

#11 Acts: Barrier Breaking Faith
Ch. 16 Europe – Here comes the Gospel!

16: 1-5 A team of Three: Paul, Silas, Timothy

Paul Acts 6:9; 7:58; 8:1; 9:11; 21:39; 22:3 Protestor to Preacher

Silas Acts 15:32 Prophet to Missionary

Timothy: Acts 16:1; 2 Tim. 1:5-7; 3:14-15; 4:2,5 Disciple, Missionary, Envoy, Pastor
1 Corinthians 9:22; 10:31-33 *To the weak I became weak, in order to win the weak. I have become all things to all people, so that I may by every possible means save some. ³¹So, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do everything for the glory of God. ³²Give no offense to Jews or Greeks or the church of God, ³³just as I also try to please everyone in everything, not seeking my own benefit, but the benefit of many, so that they may be saved.*

Circumcised Timothy 16:3, Not compelled to circumcise Titus Gal. 2:3, *21 Different ministries - different apostles Gal. 2:8 Peter to the circumcised & Paul to Gentiles.

What rules do we go by in sharing the gospel? What is essential and non-essential?

⁵ *So the churches were strengthened in the faith and grew daily in numbers.*

What are the result of our ministry actions?

16:6-10 Blocked by the Holy Spirit, then Vision Led

:6-7 Listen - Door Closed to Asia (Minor)

:8 Wait - Paused in Troas, a seaport, trade center, an intersection of roads and cultures. In position - which way to go?

:9-10 Go - Door Opened

A heavenly vision from a man in Macedonia – come across the sea to Europe.

16:11-15 First Convert in the Roman Colony of Philippi

:13 Found a favorable audience at a beach prayer gathering on the Sabbath.

:14-15 Lydia, a prosperous businesswoman, was the first believer. She was baptized and gave hospitality to Paul's team and gave continued financial, Phil. 4:16. As women had supported Jesus and his disciples, Luke 8:2-3; 10:38; Mt. 27:55, now a lady leads the way supporting Paul. The WMU continues that tradition of supporting and promoting missions today.

The IMB Theme "Pray – Give – Go!" comes from this passage.

16 :16-40 Riots, Flogging, Chains & Stocks vs Prayer

Acts 9:15-16 *But the Lord said to Ananias, "Go! This man is my chosen instrument to proclaim my name to the Gentiles and their kings and to the people of Israel. ¹⁶I will show him how much he must suffer for my name."*

Paul's Suffering for Jesus - Gal. 1:11-24; 1 Cor. 11:22-29, 12:6-10; Philippians 3:1-21; 2 Tim. 4:17

Galatians 2:20 *I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I now live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.*

Ephesians 3:20 *Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us, ²¹ to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen.*

Praise for Suffering

Let the Word of God speak: John 15:20, 2 Tim. 3:12; 16:33, Acts 5:41, 16:25, James 1:2-4; 1 Peter 1:5-7; 3:13-18; 4:12-14 Pray not for safety but for boldness!

Paul & Silas were believing that God was going to bring good even from this situation and He did (Romans 8:28). They received an early release by God's hand through an earthquake, the jailer and his family became believers, treated their wounds and showed them hospitality, and then they even received an official government apology and protection.

The Church and the Government

A branch of the mighty Roman government in one of their colony cities was humbled and unknowingly became a servant of the gospel. It was not the first time. Think, the census of Caesar Augustus brought Mary and Joseph to Bethlehem. This would not be the last time that the "Pax Romana" (peace of Rome = roads – language – order) would help further the gospel. Cf. Gal. 4:4. for God's timing.

God is sovereign and we are to trust Him above all – Luke 20:25 *"Give to Caesar the things that are Caesar's and to God the things that are God's."* Ephesians 1:21 He rules over "every ruler power, authority, and dominion"; Phil. 2:10-11 *"At the name of Jesus every knee will bow – in heaven and on earth and under the earth - and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."* Acts 4:19 "obey men or God" Rom. 8:31 *"If God is for us, who is against us."*; 1 John 4:4 "greater is He who is in us than he who is in the world"; Rev 7:13-17; 12:11.

NT teaching on government/authorities - John 19:11; Romans 13:1-7; 1 Timothy 2:1-4; 1 Peter 2:13-17. The OT reminds us of how God put the right people in place when governments were not always friendly – Joseph, Moses, Daniel, Nehemiah, Esther.

How to respond to the government continues to be an issue for today. Living under and working with those who have a differing philosophy and value system is not easy.

How does our response affect our witness for Christ?

There are times we must decide between man's will and God's will. Acts 4:19

What we decide about dealing with the government will affect our witness for Jesus.