



Acts

Lesson 15, Chapter 16

“We are Jews by nature, and not sinners from among the Gentiles; nevertheless knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the Law but through faith in Christ Jesus, even we who have believed in Christ Jesus, that we might be justified by faith in Christ and not by the works of the Law; since by the works of the Law shall no flesh be justified.” Galatians 2:15-16

These words of Paul are from a letter written to the Galatian churches that he had established on his first missionary journey (Acts 15-16, Antioch, Iconium, Lystra and Derbe). It was written and sent after Paul’s return from his trip there as a response to some problems that had arisen in these churches. The controversy was the same one that was addressed by the Council of Jerusalem in Acts 15. The Jew vs. Gentile, Law vs. works dilemma was of such a serious nature that, if not dealt with, it would threaten the effectiveness and stability of the Church. Even with the decision that was sent by the Jerusalem Council and its authoritative directive, Paul still spent a major portion of his time dealing with the schisms that arose over this issue. His second missionary journey was partly motivated by the need to deliver the decision of the Council to those who opposed the truth. Justification by faith and not by works would also be addressed in many of his letters to other churches (Romans, Galatians, and

possibly Hebrews). In Acts 16, as Paul revisits the churches he had established on his first journey, he recruits Timothy, a young man with a godly reputation and well liked by all the people. Because Timothy’s father was a Greek, Timothy had not been circumcised. So as not to be a stumbling block to the Jews they hoped to minister to, he allowed Timothy to be circumcised.

Paul and his team now travel north until the Spirit of Jesus directs them to head west to the region of Macedonia. They establish a church in Philippi after the conversion of Lydia and her family. The seed of the gospel had now been planted on European soil. Later, the jailer from where Paul and Timothy are being held as prisoners receives Christ, and the church in Philippi continues to grow. In the future, during his imprisonment in Rome, Paul would write these beloved believers one of his most personal letters. He wrote to them...”For I am confident of this very thing, that He who began a good work in you will perfect it until the day of Christ Jesus. For it is right for me to feel this way about you all, because I have you in my heart, since in my imprisonment and in the defense of the gospel, you all are partakers of grace with me.” Philippians 1:6-7

READ CHAPTER 16

1. From the following verses, give some information about Timothy’s character and calling.

Acts 16:1-3

1 Timothy 1:2,18; 4:12; 6:11,20

2 Timothy 1:2-7; 2:1-3; 3:14-15

2. *What was the result of the missionary's revisiting the churches? Verses 4-5*

3. *What was the process through which Paul ended up in Macedonia? Acts 16:6-10 Have you ever experienced a time when God led you through a unique process to get you where He wanted you to go? Explain.*

4. *What do the pronouns "we" and "us" now used in vs. 10 compared to the "they" of vs. 7 & 8 imply?*

5. *On a map, follow the route of the missionary's from Acts 16:1-12.*

6. *Approximately ten to fifteen years after Paul established the church in Philippi, he wrote the letter of Philippians to the congregation there. From Philippians 1:3-7 and 4:10-20, how would you describe his relationship with this church so many years later?*

7. *In Philippians 2:1-4, identify six attitudes that Paul desire for the Philippian believers that would bring him the most joy?*
 - 1)
 - 2)
 - 3)
 - 4)
 - 5)
 - 6)

Why would these be Paul's top priorities for the church?

8. *Describe Paul's first convert in Philippi. Acts 16:14-15*

9. *Describe the circumstances that led Paul and Silas to prison. Acts 16:16-24*

10. *How did God turn this circumstance that appeared evil to be for good? 16:25-34*

11. *What privilege did Paul use when they were released, and why do you think he did that in this case? 16:35-39*

12. *How does Acts 16:25 testify to what Paul told the Philippian believers in Philippians 4:12-13 that he had learned? What can you learn from this?*

Prayer requests:

Group time notes:
