

Living out our faith Pt 19

Acts 16:1-15

V1-4

- Paul is now venturing into his second missionary journey. It has been five years since the first. Because of Barnabas' desire to take John Mark with him, Paul is given a new partner, a man name Silas. He would be valuable to the work God was doing through Paul; going on to become instrumental in the development of these early Gentile churches. This time they approach their journey from the East, which was the reverse of the first journey, and traveled to Derbe and Lystra. This was the city where Barnabas and Paul were thought to be Zeus and Mercury – Greek gods who come down from the heavens, and the people were ready to worship them. When they realized it wasn't their desire to be worship the people became angry and they stoned Paul leaving him to die outside the city. You'd think when Paul was putting his itinerary together for this second journey he would find a convenient reason for skipping this particular city, but he doesn't. I can't begin to understand the bravery of this man, but I do know that self-preservation was not in his vocabulary.
- During this time they were introduced to another man who would also play a prominent role in the Gentile churches, and his name is Timothy. This man would become so dear to Paul that he later called him his "His beloved and faithful son" (**1 Corinthians 4:17**) and his "true son" in the faith (**1 Timothy 1:2**). He is a man who knew the Apostle Paul like no other; someone that Paul would say was like-minded in the faith, with the same character of heart (**Philippians 2:19-22**). What an endorsement and testimony. This man who Paul heaped all this praise upon came from a spiritually divided home, his mother was Jewish and a believer but his father was Gentile and an unbeliever. You may think it doesn't say he was an unbeliever only that he was Greek. However, in **2 Timothy 1:5** as Paul was reminding Timothy to be strong in the faith, he mentions how Timothy came to know the Lord first, through his grandmother and second through his mother.

- This no doubt happened during Paul's first missionary journey and now five years later this young man becomes part of the team, but not without controversy and pain. Notice he had a praying grandmother, A Godly mother, a sterling testimony, but he is missing something that could hinder him from being received – circumcision. Didn't we cover this last chapter? But this isn't for salvation it is for invitation. Since Timothy was part Jewish, Paul knew that the Jewish crowd would use this to cause division so Paul advised Timothy to be circumcised that to do this, the only thing that would be hurt was his flesh not his doctrine (**1 Corinthians 9:19-22**). In contrast, when the judaizers wanted to circumcise Titus in **Galatians 2:3-4** - Paul absolutely forbade it because Titus was a gentile. This allowed them to deliver to the churches the decrees which had been established in Jerusalem that: Salvation is by faith alone, sexual immorality is forbidden to all believers, and meats offered to idols and that meats strangled and mixed with blood should not be eaten.

V5-15

- Notice the churches are established in the faith and then increased in number; you see the order, first establish and second numbers. Churches today are merely interested in numbers not maturity. Give me one hundred rock solid in the faith saints over a one thousand carnal folks any day.
- Next Paul wanted to go into modern day Turkey and preach the gospel, but the Holy Spirit said no. Isn't it interesting that God allowed him to try and go before He told him no. Why? God wants us to cast a wide net but the true test is when you want to do something and God wants to do another, who will you listen to? Yourself? or God? Verse 7 – again they are forbidden to go as God closes the door. So they travel to Troas where they receive direction where God wants them to go. What a lesson. Paul never stops or complains, he just keeps moving, expecting God will eventually speak to him – so they go here no, they go over there no, and then they enter here until a vision is given as to where God is guiding (**Proverbs 16:9**). This is comforting to me that not even Apostles were always clear as to God's will for their ministries. Verse 9 – in this vision Paul gets a call for help, now that's a great reason to go somewhere isn't it? Verse 10 – notice the pronoun

“we”, it was **DR. Luke** who wrote the book of Acts and in verses 4, 6,7,8, you read “they” now its “we”.

- What changed is Luke has now joined the team. Paul’s liked to go where the people were, so he journeys one hundred and fifty miles to the city of Philippi – a Roman colony. Verse 13 – Paul’s custom was to enter the synagogue but finding none they found some women holding their own Sabbath meeting. Funny that although Paul heard the voice of a male in his vision all he found initially was women. So it’s here Paul preaches the gospel and a woman named Lydia hears it and gives her life to the Lord. Some interesting facts about this woman
 1. She’s from Thyatira, which is in Asia Minor the place God forbade Paul to go.
 2. She’s a successful businesswoman, a seller of purple dyes.
 3. She’s a Gentile who openly worships without fear of persecution.
- The Lord brought her all the way of over to Europe, not to merely make money, but to get saved, she probably thought it was a good business decision but God had a greater plan for her life. This caused a spiritual awakening to occur in Lydia’s house, as the members of her household also became saved. And since there’s no mention of a husband we must assume it is her servants. Verse 15 – you should not have to speculate whether someone knows the Lord or not if you do then something is wrong. Immediately after she’s saved she asks Paul if he is to examined her and find that she is faithful then to come over and stay at her home. Wow! When God opens a heart they are not saved by good works, they are saved in order to do good works.