



Spiritually Empowered To Overcome

“... a certain damsel possessed with a spirit of divination met us, which brought her masters much gain by soothsaying: 17 The same followed Paul and us, and cried, saying, These men are the servants of the most high God, which shew unto us the way of salvation” (Acts 16:16-17).

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grieved, turned and said to the spirit, I command thee in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her. And he came out the same hour” (Acts 16:18).

“And it came to pass, as we went to prayer, a certain damsel possessed with a spirit of divination met us, which brought her masters much gain by soothsaying: 17 The same followed Paul and us, and cried, saying, These men are the servants of the most high God, which shew unto us the way of salvation. 18 And this did she many days. But Paul, being grieved, turned and said to the spirit, I command thee in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her. And he came out the same hour. 19 And when her masters saw that the hope of their gains was gone, they caught Paul and Silas, and drew them into the marketplace unto the rulers, 20 And brought them to the magistrates, saying, These men, being Jews, do exceedingly trouble our city, 21 And teach customs, which are not lawful for us to receive, neither to observe, being Romans. 22 And the multitude rose up together against them: and the magistrates rent off their clothes, and commanded to beat them. 23 And when they had laid many stripes upon them, they cast them into prison, charging the jailor to keep them safely:” (Acts 16:16-23).

Sensitivity to the Holy Spirit is vital not only in receiving guidance for recognising divine opportunities but also in discerning and avoiding dangers associated with deception from counterfeit spiritual voices that disguise as the voice of God. “And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works” (2 Corinthians 11:14-15). It is for this purpose that scripture admonishes us in 1 John 4:1 “Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world”.

To live victoriously in this world, we must not only follow what is right but also avoid what is wrong. In this text we learn that:

1) A demon possessed person may participate in Christian gatherings and create the impression of being spiritual. In this text, a girl pos-

sessed by the Spirit of divination who practiced soothsaying followed Paul (vs 16).

2) Through the practice of divination (attempt to gain insight into a question or situation by way of an occultic ritual or practice) and soothsaying (prediction of future events), she publicised Paul and Silas as “servants of the most high God, which shew unto us the way of salvation” (vs 17). This sounded religiously correct (prophetic), but was not from God. Watch, all that glitters is not gold.

3) The spirit that spoke through her, had no interest in promoting Jesus, whom Paul preaches, but in diverting attention from the Gospel of Christ to herself. Paul discerned this and cast out that spirit (vs 18).

4) Her deliverance also meant the loss of her lucrative soothsaying business “which brought her masters much gain” (vs 16), which attracted their persecution against the apostles (vs 19-23).

5) Every believer is spiritually empowered to discern and deal decisively with demonic spirits “Behold, I give unto you power to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy: and nothing shall by any means hurt you” (Luke 10:19). Use your God-given power to advance.

“And the spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord; 3 And shall make him of quick understanding in the fear of the Lord: and he shall not judge after the sight of his eyes, neither reprove after the hearing of his ears” (Isaiah 11:2-3).