

## The Gospel and the Pocketbook

Ponder: Decreasing demand for sin

Scripture: "Your word I have hidden in my heart, that I might not sin against You" (Psa. 119:11, NKJV).

If you want someone's attention, hit him in the pocketbook!

In Philippi Paul encountered a slave girl afflicted with a demon. Her masters had profited greatly from the ability the demon gave her to tell fortunes. When Paul cast the evil spirit out of her, how do you suppose her masters reacted? Were they glad the poor girl was no longer demonized? No, indeed! Their only concern was that "their hope of profit was gone" (Acts 16:19).

They hauled Paul and Silas before the local authorities on charges of disturbing the peace and anti-Roman teaching (16:20, 21). Paul and Silas endured a painful beating with rods followed by many hours of confinement in the dungeon with their feet in stocks.

In Ephesus (Acts 19), Paul again saw the power of men's love of money. Demetrius and his fellow silversmiths made and sold shrines of the goddess Diana. Devotees of Diana from all over came to Ephesus to worship at her temple. Paul's preaching, however, had led so many people out of idolatry that the market for silver shrines was drying up!

When Demetrius met with his fellow silversmiths and the less-skilled workers they employed, what was his primary concern? Money! "Men, you know that we have our prosperity by this trade" (Acts 19:25). He also mentioned that their goddess was losing respect, but that was secondary.

What if we were so busy leading people to Jesus that the porn-peddlers, drug pushers, liquor stores, and casinos saw their profits plummeting? The gospel still has the power. Do we have the courage and dedication?

Hymn: "I Want To Be Ready To Meet Him"

Prayer: Father, we thank you for the Gospel of Christ and the power it has to change people's lives. Help us to be diligent in sharing that good news. In Jesus' name, Amen.