

Sermon Handout

Trusting God's Providence

Acts 16:25-40

I. The Situation of Paul & Silas vv. 22-24

- a. "they had laid many stripes upon them" v. 23 *cf.* v. 37
 - i. They were beaten with rods, not whips *cf.* II Cor 11:24-25
 - ii. The *fasces* – an emblem of Roman authority
This action taken by the *praetors* (in Philippi there were 2)
 - iii. Punishment without trial (beatings on the bare back) v. 37
- b. "they cast them into prison" v. 23
 - i. In the most secure room of the prison
 - ii. Locked in "stocks" – a cruel form of punishment
- c. The Roman jailor's duty v. 24
 - i. To keep them securely, upon pain of death
 - ii. The man was likely a former Roman soldier

II. God Controls the Situation

- a. Paul & Silas singing the Psalms v. 25
"prayed & sang" refer to a single action
The other prisoners were listening Mt 5:14-16
Paul & Silas knew their situation rested with the Lord!
- b. The miraculous earthquake v. 26
Doors were opened, prisoners' bonds released
- c. The jailor set free from his bonds vv. 27-32
He is "saved" in more than one way.
- d. The jailor tends to them, "securing" them in his home vv. 33-34
The jailor & his household come to Christ v. 33b
- e. Now Paul uses the law lawfully (I Tim 1:8) vv. 35-40
The *praetors* had acted unlawfully, albeit unknowingly
Paul calls for them to repent v. 37 (and they do v. 39)

III. What Should God's People Learn?

- a. Paul & Silas obeyed the instructions of Jesus Mt 10:16-20; **esp. 6:25-34**
See also Mk 13:9-11; Lk 12:11-12
- b. Like them, we must always rely on the providence of God
- c. **Nothing** comes into our lives that is not part of his plan Rom 8:28-32
- d. We must not let "things of this world" disrupt our confidence in God.