

The Book of Acts  
Chapter 16 Part 1

*Acts 16:9-10*

*9 And a vision appeared to Paul in the night; There stood a man of Macedonia, and prayed him, saying, Come over into Macedonia, and help us.*

*10 And after he had seen the vision, immediately we endeavored to go into Macedonia, assuredly gathering that the Lord had called us for to preach the gospel unto them.*

I. Review

- 1 Acts chapter 15 detailed the first church council in Jerusalem that had to deal with the big question of the period: Should the new Gentile believers be required to keep the ceremonial traditions of Judaism including circumcision?
- 2 Peter addressed the council first saying when Gentiles were first saved, it was by grace and receiving the Holy Ghost that they got in the church, just as it happened for the Jews.
- 3 Paul and Barnabas next told the testimonies of how many Jews and Gentiles were saved on their recent missionary trip across Galatia.
- 4 Finally, James, the brother of Jesus, gave the decision of the council that Gentiles should simply be required to stay away from their former practices associated with idolatry, eating the blood, strangled animals, and fornication.
- 5 That pleased everyone, so James prepared a document to be circulated among the churches.
- 6 But as Paul and Silas prepared to start their second missionary journey, there was a contention that arose between them regarding Barnabas' nephew, John Mark, so the two parted ways and two separate missionary journeys took place instead of one.

II. The Second Missionary Journey (Part 1)

- 1 The first missionary journey had taken place between 45-47AD in Acts chapters 13-14.
- 2 The second journey began two years later between 49-52AD. This journey is covered in the last two verses of chapters 15, chapters 16, 17, and part of 18.

### III. The Calling of Timothy (Verse 1-5)

#### A. The Cities: the big picture

1 Let's remind ourselves how this second missionary journey got started from the last two verses of chapter 15:

*Acts 15:40-41*

*40 And Paul chose Silas, and departed, being recommended by the brethren unto the grace of God.*

*41 And he went through Syria and Cilicia, confirming the churches.*

2 Syria is the region that the city of Antioch is in, and Cilicia is the region of Paul's home city of Tarsus.

3 On the first missionary journey [**map: First Missionary Journey-close**], Paul and Barnabas had come to Derbe from the west, having made a semi-circle by way of Cyprus, Perga, Antioch of Pisidia, Iconium, and Lystra.

4 But on Paul's second missionary journey, [**map: 2<sup>nd</sup> Missionary Journey; and map: Regions Highlighted**] he and Silas came to Derbe from the east, having traveled overland from Antioch in Syria through northern Syria and the province of Cilicia. [**map: Cilician Gates, Derbe, Lystra**]

5 There exists a passage through the Taurus mountains [**images of Taurus mountains**] called the Cilician Gates, [**image: Cilician Gates**] well known from ancient history and was widely used by Greek and Roman armies. It is a narrow gorge that today is a **Tarsus-Ankara Highway**.

6 It was the only means of traveling from the region of Cilicia where Paul's hometown of Tarsus was, into the regions of Galatia and Asia.

7 So the second trip began where the first trip had ended.

#### B. Meeting Timothy

1 From Derbe they traveled on to Lystra and the other cities in order where they had formerly ordained elders over congregations in the churches they began on the first missionary journey.

*Acts 16:1 Then came he to Derbe and Lystra: and, behold, a certain disciple was there, named Timotheus, the son of a certain woman, which was a Jewess, and believed; but his father was a Greek:*

2 Again, remember the significance of Lystra. Jews from the region had influenced a mob in Lystra to stone Paul and left him for dead.

3 Someone less bold and more fearful than Paul would likely have avoided Lystra. But God blesses those bold in faith.

4 For there in Lystra lived a young man named Timothy, who no doubt, along with his family, had been converted to Christianity through the ministry of Paul and Barnabas on the first trip two years before.

5 Timothy had gained a good reputation among the brethren in those two years:

*Acts 16:2 Which was well reported of by the brethren that were at Lystra and Iconium.*

6 Perhaps he had been helping in the ministry in these local assemblies. Paul recognized in him a potential missionary and minister of the gospel.

7 Timothy had demonstrated faithfulness, and God called him to a greater service and giftings:

*1 Tim 4:14-16*

*14 Neglect not the gift that is in thee, which was given thee by prophecy, with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery.*

*15 Meditate upon these things; give thyself wholly to them; that thy profiting may appear to all.*

*16 Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee.*

8 Paul wanted Timothy to join his missionary party, out there was one difficulty to be overcome. Timothy's mother, Eunice, and Grandmother Lois, were faithful Jews, but his father was a Greek. That is a general reference to him being a Gentile, not necessarily from Greece.

9 Because Lystra was a Roman colony occupied by Roman soldiers at this time, it is quite possible that his father was a Roman.

10 It is likely that, although his Jewish mother would have wanted it, his Gentile father did not permit Timothy to fully practice the Jewish faith by being circumcised as a baby.

11 But from childhood, Timothy was taught the Old Testament Scriptures by his mother and grandmother and was brought up knowing the Jewish faith.

12 We can read a little about Timothy's family, his calling, and his friendship with Paul in:

*2 Tim 1:2-7*

*2 To Timothy, my dearly beloved son: Grace, mercy, and peace, from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord.*

*3 I thank God, whom I serve from my forefathers with pure conscience, that **without ceasing I have remembrance of thee in my prayers night and day;***

*4 Greatly desiring to see thee, being mindful of **thy tears**, that I may be*

*filled with joy;*

*5 When I call to remembrance the unfeigned faith that is in thee, which dwelt first in thy grandmother Lois, and thy mother Eunice; and I am persuaded that in thee also.*

*6 Wherefore I put thee in remembrance that thou stir up the gift of God, which is in thee by the putting on of my hands.*

*7 For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind.*

- 13 Being raised by a Jewish mother and grandmother, Timothy was taught the scriptures as a child, and knew how important it was to keep the scriptures:

*2 Tim 3:14-17*

*14 But continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them;*

*15 And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.*

*16 All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness:*

*17 That the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works.*

- C. All things to all men—come to the Jews as a Jew

- 1 But because Paul knew the importance Jews placed not only on learning scripture, but also on circumcision, Timothy's mixed ethnic heritage that would present a problem for many of the people they would be ministering to. Especially since Timothy had not been circumcised:

*Acts 16:3 Him would Paul have to go forth with him; and took and circumcised him because of the Jews which were in those quarters: for they knew all that his father was a Greek.*

- 2 The fact that he was an uncircumcised Jew would be a hindrance to their influence in ministry as they traveled through the synagogues preaching the gospel.

- 3 It wasn't required for salvation—the council in Jerusalem had decisively recognized that. In fact, ironically, Paul was carrying copies of the council's decision stating that circumcision was not required of Gentile believers.

- 4 So why did Paul require that Timothy be circumcised?

- 5 It had to do with maximum influence with the gospel, as Paul stated in his first letter to the Corinthians—a letter he wrote following this missionary journey:

*1 Cor 9:20-23*

*20 And unto the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might gain the Jews; to them that are under the law, as under the law, that I might gain them that are under the law;*

*21 To them that are without law, as without law, (being not without law to God, but under the law to Christ,) that I might gain them that are without law.*

*22 To the weak became I as weak, that I might gain the weak: **I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some.***

*23 And **this I do for the gospel's sake**, that I might be partaker thereof with you.*

6 That is why Paul required Timothy to be circumcised.

7 It is commonly thought that we don't need to worry about what others think about us, and on one level that is true.

8 But if you want to be effective in reaching certain groups, you must become all things to all men in order to save some people.

9 What might not be required for salvation, might be required for influence among those you want to reach.

10 But this was done because of Timothy's Jewish family background, and it just made it easier for them to go into synagogues to preach.

Uncircumcised were not permitted in the Temple in Jerusalem because it was thought they would pollute the temple (Acts 21:28).

11 It is interesting that the primary purpose of this trip was also to deliver the decree passed by the Apostles and elders in Jerusalem, stating that circumcision was not required in the Gentile churches. That is exactly what they did:

*Acts 16:4-5*

*4 And as they went through the cities, they delivered them the decrees for to keep, that were ordained of the apostles and elders which were at Jerusalem.*

*5 And so were the churches established in the faith, and increased in number daily.*

12 These churches were built up and established in the faith, and through Paul's evangelistic efforts many new converts were added to them daily.

IV. The Macedonian Call (Verses 6-11)

D. Stay away from there

1 Paul, for the purpose of encouraging and establishing the saints in the faith, visited all the churches that had been raised up on the first missionary journey.

2 He then traveled, with Silas and Timothy, through the regions of Phrygia and Galatia.

3 I want you to see this in a translation using the earliest manuscripts:

*Acts 16:6-8*

*6 They went through the region of Phrygia and Galatia, having been prevented by the Holy Spirit from speaking the message in the province of Asia. 7 When they came to Mysia, they attempted to go into Bithynia, but the Spirit of Jesus did not allow them to do this, 8 so they passed through Mysia and went down to Troas. NET*

4 First, let's look at the area involved. This territory embraced most of central Asia Minor **[map:Galatia, Phrygia, Asia]**. No particulars of this ministry were recorded but we know that churches were established in Galatia, for Paul later wrote his Epistle to the Galatians.

E. The Holy Ghost and the Spirit of Jesus speak

1 Second, let's see why they made those choices. Paul and Silas intended to go into the western part of Asia Minor, likely toward Ephesus, the capital city of Asia on the coast.

2 But notice in verse 6 that the Holy Ghost prevented them from going there so they more of a northern route toward Bithynia and the Black Sea.

3 **[map: Second Missionary Journey\_regions]**

4 He then thought he should go into Asia Minor's most northern province of Bithynia, but again the Spirit of Jesus restrained them.

5 It is important to note how the earliest manuscripts of this passage show that it was the Spirit of Jesus who spoke with them in verse 7, and it was the Holy Ghost/Holy Spirit that spoke to them in verse 6.

6 In other words, while some try to divide up God into various persons, the phrases Holy Ghost and Spirit of Jesus are used interchangeably, meaning they are the one and same.

F. Waiting on God's call

1 They were not, at this time, permitted to go either west or north, but were led between these two points to Troas on the northwest coast of Asia Minor.

*Acts 16:8 And they passing by Mysia came down to Troas.*

- 2 I'll point out that on their return home journey, they did stop in Ephesus and preached briefly as he was ending this trip, but came back on his third missionary journey and did spend much time in Ephesus and established many churches in the area.
- 3 And Jesus forbade Paul and Silas to go to Bythynia at this time, but later on someone started a church. Peter wrote his first letter to five areas including the Christians in Bythynia.
- 4 A lesson to learn from this: just because the Holy Ghost says no today, doesn't mean that is a no forever.
- 5 **[map: Troas]** It was here that they would wait to hear from the Lord. And God certainly did speak with them by a vision and also gave them something that proved very crucial to all of history.  
*Acts 16:9-10*  
*9 And a vision appeared to Paul in the night; There stood a man of Macedonia, and prayed him, saying, **Come over into Macedonia, and help us.***  
*10 And after he had seen the vision, immediately **we** endeavored to go into Macedonia, assuredly gathering that the Lord had called us for to preach the gospel unto them.*
- 6 **[map: Troas, Macedonia]**
- 7 This vision of a Macedonian man asking for help revealed the pressing need for the gospel in Macedonia at this time. Rather than going where they wanted, they waited on the Lord until He led to Troas, and then Macedonia.
- G. Luke joins the journey
- 1 But something else we see in verse 10 arrives with the missionary team as a gift for all the ages.  
*Acts 16:10 And after he had seen the vision, immediately **we** endeavored to go into Macedonia, assuredly gathering that the Lord had called us for to preach the gospel unto them.*
- 2 Luke, the author of the Book of Acts, begins to use the pronoun "we" in several places through the rest of the book. What could that mean? That communicates that Luke joined Paul's party in Troas.
- 3 That is why we get three chapters of minute details on this journey. Luke chronicled many details of the journey.

4 They took a boat from Troas, and sailed across the northwest corner of the Aegean Sea by way of the island of Samothracia to the Macedonian seaport of Neapolis. **[map: Troas, Macedonia]**

V. Paul at Philippi: introduction (Verses 12-15)

1 Philippi which was the chief city of that area, so preaching there would sow the gospel seed at the center of the main operations and interests of the people, from which point it would spread into all that region.

*Acts 16:12-15*

*12 And from thence to **Philippi**, which is the chief city of that part of Macedonia, and a colony: and we were in that city abiding certain days.*

2 **Map of Asia/Europe** – first time the gospel reached the European continent:

*13 And on the sabbath we went out of the city by a river side, where prayer was wont to be made; and we sat down, and spake unto the women which resorted thither.*

*14 And a certain woman named Lydia, a seller of purple, of the city of Thyatira, which worshipped God, heard us: whose heart the Lord opened, that she attended unto the things which were spoken of Paul.*

*15 And when she was baptized, and her household, she besought us, saying, If ye have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come into my house, and abide there. And she constrained us.*

3 As we saw in their first missionary trip, Paul's practice was to begin his ministry in each city among the Jews on Sabbath if there was a synagogue in the city. That opened the door not only to Jews but also Gentiles who were able to hear, or following the synagogue service.

4 There was obviously no synagogue in Philippi, but a few Jews, and perhaps a few proselytes to the Jew's religion, all of whom were women, met to worship the Lord by a riverside.

5 We will continue with this next week.