

II. THE SECOND MISSIONARY JOURNEY OF PAUL

A. THE COURSE WHICH PAUL WAS LED TO TAKE ON HIS SECOND MISSIONARY JOURNEY (Acts 15:36-18:22).

1. Paul and Silas departed from the church in Antioch, Syria and went through Syria and Cilicia to Derbe and Lystra (Acts 15:40-16:1).

a. The reason for departing on this journey and why Silas was chosen.

(1) Paul wanted to know how the believers were doing in the places where he had preached the gospel (Acts 15:36).

(2) Paul chose Silas instead of Barnabas because Barnabas wanted to take John Mark with them again and Paul would not agree to it (Acts 15:37-40).

b. The events which occurred at Derbe and Lystra.

(1) At Lystra Paul chose Timothy to join the missionary party. Timothy had a good testimony before the churches at Lystra and Iconium (Acts 16:1-2).

(2) Notice because Timothy's father was a Greek and there were Jews in that place, Paul circumcised Timothy (Acts 16:3).

Why did Paul do this when he refused to do the same with Titus (Gal. 2:3) and it contradicted what he preached in other places? (Gal. 5:6; 6:15) This was no doubt a personal application of I Cor. 9:19,20. Without Timothy being circumcised Paul wouldn't have had any access or entrance to minister to the Jews. Otherwise both of them would have been considered unclean. It should be noted that although Timothy was circumcised on this occasion, it had nothing to do with his justification. Whereas the situation with Titus was different. The pressure to have him circumcised was to bring him under the law as a means of justification. Thus Paul refused to do it. (Adam Clark's Commentary)

c. Some applications we can make from these events.

(1) Acts 16:2: In Paul choosing Timothy we see the importance of a good testimony to be selected for service. People who are without this are greatly limited in the ways they can serve the Lord.

(2) Acts 16:3: Notice as Paul carried out the rite of circumcision with Timothy to prevent controversy and contention, there are times when we should agree with others to win them.

2. Paul and Silas left Lystra and traveled through Phrygia and Galatia and came to Troas.

a. The reason they took this route.

(1) Note the Holy Spirit forbade them from preaching the Word of God in Asia (16:6).

(2) Then when they attempted to go into Bithynia the Holy Spirit would not allow them (16:7,8).

b. The ministry they were involved in along the way to Troas.

(1) As they went through the cities they delivered to the churches certain decrees to keep (16:4).

(2) This ministry caused the churches to be established in the faith and to grow (16:5).

c. The events which occurred at Troas.

At Troas Paul saw a vision of a man in Macedonia desiring help and Paul was assured by it that the Lord wanted him to go there and preach the gospel to them (Acts 16:9,10).

d. Some applications we can make from these events.

(1) Acts 16:4: First, we see for churches to be established in the faith they must be taught certain truths. Without sound teaching churches will fall prey to every wind of doctrine and the devil will destroy them through false teachings.

(2) Acts 16:5: Secondly, we see that a well-established church will reach others and grow.

(3) Acts 16:6,7: Thirdly, as Paul was sensitive to the leadership of the Holy Spirit, in where he went and preached, so should we be in our witnessing to others.

(4) Acts 16:9,10: Note while Paul was given a special revelation through a dream to direct him, we should understand that God doesn't lead us in this way today (Heb. 1:1,2).

3. Next Paul and his missionary company sailed from Troas to Samothracia and they traveled to Neapolis and from there to Philippi, Macedonia (Acts 16:11,12).

a. The blessing which occurred at Troas.

At Troas Luke arrived and joined Paul's missionary party (16:10). This is evident as the narrative changes from the third person "they" to the first person "we."

b. The events which occurred at Philippi.

(1) When the Sabbath came Paul and his company went to a place of prayer by the riverside and spoke to the women there (16:13).

- (2) Note from this meeting Lydia and her household were saved and baptized and she constrained Paul and his company to abide with her (16:14,15).
- (3) As they went to prayer Paul was plagued by a demon-possessed maid for many days. Finally, Paul cast out the demon and this resulted in her masters stirring up trouble against Paul and Silas. They were beaten and put in prison (16:16-24).
- (4) From prison God heard their prayers and this led to an earthquake and the Philippian jailer's conversion (16:25-34).
- (5) After this Paul and Silas were released the next day and besought to leave the city after it was learned that they were Roman citizens who had been beaten uncondemned (16:35-40).

c. Some applications we can make from these events.

- (1) Acts 16:16-18: Note how the devil used this maid to hinder Paul's ministry. What she was saying seemed helpful but it was lacking. Religious counterfeits often sound spiritual and used of God.
- (2) Acts 16:19-34: From Paul's response to the magistrates we can learn that it's alright to exercise our rights as citizens even though we are Christians and citizens of another country.

4. Leaving Philippi, Paul and his company traveled through Amphipolis and Apollonia and came to Thessalonica (Acts 16:40-17:1).

a. Some things about this place.

Thessalonica was situated on the Thermaic Bay and was a capital city of one of the four Roman districts of Macedonia. It was named after Thessalonica, the wife of Cassander, who built the city. And Thessalonica was the sister of Alexander the Great. Today it bears the name of Saloniki in western Turkey (Smith's Bible Dictionary).

b. The events which occurred at Thessalonica.

- (1) There Paul preached the gospel in a synagogue on three Sabbaths and some believed. Among these were Greeks and chief women of the city (17:2-4).
- (2) Note, however, that the unbelieving Jews went about to cause an uproar in the city and they brought Jason and certain believers unto the rulers of the city because he had received Paul and his company (17:5-7).
- (3) When the rulers had taken security of Jason and the others they let them go (17:8,9). In other words, they were released on bail.

(4) Note while Paul was in Thessalonica, the church at Philippi sent a gift to meet his needs on two occasions (Phil. 4:15,16).

c. Some applications we can make from these events.

(1) Acts 17:5-9: Once again we can expect opposition to the preaching of the gospel from the religious crowd.

(2) Acts 17:6: Notice Paul had a testimony of making a difference in people's lives.

(3) Acts 17:7-9: We may learn also that it may cost us, in this life to side with God's servants, but it will yield eternal dividends.

5. Next Paul and Silas were sent away by night by the brethren and they came to Berea (17:10).

a. Some things about this place and people.

Berea was city of Macedonia near Mount Bermius and not far from Pella. It used to be called Irenopolis, today it is called Boor or Verria (American Tract Society Dictionary). Sopater was a native of this city and was converted at this time and became a companion of Paul (Acts 20:4).

b. The events which occurred at Berea.

(1) In Berea, Paul preached in the synagogues and many believed, including Greeks (17:10-12).

(2) When the Jews of Thessalonica learned that Paul was preaching in Berea, they came and stirred up the people (17:13).

(3) This led the brethren to send Paul to Athens, but Silas and Timothy abode there until they received word from Paul to join him (17:14,15).

c. Some applications we can make from these events.

(1) Acts 17:10: Sometimes circumstances may require us to retreat from certain people or places.

(2) Sometimes we may have to be separated from those we love in the Lord's service. This is certainly illustrated in missionary service.

6. Paul then sailed from Berea to Athens (Acts 17:15).

a. Some things about this place and people.

Athens was the capital city of Attica and situated about three miles from the seacoast. It was the chief city of Greek culture and derived its name from the worship given to the goddess Athena. The Acropolis there was a center of various architecture

with the Parthenon (House of the Virgin) being its chief building. The Areopagus (Hill of Ares) was situated to the north of the city and the acropolis stood on the east. West of the Areopagus stood another hill called Mars Hill (Smith's Bible Dictionary).

b. The events which occurred at Athens, Greece.

- (1) In Athens Paul preached in the Synagogue and in the market place daily (Acts 17:16,17).
- (2) As a result, Paul was taken to the Areopagus where the high court of Athens met. This place was called Mars Hill (Latin form of the Areopagus). There Paul preached (17:18-31).
- (3) This resulted in certain ones believing and others mocking or undecided (17:32-34).

c. Some applications we can make from these events.

- (1) Acts 17:22,23: Notice it's not enough to be sincere or religious as the people of Athens displayed, people need to hear and believe the gospel.
- (2) Acts 17:32-34: We see also the three-fold response when the gospel is preached.

7. Then Paul left Athens and went to Corinth (Acts 18:1).

a. Some things about this place and people.

Corinth was situated some 40 miles west of Athens on the Isthmus which separated the Ionian Sea from the Aegean Sea. It was the capital of Achaia and enjoyed the commerce of two oceans. It was one of the most populous and wealthiest cities of Greece. Corinth was also a licentious city given to the worship of the goddess Venus which involved notorious prostitution as a practice in that worship (American Tract Society Dictionary).

b. The events which occurred at Corinth.

- (1) At Corinth Paul met Aquila and his wife Priscilla. He stayed with them and worked with them in their occupation of tent making (18:1-3).
- (2) Every Sabbath, Paul preached in the synagogue and then when Silas and Timothy joined him, he preached to the Jews again, but they rejected the gospel. Paul then denounced their unbelief and then turned to the Gentiles (18:4-6).
- (3) Many Corinthians believed on the Lord and Paul stayed there a year and a half teaching God's Word (18:7-11).
- (4) During this time the Jews, who opposed Paul, brought him before Gallio,

the deputy of Achaia and accused him. But Gallio drove them away from the judgment seat, not willing to judge things according to the law of the Jews (18:12-16).

(5) At this time the Jews beat Sosthenes, the ruler of the synagogue, before the judgment seat but Gallio was indifferent about the matter (18:17).

c. Some applications we can make from these events.

(1) Acts 18:1-3: Here we note how God directs and provides for our temporal needs and gives us others with whom we can fellowship.

(2) Acts 18:3: Notice sometimes preachers have to make tents and support themselves in the Lord's work.

(3) Acts 18:9-11: Notice, as Paul was assured by the Lord in preaching the gospel, so should we be because it fulfills His calling and produces fruit.

(4) Acts 18:12-17: Once again, we can expect opposition to the preaching of the gospel. And believing on the Lord may cost some more than others.

8. From Corinth Paul sailed to Ephesus (Acts 18:18).

a. The blessing associated with this voyage.

Aquila and Priscilla joined Paul's company when he left Corinth.

b. Some events which occurred on the way to Ephesus and then while there.

(1) In Cenchreae Paul took a Jewish vow and shaved his head (18:18). This was a practice associated with Jewish vows (Numbers 6:18).

(2) At Ephesus Paul preached in the synagogue but he refused to tarry long there so he could be at the Feast in Jerusalem (18:19-21).

c. Some applications we can make from these events

(1) Acts 18:18: Sometimes we may have to identify with others in some ways in order to win them. Obviously, this does not mean to involve one's self in sin.

(2) Acts 18:20,21: As Paul was mindful of good opportunities to reach others, so should we be. There are various times and events which afford us greater opportunities to witness and we should keep these in mind lest we miss them.

9. Paul finally sailed from Ephesus and came to Caesarea. From there he went up and greeted

the church at Jerusalem and from there he returned to Antioch, Syria (18:21-22).