

"The Second Missionary Journey"

Part 1

Acts 15:41-18:22

Introduction: In our study last week, we looked at the contention between Paul and Barnabas. Paul decided to revisit the churches that were started on the first missionary journey and Barnabas was in agreement. Apparently, John Mark listened to the testimonies after they had returned from the first trip and he decided that he wanted to join Paul and Barnabas on this second journey. Barnabas was all set to take him along but Paul was set against it. This led to a heated discussion and the end result was that Paul and Barnabas parted ways. Barnabas took John Mark with him and Paul took Silas. We are given no information about how the journey went for Barnabas and Mark as a team. We do, however, have a record of Paul's journey with Silas and this is what we are going to look at tonight. The remainder of the book of Acts follows along with the Apostle Paul and his ministry on the second missionary journey and the third missionary journey. In chapter 16 we will see God move His missionaries so that the Gospel will now go to Europe starting at Philippi.

I. Revisiting the Churches

Notice Acts 15:41-16:1

In this journey they did not take the same route that was traveled the first time. This time they went through Paul's home region of Cilicia which was the area of Tarsus. From there they worked their way back through the cities. We can only imagine the joy of the believers when they heard Paul was back in their town. Then there was the news that had come from the Jerusalem church that the Gentiles did not need to become as Jews through circumcision and keeping the Law, but only needed to practice abstaining from four things. There would have been great rejoicing within the churches when they heard this news.

Here in 16:1 we are now introduced to a new convert by the name of Timotheus or Timothy. We see in this verse that his mother was a Jew and his father was a Greek/Gentile. We are told in this verse that his mother was a believer but it appears as though his father was not. His mother was probably reached with the Gospel when Paul and Barnabas made the first missionary journey. Timothy was led to the Lord by Paul and he was taught the Old Testament Scriptures by his mother and grandmother.

2 Timothy 1:2-5

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.*

These ladies taught Timothy the Scriptures but he was saved when he met Paul on the first missionary journey. Possibly it was the stoning of Paul that had a deep impact upon him. Whatever was the case, Timothy heard the clear Gospel when Paul preached and he was saved.

1 Timothy 1:2

² *Unto Timothy, my own son in the faith: Grace, mercy, and peace, from God our Father and Jesus Christ our Lord.*

Timothy grew into a very dependable disciple. He became a very selfless servant of the Lord.

Philippians 2:19-22

¹⁹ *But I trust in the Lord Jesus to send Timotheus shortly unto you, that I also may be of good comfort, when I know your state.*

²⁰ *For I have no man likeminded, who will naturally care for your state.*

²¹ *For all seek their own, not the things which are Jesus Christ's.*

²² *But ye know the proof of him, that, as a son with the father, he hath served with me in the gospel.*

Here in Acts 16 Timothy already had a God honoring reputation.

Notice Acts 16:2

We do not know Timothy's age but we can be sure he was a young man. Notice what Paul said later when he wrote 1 Timothy.

1 Timothy 1:12

¹² **Let no man despise thy youth**; but be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity.

Application:

Just a reminder to all of us that God can use us at any age. Moses was 80 when he began to lead the nation of Israel. Joshua was 89 when he led the nation after Moses' death. David was but a young man when he was anointed king. Josiah was very young when he became king.

2 Kings 22:1-2

Josiah was eight years old when he began to reign, and he reigned thirty and one years in Jerusalem. And his mother's name was Jedidah, the daughter of Adaiah of Boscath.

² *And he did that which was right in the sight of the LORD, and walked in all the way of David his father, and turned not aside to the right hand or to the left.*

God is not concerned about age He is only concerned about the heart.

1 Samuel 16:7

⁷ *But the LORD said unto Samuel, Look not on his countenance, or on the height of his stature; because I have refused him: for the LORD seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the LORD looketh on the heart.*

Notice Acts 16:3

Paul made the choice to take Timothy with him on the missionary trip but before he did, he had him circumcised because of the Jews. Now this raises some questions. In the previous chapter it was determined by the church at Jerusalem that circumcision was not required for believers. So how do we harmonize Acts 16 with Acts 15? Another question is, "How are we to view this in light of Galatians 5?"

Galatians 5:1-4

Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage.

² *Behold, I Paul say unto you, that if ye be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing.*

³ *For I testify again to every man that is circumcised, that he is a debtor to do the whole law.*

⁴ Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace.

Another question would be, "Why was Timothy circumcised but Titus was not?"

Galatians 2:3-5

³ But neither Titus, who was with me, being a Greek, was compelled to be circumcised:

⁴ And that because of false brethren unawares brought in, who came in privily to spy out our liberty which we have in Christ Jesus, that they might bring us into bondage:

⁵ To whom we gave place by subjection, no, not for an hour; that the truth of the gospel might continue with you.

In light of all of this, why did Paul have Timothy circumcised? Timothy's mother was a Jew and his father was a Gentile. Back then if the mother was a Jew, then the child was also considered a Jew. Paul knew that it would be offensive to the Jews if Timothy, whom they knew to be a Jew, was not circumcised. Paul was taking him on the missionary journey and when they would come to a town they would go first to the synagogue and preach the Gospel to the Jews. If it was known that Timothy, a Jew, was not circumcised then the Jews might refuse to listen. Timothy's circumcision was not a perversion of the Gospel, but it was for the purpose of reaching the Jewish people with the Gospel. Getting back to Titus, he was not circumcised because he was a Gentile. Timothy was a Jew and Paul was very concerned about reaching the Jews with the Gospel of Jesus Christ so he would do all he could to be sure the Jews were not offended.

Notice the words of Homer Kent.

"Timothy's circumcision was not for salvation but was performed to make Timothy acceptable to synagogue audiences (not to placate Judaizing Christians). The operation regularized his status and increased his usefulness to Paul in Jewish areas."

Paul's entire missionary team was circumcised and could now be effective in reaching both the Jews and the Gentiles. They will later in this chapter be joined by a Gentile named Luke.

Application:

There are times in our lives when we must be willing to forfeit our liberty in Jesus Christ so that we are not offensive to someone else. Let us remember how Paul addressed this

subject in the letter to the Corinthians. The question in Corinth was, "Can I eat meat offered to idols?"

1 Corinthians 8:8-13

⁸ *But meat commendeth us not to God: for neither, if we eat, are we the better; neither, if we eat not, are we the worse.*

⁹ *But take heed lest by any means this liberty of yours become a stumblingblock to them that are weak.*

¹⁰ *For if any man see thee which hast knowledge sit at meat in the idol's temple, shall not the conscience of him which is weak be emboldened to eat those things which are offered to idols;*

¹¹ *And through thy knowledge shall the weak brother perish, for whom Christ died?*

¹² *But when ye sin so against the brethren, and wound their weak conscience, ye sin against Christ.*

¹³ *Wherefore, if meat make my brother to offend, I will eat no flesh while the world standeth, lest I make my brother to offend.*

1 Corinthians 10:23-25

²³ *All things are lawful for me, but all things are not expedient: all things are lawful for me, but all things edify not.*

²⁴ *Let no man seek his own, but every man another's wealth.*

²⁵ *Whatsoever is sold in the shambles, that eat, asking no question for conscience sake:*

Paul was very clear that all things were lawful but not all things would work to edify others. The bottom line is that as believers we must be very careful about using our liberty in Jesus Christ in a way that is offensive to others. This is true for all of us but it is especially true of the leadership. People look up to us and if we do something that is offensive that is not edifying to the body of Jesus Christ. We are to seek the spiritual wealth of others. If we wound the conscience of a brother or sister we are sinning against Jesus Christ. If we do something that is offensive to the unsaved person then we can hinder the Gospel's path to their heart. Paul said if meat offended his brother in the Lord, he would never again eat meat. This is the attitude that should be in each one of us. Our

concern should be the edification of the body of Jesus Christ. When I use my liberty in a way that is offensive, I am not edifying anyone in the body of Jesus Christ and I am hindering the ministry of the Holy Spirit.

Notice Acts 16:4-5

Here is the result of being sensitive to others while walking in the will of the Lord. The churches were established in the faith and people were saved.

Conclusion:

We must be careful not to do anything that could hinder the work of the Spirit. Without His power we can accomplish nothing.

1 Thessalonians 5:19

¹⁹ *Quench not the Spirit.*

To quench the Spirit is to diminish His power in our lives. We can also grieve Him.

Ephesians 4:30

³⁰ *And grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption.*

Notice the words of Spurgeon.

The Holy Spirit's grief is not of a petty, oversensitive nature. "He is grieved with us mainly for our own sakes, for he knows what misery sin will cost us; he reads our sorrows in our sins... He grieves over us because he sees how much chastisement we incur, and how much communion we lose."