

## Paul's Second Missionary Journey Begins

Acts 15:36-41, 16:1-15

### Introduction:

In our passage for today we see Paul set out to minister to the churches where he had already been, and then the Lord takes him to new places. In these formative years of the church we hear of divine guidance with visions, voices and dreams. However, things were not always perfect. There were disagreements and division. The apostles and disciples were very human people. Despite this, the Holy Spirit works through them to build the church, reaching ever outward to embrace more and more peoples within the kingdom of God. How glad we are that God works through imperfect vessels – like us!



### Paul and Barnabas Separate – Acts 15:36-41

1. What does Paul want to do according to verse 36? Why?
2. Why might Barnabas want to take Mark with them? (cf. Acts 13:5, Colossians 4:10)

3. How did Paul feel about bringing Mark (John Mark) with them (v. 38)? What caused Paul to think this way (cf. Acts 13:13)
4. Verse 39 speaks about a “sharp disagreement.” The verb used here indicates both sides were well entrenched. Does being filled with the Spirit mean we will always agree? Or had someone “lost” their sanctification?
5. Was solution did they arrive at (vss. 39-40)? Who was Silas? (cf. Acts 15:22)
6. What does the Antioch church do for Paul and Silas in verse 39? What was the mission of Paul and Silas? (v. 41)

### **Welcome Timothy – Acts 16:1-57.**

7. In Lystra Paul and Silas meet someone who joins their team. Who is he, and what do we learn about him? (vss. 1-2)
8. Paul wants Timothy to join them on their missionary journey. He sees leadership qualities in this young man. What does he have Timothy do before they set out? What reason is given? (v. 3) Does this seem a contradiction to the directive that the Jerusalem church has just given?
9. What message did the Apostles give to the churches (v. 4)?
10. What was happening in the Gentile churches (v. 5)?

### **Macedonian Call – Acts 16:6-10**

11. Where do Paul and Silas go next according to verse 6? This is heading westward, though there were large cities to the east in Asia. Why do the disciples not go there? (v. 6)



12. Why did the disciples not go into the Roman province of Bithynia (v. 6)? How was this accomplished?
13. What happens in verse 9? The call is an urgent call: “Come!” Where was the vision drawing the Apostles?
14. How do Paul and Silas respond (v. 10)? Why?

**Welcome Lydia to the Family – Acts 16:11-15**

15. Samothrace is an island in the Mediterranean, without a port, so they likely stayed in the boat overnight. Then they went to a seaport city called Neapolis and from there they went to which city (v. 12)? Why was this city their destination?
16. Verse 12 tells us that the apostles stayed in the city some days before the Sabbath. The language suggests they were waiting – not ministering or preaching. Why might this be?
17. Since they find a crowd on the Sabbath day down by the river, which background do we suppose the crowd represented? (v. 13) (It is suggested

that the term “place of prayer” was a name given by the Jews for a Diaspora Synagogue).

18. Paul and Silas had a crowd, so what do they do (vs. 13)? Again, this shows the Holy Spirit was breaking down barriers. What barrier is being brought down here?
19. Who do we meet in verse 14? Describe this woman.
20. What was her response to the message of the Gospel? (v. 15) Note: the first baptised convert in Europe was a woman! Please do not let people say Christianity disparages women!
21. What request does Lydia have for Paul and Silas (v. 15)? What might this indicate?

### **Conclusion:**

Isaiah 55:8 says, ““For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways,” declares the LORD.” We see this again and again on this missionary journey of Paul and Silas. Doors were opened and closed by the Lord. Yet always God had people ready wherever the Gospel was preached, ready to accept Jesus as Lord. God steered Paul and Silas away from the big cities of Asia and led them to Macedonia – the southern tip of what we know as Europe today. That mission field was opened by the conversion of one person: a lady. She was a seller of purple, and though this trade may have gained her wealth (thus she could host the apostles at her house) it also came with a price. Those who dyed cloth were seen as unclean and outcasts by society (much like the tanners). But this outcast became the first pillar upon which God would build the Christian Church of Europe. This is not the way we would have written the script, but this is God’s story, and “his ways are not our ways.” His ways are better!