

Toward A Radical Unity

TRU-08 “The Scandal of Jesus”

PAUL’S LETTER TO THE PHILIPPIANS

08/09/2026

PHIL 2:9-11 Therefore GOD has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, 10) so that at the name of JESUS every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, 11) and every tongue confess that JESUS CHRIST IS LORD, to the glory of GOD THE FATHER.

THE PHILIPPIAN CHURCH: “Lights in the World”

ACTS 16:11-12 So, setting sail from Troas, we made a direct voyage to Samothrace, and the following day to Neapolis, 12) and from there to PHILIPPI, which is a leading city of the district of Macedonia and a Roman colony. We remained in this city some days.

PHIL 2:12-16 Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, so now, not only as in my presence but much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, 13) for it is GOD who works in you, both to will and to work for his good pleasure.” 14) “Do all things without grumbling or disputing, 15) that you may be blameless and innocent, CHILDREN OF GOD without blemish in the midst of a crooked and twisted generation, among whom you shine as lights in the world, 16) holding fast to THE WORD OF LIFE...”

THE “SCANDAL” OF JESUS CHRIST

ACTS 16:16-24 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 fortune-telling. 17) She followed Paul and us, crying out, “These men are servants of the Most High God, who proclaim to you the way of salvation.” “Spirit of Divination” – “Puthos” (python) – Use of a seemingly innocent words / things / substances to ensnare those who listened or used them - Probably an adherent to the “ORACLE OF DELPHI” –

“A WAY of salvation...” - NOT “THE WAY of Salvation...” - Implying it was “One of Many ways” - an early UNIVERSALIST presentation – This heresy

has found “new life” in the current culture that sees “truth” as personally understood – and the Bible as suggestively interpreted...

18) And this she kept doing for many days. Paul, having become greatly annoyed, turned and said to the spirit, “I command you in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her.” And it came out that very hour.

Paul finally called an end to the harassment and its distraction from the “True Message of Salvation in Jesus Christ” that they preached...

The “GOSPEL OF JESUS CHRIST” is a “scandal” – “Skandalon” being offensive to those who hear... AND at the same time being a “trap / snare / stumbling stone” (Drawn to the bait – caught in the trap)

19) But when her owners saw that their hope of gain was gone, they seized Paul and Silas and dragged them into the marketplace 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 that are not lawful for us as Romans to accept or practice.”

It wasn’t offensive or illegal to be a “JEW” in the Roman Empire.

“They” were offended over the loss of income both from the influence of her words AND from the loss of the girl...

“Their” accusation was this “new religion” was influencing people to leave their “acceptable” pagan idolatries, which included the Cult of “EMPEROR WORSHIP” – thus leading to Treason... and Anarchy

This was used by the owners to punish Paul for their loss. We see this often in the cities to which Paul would bring the Gospel.

22) The crowd joined in attacking them, and the magistrates tore the garments off them and gave orders to beat them with rods.

As seen in Jesus’ crucifixion narrative, and many other scenes in the BOOK OF ACTS, it was not hard to raise a “riot” in a crowded market

23) And when they had inflicted many blows upon them, they threw them into prison, ordering the jailer to keep them. 24) Having received this order, he put them into the inner prison and fastened their feet in the stocks.

As a “ROMAN COLONY” any activity that could be potentially seen as “treasonous” against ROME and the EMPEROR by a non-citizen was punishable W/O a trial or hearing... (All Citizens received a trial) Beatings and Imprisonment were both immediate and open-ended...