A Convicting Spirit
(Series: Reimagining Church; Message Twenty-Seven)
Acts 16:16-40

A. Like Murphy, we have a list of rules that experientially resonate
B. The wind always seems to be in our face (i.e., there is resistance to progress)

THE SPIRIT
A. In Acts, the Holy Spirit is the main character
   1. The Holy Spirit came primarily to build Christ’s Church
   2. The Spirit’s focus is forming us into the image of Jesus
      “When he comes, he will convict the world of guilt in regard to sin and righteousness and judgment: in regard to sin because people do not believe in me; in regard to righteousness because I am going to the Father where you can see me no longer, and in regard to judgment because the prince of this world stands condemned” (16:8-11)

B. The Spirit is either convicting us or we’re resisting him
   1. Few would acknowledge they are resisting the work of the Spirit
   2. It is one thing to acknowledge the Holy Spirit convicts people; it is quite another to open ourselves up to be convicted

C. The convicting work of the Holy Spirit begins with us
   1. There are two kinds of sorrow - godly sorrow and worldly sorrow
      a. Godly sorrow leads to action; worldly sorrow paralyzes people (Acts 2:37)
      b. Godly sorrow leads closer to God; worldly sorrow brings shame (Acts 2:38)
      c. Godly sorrow connects us to community; worldly sorrow promotes isolation - (Acts 2:41)
      d. Godly sorrow brings joy; worldly sorrow brings more guilt (Acts 2:46-47)
      “Search me, O God and know my heart, test me and know my anxious thoughts. See if there is any offensive way in me and led me in the way everlasting” (Psalm 139:23-24)
   2. How do we submit to the convicting ministry of the Spirit?
      a. Ask God to make us sensitive to the Spirit’s leading
      b. Engage the Word of God (Gospel)
      c. Listen for the words of God in others
      d. Set aside time to examine your heart and life (cf. 1 Corinthians 11:28)

THE STORY
A. The Gospel cannot tolerate the testimony of anyone resisting the Spirit
B. Paul and Silas are charged before the magistrates with being Jews and being politically incorrect
C. “They were severely flogged [and] thrown into prison...” (16:22-23)
   1. Rule: No good deed goes unpunished
   2. Response: they pray and sing hymns
D. 16:25 - “The other prisoners were listening to them”
   1. Rule: The world is always watching
   2. Response: they always exemplify Christ-like behavior
E. The jailer asks, “Sirs, what must I do to be saved?” (16:30)
   1. Answer: “Believe in the Lord Jesus and you shall be saved!” (16:31)
   2. As our witness goes, so goes the church

THE STATUTES
A. Every spiritual breakthrough brings a corresponding resistance
   “I will show him how much he must suffer for my name.” (Acts 9:16)
   1. Paul and company accepted the beating for the sake of the mission
   “Everyone who wants to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted” (2 Tim. 3:12)
   2. When we focus on His mission, there will always be opposition
B. Moving from singular to plural is essential to being church
   1. Luke has been narrating in the third person (cf. Acts 16:7 - “They came...”)
      a. Then in 16:10, Luke begins using “we” (“We got ready...”)
      b. Luke becomes part of the fellowship; he embraces the mission
   2. When you talk about your church do you use “they” or “we”?
      a. Are you a bystander or an eyewitness; are you observing or do you belong?
      b. Is being a follower of Jesus an association you have or your identity?
C. Even if the odds do not appear in our favor, Jesus is still our Savior
   1. Do you want to be like Jesus?
   2. It begins with our willingness to listen to the Spirit and make an “X”
D. If there is one rule you should remember, it is “God Rules!”