

Acts 16:16-21

¹⁶ Once when we were going to the place of prayer, we were met by a female slave who had a spirit by which she predicted the future. She earned a great deal of money for her owners by fortune-telling. ¹⁷ She followed Paul and the rest of us, shouting, "These men are servants of the Most High God, who are telling you the way to be saved." ¹⁸ She kept this up for many days. Finally, Paul became so annoyed that he turned around and said to the spirit, "In the name of Jesus Christ I command you to come out of her!" At that moment the spirit left her. ¹⁹ When her owners realized that their hope of making money was gone, they seized Paul and Silas and dragged them into the marketplace to face the authorities. ²⁰ They brought them before the magistrates and said, "These men are Jews, and are throwing our city into an uproar ²¹ by advocating customs unlawful for us Romans to accept or practice."

Principles of the biblical story: We don't have to be afraid of demons nor focus on them though they do exist so let's move on in mission in Jesus' name.*

1. We are meant to be on mission with others, not alone.

- Notice: We (v16), the rest of us (v17), Paul and Silas (v19), them (v20), and these men (v20).
- Earlier in Chapter 15 and 16, Paul is always with Barnabas or Silas and rarely alone in his missionary journey.
- This fits with the command and pattern of our Lord Jesus when He sent them out in pairs – Luke...and Mark.
- Jesus spent time with Disciples not just one person.
- America is rated highest on the cultural index at 91% among countries regarding individualism.
- Are you doing Christianity individually or with others?
- Do you have someone to "do mission" with or do you do it alone?
- Do you pray alone or with others? v16

2. We are meant to be with others when we encounter Dark forces.

- The demon possessed girl was near the place of prayer.
- She was annoying, distracting Paul and the team in their mission.
- She was speaking a form of truth but not the entire truth.
- In the USA dark forces manifest themselves in false teaching systems. 1 Tim 4
- Satan can be an angel of light through different teachings that rob Christ of his deity and Salvation to the Father by grace through faith alone.
- Paul and the crew weren't afraid because Jesus was their shield and authority, and the Spirit was inside them.

3. When we face opposition from angry people, having a "We" helps us continue.

- They were both "dragged" not just Paul. v19
- They were lied about.
- They were outnumbered.
- Two are better than one and this just doesn't mean marriage.
- As Jesus followers we should expect rejection and opposition if we make a stand for Him. Matthew 10
- Jesus was insulted and said it is a blessing for us also. Matt 5

4. Let's remember Jesus was the perfection of mission, defeated the darkness and faced opposition in our place. Will you put your full trust in Him?

*For more information about Christians and demon possessed people see Alistair Begg's explanation <https://youtu.be/-R-rKVtNHDY>