

PAUL & CO. ΧΙΟΥC

A Musical Drama **Based on Acts 15:35-16:40**

for unison chorus, soloists, flute, piano,
opt. handbells (3 oct.) and opt. congregation

Choral Score

Text by Mary Nelson Keithahn

Music by John D. Horman

Overview of *Paul & Co.*

Paul & Co. is a musical drama based on an episode from Paul's Second Missionary Journey as recorded in Acts 15:35-16:40. The musical is suitable for either large or small churches. It may be performed by children, youth, and/or adults, and lends itself especially well for use with multi-generational groups. The characters may be costumed in biblical or contemporary styles or a mixture of the two. The musical may be performed in a simple, imaginary setting in the chancel or on a stage with a more elaborate set. It may be used in place of the sermon at a service of worship, or as a separate production.

Detailed suggestions for producing the musical may be found in the Directors' Score (CGC-28).
Approximate performance time: 35-40 minutes.

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Cast of Characters

(In order of appearance)

Chorus
Luke*
Timothy
Silas
Paul
Macedonian*
Jewish Women of Philippi

Lydia
Fortuneteller*
Her Owners*
Policemen/Soldiers*
Judge*
Jailer (A Roman Centurion)
Jailer's Wife and Children

*Parts may be played by non-singers.

The Major Characters

Luke, author of the Gospel that bears his name and the Acts of the Apostles, was an early member of the Christian community in Antioch of Syria. He was trained in medicine, but served as Paul's secretary and companion on his last three journeys.

Timothy was a young man from Lystra, a city Paul had twice visited with Barnabas on his First Missionary Journey. Timothy's father was a Gentile, but his Jewish mother Eunice and grandmother Lois were members of the Christian community and friends of Paul. Paul and Silas took Timothy along with them on their Second Missionary Journey, and Timothy served as Paul's "right-hand man" from then on, despite his shy nature and less than robust health.

Silas, a Roman citizen also known as Silvanus, had been sent by the Church at Jerusalem to Antioch of Syria to work with the Christian community that was being gathered there. He accompanied Paul on his Second Missionary Journey and later worked with Peter in Rome. He was a loyal and dependable worker in the Church.

Paul, also known as Saul of Tarsus, was born a Jew, inherited Roman citizenship from his father, and received a Greek education. As a Pharisee studying in Jerusalem to be a rabbi, Saul had persecuted the Christians unmercifully. Then he was converted to the new faith himself, and became Paul, Apostle to the Gentiles, whose energy and unshakable faith were largely responsible for the organization and establishment of the Church in the whole Roman Empire. He was clearly a "man with a mission."

Lydia, a businesswoman who made her money in the purple-dye trade, was from the city of Thyatira, 100 miles or more north of Ephesus in Asia Minor. A Gentile who was loosely related to the small Jewish community in Philippi, she was moved by Paul's preaching to accept his faith in Christ. Her household was the first in Europe known to be converted and baptized, and she became a key person in the foundation of the Church in Philippi. Paul later wrote from prison to this community of Christians, thanking them for their financial support of his missionary efforts.

The Others

The **fortuneteller** was a slave girl whose ability to see into the future was used by her owners as a means of financial support. The slaveowners may have been husband and wife.

The **citizens of Philippi**, impressed with their status as a Roman colony, had organized themselves like Rome, under the control of **judges** whose power was backed by the military police. The **policemen** used their weapons (bundles of rods tied together around an ax) to carry out the floggings ordered by the judges. Roman citizens were supposed to be exempt from such punishment, and violation of such protection resulted in severe penalties for those responsible.

The **jailer** in the story was probably a Roman centurion, an officer in charge of 100 men. The baptism of his whole family is the second household baptism recorded in the New Testament.

Synopsis of the Plot

The **Book of Acts** records the early history of the Christian Church as it spread from Jerusalem throughout the Roman Empire. The section chosen for this musical drama clearly illustrates the work of the missionaries and their converts in gathering and establishing new faith communities, often at great personal cost.

Paul, starting out on his Second Missionary Journey with Silas and Timothy, is inspired to take his gospel to the city of Philippi in Macedonia. Lydia, a wealthy businesswoman, becomes Paul's first convert after hearing him preach to an informal prayer group of Jewish women. She is baptized with her household, and becomes a strong supporter of the new church.

Paul's next venture is less successful. Angered by the taunts of a fortune-telling slave girl, he exorcises the evil spirit from her, offending her owners who have depended upon her for their livelihood. Furious, they accuse Paul and Silas of proselytizing for the Jewish faith, an illegal act in a Roman colony whose citizens are supposed to look upon their emperor as divine.

The judge orders Paul and Silas to be beaten and thrown into the prison stocks. During the night an earthquake frees them, but Paul refuses to flee. When the jailer discovers the situation, he is frightened at his narrow escape and touched by Paul's concern for his well-being. He listens to Paul preach and asks to be baptized with his whole household.

The policemen who come to release Paul and Silas the next morning are horrified to learn they had beaten Roman citizens. Paul demands that the judge himself come to set them free. The judge arrives with an apology, but also asks them to leave before there is any more trouble. Paul and Silas first go to Lydia's home to collect Timothy and Luke, and worship once more with the new community of Christians in Philippi. Although not mentioned in the story, it seems logical to suppose that the Lord's Supper might have been part of their celebration.

Sign of the Fish

In times of persecution, the early Christians often used the fish as a secret sign of their faith. This was because the Greek letters that spell "fish" are the first letters of the five Greek words meaning "Jesus Christ, God's Son, Savior." In English those five first letters look something like this:

I	(I)	for	"Jesus"
CH	(X)	for	"Christ"
TH	(O)	for	"God's"
U	(Y)	for	"Son"
S	(C)	for	"Savior"



The cross was not used as a Christian symbol in these early years as it was considered a shameful way to die.

Overture

(During the Overture, the Chorus may enter in small groups, two or three at a time, from different directions.* Some are shopkeepers, some local citizens, some travelers on the road. A few Christians are scattered among them, identified only by the sign of the fish on their clothing or belongings. The groups meet onstage, exchange greetings, and then move to their assigned places. Luke enters last, carrying a large clipboard and oversized pen. He goes over to a writing table downstage right, sits on a stool, and begins to write.)

(*Instead, the Chorus may wait to enter on the second refrain of "We're Timothy, Silas, and Paul." Then the Chorus would respond to Luke's comments about Paul from behind the congregation.)

Maestoso ($\text{♩} = 92$)

John Horman

6

$\text{♩} = \text{♩}$. Allegro

12

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Timothy: (*sighs and sits down on edge of stage*) I never knew being a missionary would be such hard work! All we do is walk, walk, walk! And sleep in strange places! And wonder when we'll have our next meal!

Silas: (*groans*) Don't talk about food! It makes me miss your mother and grandmother. Eunice and Lois were wonderful cooks!

Timothy: They were more than that to me, Silas. They fed my spirit as well as my body. They gave me my faith.

Paul: (*approaches them with enthusiasm*) Well, my friends, where shall we go next? (*leads them to stage left*) Asia? There are believers in Colossae and Laodicea we should visit.

Silas: (*aside to Timothy*) And leaders in the synagogues who would run us out of town!

Paul: (*continuing, as if he hadn't heard*) I think we should go to Asia.

Chorus: (*with wind tree chimes in the background*) No, no, no.....

Yes, the Spirit Says, "No"

Chorus

(Each time the Chorus sings, the Trio should freeze in place. Spotlight on Chorus, leaving Trio backlit. On "Spirit" the Chorus members raise their hands, crossing them in front of their faces with fingers slightly fluttering and palms back-to-back. They shake their finger on "No," and do a "Cut" motion (like the umpire's "Safe" sign in baseball) for "That's not the way to go." On the last stanza, instead of the "Cut" motion, Chorus members raise hands high, holding that position until they clap on "Yes" and then shake their finger on "No" as before.)

Mary Nelson Keithahn

John Horman

179 With a light bounce ($\text{♩} = 92$)

182

Yes, the Spir - it _____ says, "No. That's not the way _____ to

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go." Yes, the Spir-it _____ says, "No. That's not the way _____ to

190

go." So, they trav-el once more to some far a-way shore 'til

195

God speaks a-gain to this lit-tle band _____ of men. _____

Paul: *(leading the others to stage right)* All right, all right. Asia's out. *(pauses to think)* How about Bithynia? There's work for us in Nicomedia. It's a big town. The people speak Greek. They would understand our message.

Timothy: *(aside to Silas)* And the leaders of the synagogues.....

Timothy and Silas: *(who nods in the affirmative)* ...would run us out of town!

Paul: *(enthusiastically, ignoring them)* I think we should go to Bithynia!

Chorus: *(again, with wind tree chimes in the background)* No, no, no...

(They return to center stage as the Chorus sings.)

Yes, the Spir - it _____ says, "No. That's not the way _____ to go." Yes, the

203
Spir - it _____ says, "No. That's not the way _____ to go." When you

207
don't know where you're head - ed and no path to you is clear, that's the

211
time to sim - ply wait for that voice you need _____ to hear. _____

mp

mp

trem
8va

Paul: I give up! We'll just have to go on past Mysia to Troas. We'll spend the night on the seashore, and wait...wait for the Spirit to tell us what to do.

(They walk slowly to upstage center and lie down to rest as Chorus finishes song. Spotlight dims.)