationship with God, etc.

4. The message of the Gospel is exclusive and divisive—think about it. **“For there is no other name under heaven given to men by which we must be saved.”** (Ac 4:12) It is this that makes the Gospel, in particular, and Christianity in general so “politically incorrect” in the day and age in which we live. The world likes to think we are in the process of societal improvement—the Bible says the condition of lost mankind is desperate! The world likes to think there are many ways to enlightenment—the Bible says there is one way, and that way is narrow ! **(I am the way the truth and the light, and no man cometh to the Father but through me. (Jn 14:6))**

Lord, let us hold fast to the truth of mankind’s desperate need, and the person and work of Jesus Christ as the sole answer. Let us not be ashamed of the Gospel, for **“it is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believers.”** (Rm 1:16)

¹ Religion is all about how man, by his efforts, can please god(s). On the contrary, Christianity is all about what God has done, through his Son, to rescue man from his desperate situation and restore him to relationship with himself.