

“GOD LEADS HIS DEAR CHILDREN ALONG”

Acts 16:6-10

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INTRODUCTION

Paul and Silas are now carrying out their second missionary campaign. It will be profoundly significant for the future of Christianity.

This section of Acts begins another main division of the book—culminating in 19:20 where Luke gives us another summary of the progress of the spread of the Gospel. This transitional passage **highlights the leading of the Holy Spirit** in the lives of the missionaries.

The Lord promises many times in the Scriptures that He will guide His children into His will. Let us look at a few of these:

- Ps. 25:9: “The meek will he guide in judgment.
- Ps. 32:8: “I will instruct you and teach you in the way which you should go; I will guide thee with mine eye.”
- Ps. 73:24: “You shall guide me with your counsel.”
- Ps. 119:18: “Open my eyes that I may behold wondrous things out of your law.”
- Is. 30:21: “Your ears shall hear . . . ‘this is the way, walk ye in it.’”
- Is. 49:10: “By the springs of water shall he guide them.”
- John 16:13: “He [the Spirit] will guide you into all truth.”
- Rom. 8:14: “As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.”
- Gal. 5:18: If you are led of the Spirit, you are not under the law.”
- II Tim. 3:15: “From a child you have known the holy scriptures which are able to make you wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.”

In this passage we see how the Lord guided the missionaries on their journeys. The Spirit’s guidance was not just positive, it was also negative.

If we listen to the Lord through His Word, He will surely guide us into His will.

- I. PAUL AND SILAS AND TIMOTHY PLANNED TO GO TO _____ TO MINISTER. (v. 6)
 - A. Evidently they intended to go to Ephesus. It would have been a strategic move and was a good plan. But, it was not God’s plan!
 - B. First, they were to finish ministering in the four cities—including Iconium and Antioch.
 - C. Then they must head north and northwest through the Phrygian/Galatian region and beyond.
 - D. Notice that it was the _____ who forbade them from doing so.

How?

 - Maybe by circumstances.
 - Maybe by prophetic revelation.
 - Maybe through a vision.
 - The point is that the Lord made His prohibition clear.

- II. NEXT PAUL PLANNED TO GO INTO _____. (V. 7)
- A. There were several large and significant cities there for preaching: Prusa, Nicomedia, Chalcedon, Heracleia, and Nicaea. There were also significant Jewish colonies there.
 - B. The Spirit of Jesus did not permit them to go there.
 - 1. Note that this may have been a form of revelation featuring the manifestation of the risen Christ.
 - 2. This is the only NT reference of “the Spirit of Jesus.”
 - 3. Man’s good plans are often not God’s plans.

- III. THEN THEY WENT TO _____ THROUGH THE OUTSKIRTS OF MYSIA. (8)
- A. They did not stop to preach there—it was part of the province of Asia.
 - B. Troas was in Mysia and was its seaport.
 - It was on the direct route to Rome via Macedonia and the Egnatian Way.
 - It was a Roman colony and a very significant seaport.

Up to this point, the leading of the Spirit had been _____: Don’t go to Asia to preach; don’t go to Bithynia to preach.

- Many a servant of the Lord would have been discouraged at this point and may have quit.
- Paul kept pressing forward—despite the extreme difficulties of the journey.
- He would wait upon the Lord for clear direction.

- IV. GOD GAVE THE MISSIONARIES _____ DIRECTION AT TROAS. (9)
- A. Paul saw a vision of a _____ man.
 - 1. The man appealed to Paul to “come over and help us.”
 - 2. The help he wanted was the preaching of the gospel of salvation.
 - B. Paul explained the vision to the others (10)
 - 1. After discussion during which various viewpoints may have been expressed, they came to a conclusion—putting the facts together.
 - 2. They were convinced that God had called them to **preach the Gospel** to the Macedonians.
 - 3. Note that this is credited to God the Father.
 - 4. Thus, in v. 6 we have the **Holy Spirit**; v. 7 the Spirit of **Jesus**, and here the **Father**.
 - C. Notice now that Luke is with the missionaries (“we”); when he joined we cannot be sure.

Thus, for the first time the Gospel entered into what is today known as part of Europe.

However, geographical distinctions were different then, and this was part of the Roman Empire unified under Roman government and Greek civilization.

CONCLUSION

Paul had some great plans—God had better plans. Such it often is in our lives.

Luke’s joining the team may be one significant reason; ministry in Macedonia and Greece was another.

It is urgent that we get on board with God’s plan for our lives! He knows what is best for us, for our church, and also what is best for the spread of the Gospel.

He knows what is best. Are we listening to Him?