

Acts 16

Acts 16.1-5

V1 – What is ironic about Paul going to Lystra? *Acts 14.19* – That is where he was stoned and left for dead on the First Missionary Journey

-What do we know about Timothy?

1. *Acts 16.1* – A Jewish mother (Christian) and Greek father (non-Christian)
2. *2 Tim. 1.5* – He had a Jewish grandmother named Eunice who was a Christian
3. *1 Tim. 4.14* – Timothy had the gift of prophecy
4. *Rom. 16.21* – He had done much mission work with Paul
 - 1 Cor. 4.17* – A messenger for Paul to the church at Corinth
 - 1 Thess. 3.2* – A messenger for Paul to the church at Thessalonica
5. *Phil. 1.1* - He was with Paul in Rome
6. *Heb. 13.23* – He had been released from prison

V2 - 7. *Acts 16.2* – He was well spoken of by the Christians at Lystra and Iconium
-It had been 3 years since Paul had preached at Lystra and Iconium; his work was beginning to bear fruit

V3 – Why did Paul circumcise Timothy? Read 1 Cor. 9.20-21 – To follow the social practices of the people they would be working with (Jews)

-Message for us? We should generally follow the social customs of the people we are living among (wearing clothes that are commonly worn there, whether a suit and tie, or blue jeans and a flannel shirt, etc.)

-We should not be like the Amish and intentionally go out of our way to keep from fitting into a society

-Of course, in everything we should follow the guidelines of the Scriptures

V4 – What decrees? Instructions concerning circumcision, etc.

V5 – What was the condition of the church in Acts 16? Growing constantly

Acts 16.6-10

V6 – They went through Galatia and Phrygia, but were not allowed to speak in the province of "Asia"
– the country of Turkey today

Read Galatians 4.12-15 – Paul got very sick on this trip and was treated very well by the Galatians

Read Galatians 6.11 and 2 Thess. 3.17

V7 – The Spirit was forcing them to go to Europe (they couldn't go to Mysia or Bythinia), so they went on to Troas

-The Holy Spirit was leading them into new territory

-There are times in our lives when an insurmountable obstacle appears before us – We should consider the possibility that maybe God does not want us to go in that direction

V 8 – What do we know about Troas? The Trojan War (1000 BC) took place there, and the Hellespont was near there

V 9 – Some Bible scholars think that the "man" was Luke

-**Why?** *V 10* – The first "we" passage starts here (meaning that Luke was with the missionary party)

-**Song we sing in church about this passage?** "Send the Light" (verse 2) - #572, *Praise for the Lord*

The four "we" sections in the book of *Acts* (meaning that Luke was with the missionary party):

Acts 16.10-17

Acts 20.5-15

Acts 21.1-18

Acts 17.1 – 28.16

-**Why did Luke not mention his name in the book of *Acts*?** For the same reason he did not mention his name in the *Gospel of Luke*: his humility and modesty

V 10 – What did Paul do as a result of this vision? Immediately headed for Macedonia

Acts 16.11-15

-There were four men in the missionary party at this point: Paul, Silas, Timothy, Luke

V 11 – Island of Samothrace in the Aegean Sea

-They next went to the cities of Neapolis and Philippi (capital of Macedonia)

V 12 – Why did Paul want to stay in Philippi for an extended time? It was a leading city and a very strategic city in the Roman Empire

-**What kind of congregation came from his stay in this city?** The church at Philippi was one of the best congregations in the entire New Testament

V 13 – Why did they look for potential converts on the Sabbath Day? To the Jews first and then to the Greeks (or Gentiles)

Background:

V 14 – Thyatira was a First Century town noted for its purple dyes (made from the root of the madder tree)

-Purple was the official color for Roman government officials, as well as for kings and queens

-*Acts 16.12* – Philippi was a leading Roman city

-In the *Iliad* by Homer, Book 4, Line 141, there is a reference to the women of Thyatira being skilled in dying clothes

-**How did the Lord open the heart of Lydia?** She was listening to the word of God being preached (the Holy Spirit did not just miraculously open her heart, as some groups claim today)

-Many people today don't want to listen to the preaching of the gospel

V 15 – How was the conversion completed? By baptism

-**How did this new Christian show her spirit of hospitality?** She invited the missionary party to stay at her house

-**Did a congregation get started in Thyatira?** *Rev. 2.18-15* – A congregation was there (with some good members and some bad members)

- Does *v 15* justify infant baptism? No, we don't even know if she was married
- According to Greek scholars, the word for "household" here could have referred to servants and business associates traveling with her (not necessarily babies or little children)

Acts 16.16-21

V 16 – What previous experience had Paul had with evil spirits? Bar-Jesus (Elymas) in *Acts 13* at Salamis, Cyprus
 -"spirit of divination" – the same phrase used for the Witch of Endor (*1 Sam. 28.9*)

V 17-18 – She was proclaiming the truth (*Mark 1.22-26, 5.1-13*)

- Why was Paul irritated? *James 2:19*
- By what authority? *Mark 16.17* – by the authority of Jesus Christ
- She continued doing this for "many days," irritating Paul even more

V 19 – What was their motive? Money (she had been used as a fortune teller at a carnival side show)

V 20 – What was the charge? Disturbing the peace (frequently used even today when no other charge will work)
 -Notice that there was also some prejudice against Jews

V 21 – By law, Romans could only believe in the mythological gods (Jupiter, etc.)

Acts 16.22-30

V 22 – Who got their robes torn off? Paul and Silas

- They were beaten with fasces [pronounced: fa-ceze – long e's]
- This refers to a bundle of rods used in beating prisoners; this bundle was a symbol of the power of the Roman Empire

Note to the teacher: Look up "dime" on the Internet or in some reference book

- Starting in 1936, the "Winged Liberty" dime has the fasces on the back side, and starting in 1946, the Roosevelt dime also had the fasces on the back side
- The Roosevelt dime is still being minted today
- The word *fascism* comes from the Roman fasces
- This bundle of rods was a symbol for Roman authority and it is what Paul and the others in his missionary party were beaten with

V 23 – *2 Cor. 11.25* – Paul was beaten with rods 3 times – once here, plus on two other occasions

V 24 – "inner prison...with stocks" – Why did Luke give us these details? To prepare us for the coming miracle

V 25 – What was their condition now? Hungry, wounded, bleeding, in stocks

V 26 – Source of the miracle? *Acts 4.31* – the work of the Holy Spirit

- What miracle did God carry out at this time? An earthquake and the loosening of the chains holding the prisoners

V 27 – Roman law: the jailer was responsible for the prisoners

-*Acts 12.19* – The escape of Peter meant death for the guards

-**What did the head of the jail prepare to do?** Take his own life, rather than face death at the hands of the Roman Empire

V 28 – **Why did Paul speak with a loud voice?** There was probably a lot of confusion and noise going on in the prison at that time, and the head of the prison was in the process of killing himself

V 29 – **What was the reaction of the jailer?** He fell down before Paul and Silas

V 30 – **What was his question?** *Sirs, what must I do to be saved?*

-**Where could he have gotten the idea that Paul and Silas knew anything about forgiveness and eternal salvation?** By the songs that they had been singing

-We sometimes think that our songs don't have an impact on people (like visitors), but we might be surprised at their effect

-Haven't most of us at one time or another been deeply moved by a song led in our services?

Acts 16.31-34

V 31 – In almost all denominations, a person is "saved" and then baptized the next month or two to show that he has been saved

-**Was this the case here?** Of course not – we must ask people to keep reading and find out what it means to "believe" in the Lord Jesus

V 32 – **Another possible reference to infant baptism?** No – again, we have no mention of babies or children – there were people who were old enough to understand the preaching of Paul and Silas

V 33 – **When did Paul say that the jailer had believed?** After it says that he had been baptized!

-The definition of "believe" therefore must include some action (the action of being baptized)

-See *James 2.14-26*

V 34 – **How did the jailer rejoice over his baptism?** By washing the wounds of Paul and Silas and taking care of their need for food and other things

-This was very similar to the hospitality that Lydia showed the missionaries after her baptism (v 15)

-We begin to understand by the actions of Lydia and of the jailer why such a great congregation arose at Philippi

Acts 16.35-40

V 35 – **What did the magistrates do the next morning?** Send orders to have the men released

V 36 – **What did the jailer request of Paul and Silas?** That they come out of the prison in peace (the Christian way of dealing with things)

V 37 – List the five mistakes that the city leaders had made:

- Beaten Paul and Silas in public
- Beaten Paul and Silas without a trial
- Had beaten Roman citizens
- Had thrown them into prison
- Wanted to send them away secretly

V 38 – What was the reaction of the chief magistrates when they learned these things? They were greatly afraid (of the Roman government)

- They were in a lot of trouble for violating plain Roman laws concerning Roman citizens

V 39 – What did the magistrates do? Begged Paul and Silas to leave the city (in peace – not to press charges against the magistrates for these violations of Roman law)

V 40 – What did Paul and Silas do? Visited the house of Lydia and then departed the city

At this point in the book of *Acts*, what "good moral people" had God dealt with thus far?

1. *Acts 8.13* – Simon the Sorcerer
2. *Acts 8.38* – the Ethiopian eunuch
3. *Acts 9.18* – Saul (Paul)
4. *Acts 10.48* – Cornelius
5. *Acts 16.15* – Lydia
6. *Acts 16.33* – Philippian jailer

Today, most of these people would have been accepted with question into the major denominational churches of our day!

- But all these people had to obey God's plan of salvation in order to be saved

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