

THE FUTURE OUTLOOK

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Another Boston Tea Party

By RICARDO RAFFLES
 "Trouble Shooter"

Throughout the years and ages, whenever an animal is cornered he fights back. A rattlesnake will give you a warning before he strikes. Man is no different. It happened in Rome during the first century; it happened in France in the 18th century; and it happened again in Boston at the Boston Tea Party when the discontented colonists turned against the English and gave them quite a surprise party. All of the revolutions have been the result of someone's feet on another's neck, man's inhumanity, oppression and indignities to his fellow men. The end results were no different then and they are no different now, only more devastating! — more terror, more costly, more lives lost, more bats, and more sorrow.

All these happenings which started years ago are once again starting in the same way. It began with oppression, greed, arrogance, pride, the "haves and have nots." Whether its in the white race, black race, yellow race, human nature being as it is will always support the struggle of caste, and segregation. The rich white, the poor white, the Negroes who have got it made and the poor Negroes fighting for existence will always face the same problems. These problems have existed throughout history.

The top dog who never had it so good kept throwing out bones to the underdog hoping to keep him satisfied in order to keep the meat and gravy for himself. All the time he knew that someday all the little dogs would talk it over and turn on the big dog and tear his guts out. That is the way it is now and every century. The ones who always had the gravy train, also had the answers. They were too busy trying to keep everything—they did not care!

All they had to do before every revolution was to be charitable, compassionate, and have love and understanding. But no! The more they had, the more they wanted. They did not give a damn about the hungry and oppressed. So because of closing their eyes and hearts to existing problems then and now, they ask what happened? What's wrong with these people? Did we not treat them good? Did we not throw them a bone? Why are they shooting at us? Why are they burning down the stores and houses? Didn't we give Liza a job at \$25.00 a week being a maid? Ain't Rufus got a good job being a janitor and delivery boy? Why we even gave them a nine hole golf course. Nobody gives anything for nothing!

For years everywhere in the United States, these problems have existed and yet no one gives a damn. They were there. The politicians, the rich white, the middle class white and the high class and middle class Negro did not care enough to do anything about it. So finally the lid of Pandora's Box flew off. Then the guilty as usual tried to place the blame on everyone but themselves. They created the problems; they let them grow; they could have resolved them years ago, but they waited until they were too big to handle. Then the masses of poor, the so-called minority let off steam with the only weapons that they had, and the aftermath was class destruction and upheaval.

Instead of the high and mighty taking their heads out of the sand and placing the blame where it should be, they said with a "holier than thou" attitude, "See, give them an inch and they will take a mile." Now all of a sudden the horse is out of the barn, and the white power structure turns to the Negro power structure and appoints a committee to find out what happened. Didn't we give you enough tokenism? Have we not done this and that? Well the white power structure and the Negro power structure are looking for the answer—Why?—They want to know. The answer is simple. Follow these instructions and everything will be peaceful:

- 1) Treat an American as an American, not white, not black—just a human American.
- 2) Open all recreation areas to all Americans and then your city can be truly called an All-American city.
- 3) Open schools all year round and teach students young and old, dropouts, etc. A skilled trade should be taught

This Week's Sunday School Lesson

RESPONSES TO THE GOSPEL

Purpose of Our Study

To help adults accept God's salvation through Christ and respond to his love in acts of loving service.

Scripture

Read the lesson from your Bible: Acts 16:11-40. We print selected verses below:

Acts 16:12b-23

12 . . . We remained in this city some days; 13 and on the sabbath day we went outside the gate to the riverside, where we supposed there was a place of prayer; and we sat down and spoke to the women who had come together. 14 One who heard us was a woman named Lydia, from the city of Thyatira, a seller of purple goods, who was a worshiper of God. The Lord opened her heart to give heed to what was said by Paul. 15 And when she was baptized, with her household, she besought us, saying, "If you have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come to my house and stay." And she prevailed upon us.

16 As we were going to the place of prayer, we were met by a slave girl who had a spirit of divination and brought her owners much gain by soothsaying. 17 She followed Paul and us, crying, "These men are servants of the Most High God, who proclaim to you the way of salvation." 18 And this she did for many days. But Paul was annoyed, and turned and said to the spirit, "I charge you in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her." And it came out that very hour.

19 But when her owners saw that their hope of gain was gone, they seized Paul and Silas and dragged them into the market place before the rulers; 20 and when they had brought them to the magistrates they said, "These men are Jews and they are disturbing our city. 21 They advocate customs which it is not lawful for us Romans to accept or practice." 22 The crowd joined in attacking them; and the magistrates tore the garments off them and gave orders to beat them with rods. 23 And when they had inflicted many blows upon them, they

threw them into prison, charging the jailer to keep them safely.

Memory Selection: Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved, you and your household. —Acts 16:31

Introducing the Scripture

Acts 16:11-40 encompasses Paul's mission to Philippi. After the vision at Troas, Paul and his companions, with favorable winds, completed the voyage to Macedonia in two days. In line with his strategy of planting the gospel first in important centers, Paul headed for Philippi.

Philippi was indeed a strategic center. Fortified by Philip of Macedonia and given his name, the city was enlarged and given colony status by the emperor Augustus.

These outpost colonies apparently attempted to be more Roman than even Rome itself. The inhabitants of these colonies wore Roman clothes, spoke the Roman language, and used the Roman laws. As a colony, Philippi enjoyed self-government, immunity from imperial tribute, and the same rights as the citizens who lived in Italy.

Apparently Paul's stay in Philippi was a brief one but a successful one. We find no indication that Paul met Jewish opposition at Philippi, nor was he troubled by the Judaizers, who sought to make Christianity merely a sect of Judaism.

"Spirit of divination" (Acts 16:16) means literally "a spirit, a python." Plutarch (Moralia 414E) states that ventriloquists were called "pythons." The slave girl could have been a ventriloquist, but she was more likely a demented creature noted for her strange babblings.

Interpreting the Lesson

The gospel always demands a response. It will not allow individuals or social orders or nations to ignore its imperatives.

The gospel's first presentation in Europe brought responses from many sectors of the important colony of Philippi. The responses must have been much more extensive than the three examples (Lydia, the slave girl, and the jailer) mentioned in our lesson.

The quality of the response of the Philippian people to Paul and to the gospel is indicated by the warm and untroubled rela-

tionship between Paul and this church, as revealed in Paul's Letter to the Philippians. No other letter is filled with such unbroken praise and affirmations of joy as this letter. Paul seems to have had no particular problem with this church and to have cherished an affectionate relationship with these responsive people throughout the rest of his missionary career.

Open Heart and Open Home

Paul's usual strategy called for an appeal to Jews first. When he found no synagogue in Philippi, he looked for their "place of prayer," which was often by the riverside. At Philippi he found such a riverside prayer meeting attended by Jewish women and God-fearing gentiles.

Halford Luccock, in commenting on Paul's attendance at this prayer meeting, terms it a "perfect . . . anti-climax." After a soul-stirring vision and a vigorous launching toward a new continent, Paul's first assignment seems to have been a women's prayer meeting. What a letdown!

However, in that prayer meeting was Europe's first convert to the gospel—a well-to-do woman named Lydia. Lydia was a businesswoman, a seller of purple goods. These purple goods were dyed with an expensive substance gathered drop by drop from a certain shellfish.

Lydia was not only a successful businesswoman but also a spiritually sensitive individual. She had evidently been attracted to the Jewish Scriptures and had joined this Jewish prayer group hoping to find the spiritual satisfaction for which she yearned.

Apparently, Lydia was spiritually and psychologically prepared for Paul's straightforward presentation of the gospel. It "hit home." The prayer group had opened her heart to spiritual matters, and Lydia was ready for the message of Paul when he brought the redeeming word.

If God is going to change our lives, we have to give him the opportunity. He does not force his way uninvited into any life. Lydia was ready for conversion because she revered God and was praying to him for greater spiritual insight. Certainly attending church and reading one's Bible and praying are the preliminary steps in a reconstructing of our spiritual lives.

Much of our art, literature, and philosophy today speaks of the almost universal spiritual hunger of man. People are dissatisfied with their meaningless existences and are reaching out for a gospel that will give significance and purpose to their lives. To these open hearts we need to bring the word of God.

Lydia not only opened her heart to the Lord, but she opened her house to the Lord's ambassadors. She and her household were baptized, and Lydia's home became an operating base for Paul's Philippian mission. What greater tribute could a home have than to become an operating base for the spread of the gospel!

Disturbed Businessmen

Other business people did not respond to the gospel as Lydia did. Certain men were exploiting the mental illness of a slave girl. This girl would apparently

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- so anyone can get a skilled job.
- 4) A house to house campaign, teaching hygiene, cleanliness, and manners to white and Negro, and preparing them for a move into better housing areas because of the new housing areas available.
- 5) Prepare the mind and body with love and understanding and the know-how and the will to keep the home and family an asset in the neighborhood moved into.
- 6) Find jobs for all who are out of work. For anyone working and making a good living has not time for trouble.
- 7) A program to teach all citizens to have respect for one another, to obey the law of the land, and to have "A Meet the Police Week Program" should be arranged. Get to know the police better; teach that without law and order, America dies, we all die. Let the police show that they are friends and good-will ambassadors. The best way is for both sides to throw away the chips on the shoulder and come out shaking hands and not heads.
- 8) Invite all citizens to choose someone in their area as a go-between or LIASON ambassador to whom they can take their problems. The Liason ambassador will take these problems to the leaders of our city government without delay and do something about them. Also these leaders in the certain areas of the city can help to keep problems from arising and growing.
- 9) The main problem is to teach people that color must not exist, but human dignity, Americanism. Bring in love for your neighbor and hate will leave America and Americans. How else can we survive?