

A SURVEY OF THE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES

11. PAUL'S SECOND MISSIONARY JOURNEY

Acts 15:36 – 18:2

Adult Sunday School
Gethsemane Baptist Church
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“COME OVER INTO MACEDONIA, AND HELP US”

Acts 16:9

One of the striking characteristics of Paul's Second Missionary Journey is the people that came to faith in Christ as he traveled from city to city. After the Council in Jerusalem the Apostle decided to return to the cities where he had established churches on his first journey. “The victory for gentile evangelism at the Jerusalem Council would naturally give added impetus to further spreading of the Gospel. Furthermore, the Judaizing teaching which had so upset the church at Antioch had spread beyond that one city to at least as far away as Galatia, and reports of trouble in the churches so recently founded had come to Paul. These were doubtless some of the factors along with others that prompted Paul to think of another missionary journey.” (Kent. P. 130.)

Before the trip could begin, however, there was a matter of dispute that needed to be resolved. Barnabas had his cousin, John Mark, accompany Paul and him on the first missionary trip. Unfortunately, for some reason, Mark could not complete the trip and returned home leaving the group shorthanded. Now, on this second trip Barnabas wanted to have Mark come along again. Paul would not let that happen. He felt that Mark had let them down before and would hinder the new journey if he came. He refused to allow him to be on the new team. There was a sharp discussion about this until Barnabas

agreed to take Mark to Cyprus and continue the ministry there. Even in Christian circles disagreements arise. Truly spiritual people will find a way to resolve the issues in a way that glorifies God and preserves the unity of the work. "Happily, the NT records that Paul was later reconciled to both men (Barnabas: I Cor. 9:6; Mark: Col. 4:10, Philem. 24, II Tim 4:11)" (KENT. P. 130.)

The Second Missionary Journey is recorded in Acts 16:1 through 18:22. However, in this survey study we will only highlight certain things. Missionary work must major on people. As we go through the passages and examine the locations where Paul ministered and preached it will be profitable to note some of the people who received the Christ as their Savior in the various places.

A. DERBY AND LYSTRA

Paul begins this journey in a city where a Godly lady and her mother lived. We read of these ladies and the effect that they had on their young son, Timothy in Paul's second letter to Timothy. *"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."* (2 Timothy 1:5) The first person Paul found was the young man Timothy. He was a faithful, godly person who had a good reputation among those who knew him in his home town. Paul felt that he would be a good addition to their team.

Paul, it seems, was at a loss as to where he should

first go to preach the Gospel. Surely this was a difficult decision. Every person everywhere needs to hear the Good News. In a dream God showed Paul that He wanted him to go to Macedonia. It has been a matter of conversation as to why God directed him to Philippi. The answer may be that in that city there was a riverside *“where prayer was wont to be made.”* (Vs. 13) God sent them to people who were already seeking to know the God Heaven. There he met and baptized Lydia and her household. She proved to be a great blessing to the team as they continued to minister in Philippi.

The next person they met was a young girl who had the gift of fortune telling. She was a slave and made her masters a great deal of money by her gift. She recognized in Paul and his team the gifts of God. She constantly followed them saying, *“These men are the servants of the most high God, which shew unto us the way of salvation.”* (vs. 17) Paul became grieved by this and cast the evil spirit out of her. Her constant, loud cries must have been a hindrance to his preaching. Her masters were angry that their income had been taken away and had Paul and Silas put in prison. They were beaten there and placed in stocks. God gave them such grace that they sang His praises into the night hours. As a result of their testimony the jailer was converted along with his house.

B. THESSALONICA

As they left Philippi the team came to the city of

Thessalonica. There Paul “reasoned” in the synagogue for three separate Sabbaths. His method was to *“reasoned with them out of the scriptures, Opening and alleging, that Christ [Messiah] must needs have suffered, and risen again from the dead.”* (17:3) “Some of the audience believed including the Jewish Aristarchus (Col. 4:10) and the God fearing Greek Secundus (Acts 20:4). A number of socially prominent gentile women were affiliated with the synagogue and many of them also responded to the gospel.” (KENT. P. 137)

C. BEREIA

When many of the Jewish leaders grew jealous of Paul’s influence, Paul then moved on to the city of Berea. Again, because of a careful comparison of the Scripture many came to Christ. The Berean people *“were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so. Therefore many of them believed; also of honourable women which were Greeks, and of men, not a few.”* (17:11-12) “Mention is made later of Sopater the son of Pyrrhus who was a Berean Christian (20:4)” (IBID. P. 138)

D. Athens

In Athens Paul was surprised at just how religious the city was. There were statues to deities all over the city. Those of Athens were of a very philosophical bent of mind. They loved to discuss “some new thing.” (vs. 21) The response to the Gospel in Athens

is typical of the responses today. Some mocked, some wanted to think about a bit longer and some believed and were converted. *“Some mocked: and others said, We will hear thee again of this matter. So Paul departed from among them. Howbeit certain men clave unto him, and believed: among the which was Dionysius the Areopagite, and a woman named Damaris, and others with them.”* (17:32-34)

E. CORINTH

Moving on to Corinth Paul met Pricilla and Aquila. There are a number of names of people that received Christ in Corinth. Such as Justice (vs. 17), Crispus (vs. 8), Sosthenes (I Cor. 1:1) and finally Apollos who was disciple by Pricilla and Aquila. (vs.26)

At the conclusion of the Second Missionary Journey Paul returned to Jerusalem to report to the church there. The Scripture says that after they had “gone up, and saluted the church, he went down to Antioch.” (vs. 22) The use of the “gone up and gone down” is indicative of the city of Jerusalem. Of all the reports of the adventures that they had it is certain that he reported on the souls that came to Christ. Being a missionary is not just traveling to far off, exciting places and seeing strange lands. It is meeting people and telling them about the love of the Lord Jesus Christ. Missionaries must be people persons. As we pray for them, we must pray that God would lead the missionary to people who are seeking to know the truth. Those whose hearts the Lord has already prepared. Missions is people.

Ideas to consider:

1. Was Paul justified in not allowing John Mark to come with them on the second journey?

2. Why do you think Paul was called to Philippi and not to another city?

3. What significance is there in the disciplining of Apollos?

4. Explain the saying, "missions is people."

Notes:
