

Acts 16: 16 - 34

Psalm 97

Revelation 22: 12 - 14, 16 - 17, 20 - 21

John 17: 20 - 26

### **Notes on the Lesson from the Acts of the Apostles**

Philippi was founded by and names for Philip II of Macedonia, the father of Alexander the Great. Its most significant claim to fame was that the battle in which Octavian and Mark Anthony defeated Brutus and Cassius took place in the plain just outside the city walls. It was a prosperous Roman city in the middle of the first century. Most of the ruins on the site (see photo to the right) that are visible today are from the Byzantine era.



Also notice that the famous “we” passages in Acts begin in the sixteenth chapter. Although scholars debate whether author witnessed the events himself or whether these passages came from an account that was one of those “handed on to us by those who from the beginning were eyewitnesses” (Luke 1:2b), the use of the first person plural is a strong indication of the authenticity of these accounts.

### **Notes on the Gospel Lesson**

Jesus’ final words to his disciples prior to his arrest fill four chapters of the Gospel of John (Chapters 14 - 17). Chapter 17 closes this majestic address with Jesus’ prayer for the disciples, including all of the disciples to come. It is this last section that makes up this Sunday’s lesson. It is significant that a large portion of Jesus’ final prayer is for unity within the church. The phrase, “that they may be one” appears three times in verses 21 - 23. May we do our part to help Jesus’ prayer be fulfilled.