

# SILAS

## Prophet of God and Paul's Co-Worker

### Introduction

- 1) When speaking of Paul's co-workers, we usually first think of Barnabas or Timothy
- 2) Another significant co-worker with Paul was **Silas**, who spent much of the second missionary journey at Paul's side (Acts 15:40-18:22)
- 3) We don't know a lot about Silas, or *Silvanus*, (formal Latin name), but what we are told is historically instructive and we can learn from his excellent example

### I) Who Was Silas?

A) *A leading man among the brethren in Jerusalem* (Acts 15:22)

B) *A prophet* (Acts 15:32)

- 1) New Testament prophets had a significant God-appointed role in the first-century church (1 Cor. 12:28; Eph. 4:11)
- 2) They, along with the apostles, revealed the divine mystery [gospel] of Christ by the Holy Spirit (Eph. 3:2-5; 2:20; cf. Lk. 11:49)
- 3) Spoke "edification, exhortation, and comfort to men" (1 Cor. 14:3; Acts 15:32)
- 4) Other prophets included Agabus (Acts 11:28; 21:10-11), the four virgin daughters of Philip the evangelist (Acts 21:8-9), and others (Acts 11:27; 13:1; 1 Cor. 11:4-5)
- 5) There were dangers of false prophets (Matt. 24:11; 1 Jn. 4:1)
- 6) Gift of prophecy ended when "the faith" was fully revealed (1 Cor. 13:8-10; Jude 3)

C) *Co-worker with Paul*

- 1) Traveled with Paul and Barnabas from Jerusalem to Antioch (Acts 15:22, 30)
- 2) Chosen by Paul as co-worker after dispute with Barnabas over Mark (Acts 15:36-40)
- 3) Traveled with Paul into Syria, Cilicia, Phrygia, Galatia, Macedonia, and Corinth
- 4) Included in the beginning greetings of 1 & 2 Thessalonians

D) *Worked later with the apostle Peter* (1 Pet. 5:12)

### II) An Example For Us

A) *Willing and Faithful Servant*

- 1) "Leading man among the brethren" because of faithful service and good reputation, not because he selfishly sought preeminence (contrast with Diotrephes - 3 Jn. 9)
- 2) Silas was not a man to shrink into the background when there was something to be done, but was willing and available for spiritual service (chosen - Acts 15:22, 40)
- 3) Sought to please God and not men (1 Thess. 2:1-4; cf. Acts 16:17)
- 4) Trusted by brethren to do exactly what was needed (Acts 15:27, 32)
- 5) No doubt these things encouraged Paul to choose him as a co-worker (Acts 15:40)

B) *Willing to Suffer for the Cause of Christ*

- 1) Silas knew about Paul's first journey (Acts 15:4) - the conversions *and* the violence
- 2) No hesitation to join Paul's labors, go to new parts of the world (Acts 16:10-11), and endure life-threatening situations (Acts 16:19-25; 17:5-10)

C) *Not Ashamed of the Gospel*

- 1) Preached it (Acts 18:5; 2 Cor. 1:19; 1 Thess. 2:9, 13)
- 2) Stood with those who boldly proclaimed it (1 Thess. 1:1; 2:2)
- 3) Not willing to compromise to please men (Acts 15:24-27; 17:1-14)

### Conclusion

**Silas** was one of many faithful men and women in the first century. His faithful service as a prophet of God and co-worker with Paul remains an example to us. Will you serve God faithfully, unashamed of the gospel that will save men today? Obey God today.