

The Macedonian Call – Joyful in spite of Circumstances (Acts 16:1-40)

I. TIMOTHY JOINS PAUL & SILAS

- A. Timothy joins Paul and Silas on their ministry journey through Turkey and Macedonia. His mother was Jewish but his father was a Greek. As they traveled through the region, they delivered the decrees given by the apostles at the Jerusalem council (Acts 15) where they discussed how some of the ceremonial O/T requirements applied to today.

“So the churches were strengthened in the faith, and increased in number daily” Acts 16:5.

- B. Timothy was a young disciple who was used by the Lord at the church in Ephesus. He had the difficult task of dealing with doctrinal error and practical problems in the church where he served as their apostolic leader and pastor.
- C. Paul had to encourage him to fight the good fight (1Tim.1:18). He also reminded him to, *“to stir up the gift of God which is in you through the laying on of my hands. For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and love and of a sound mind”*(2 Tim. 1:6-7).

‘Therefore I remind you to stir up the gift of God which is in you through the laying on of my hands.’ For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind. (2 Tim. 1:6-7)

II. THE MACEDONIAN CALL

- A. The Macedonian Call gives the N/T pattern to how ministry plans are to take place. As we fast and pray as believers, God begins to show us what is in His heart, and what He wants us to accomplish in the kingdom. He can speak to us through the inward witness and impressions, through dreams and visions, and through careful planning after spending seasons of time in fasting and praying over it.

“Now when they had gone through Phrygia and the region of Galatia, they were forbidden by the Holy Spirit to preach the word in Asia. ⁷ After they had come to Mysia, they tried to go into Bithynia, but the Spirit^u did not permit them. ⁸ So passing by Mysia, they came down to Troas. ⁹ And a vision appeared to Paul in the night. A man of Macedonia stood and pleaded with him, saying, “Come over to Macedonia and help us.” ¹⁰ Now after he had seen the vision, immediately we sought to go to Macedonia, concluding that the Lord had called us to preach the gospel to them. (Acts 16:6-10).

- B. Sometimes God will tell us things that may not make sense to the natural mind. Supernatural revelation about what we feel the Lord telling us to do should always be tested and confirmed. Does it line up with the scriptures? Get godly counsel from friends and family. Does it draw you closer to a loving relationship with your Savior and cause you to serve Him with a greater love and devotion?
- C. The Macedonian Call gives us insight into how the Holy Spirit can operate in guiding and directing us. First, they were forbidden by the Holy Spirit to preach in the Roman province of Asia (v.6). Then they tried to get into Bithynia, but the Holy Spirit did not permit them (v.7). As the old preached said: ***The Holy Spirit orders ours steps and our stops!***

- D. Finally, Paul sees a vision in the night, a man of Macedonia who stood and pleaded with Paul – come over to Macedonia and help us! This confirmed to them what they were to do (Acts 16:9-10).
- E. Supernatural visions and dreams can be a great tool to help lead the way! Much of the leading of this ministry as well as TheCall and JHOPDC has been through the leading of the Holy Spirit in visions and dreams. Sometimes we have dream-stream meetings where we discuss dreams and their corporate meanings for our group and for the nation. ***“In the mouth of 2 or 3 witnesses let every word be established”*** (2 Cor. 13:1).

“For God may speak in one way, or in another, Yet man does not perceive it.¹⁵ In a dream, in a vision of the night, When deep sleep falls upon men, While slumbering on their beds.” (Job 33:17-18).

III. PAUL AND SILAS AND THE SPIRIT OF DIVINATION

- A. As Paul and Silas went to prayer, they had an encounter with a girl possessed by a spirit of divination (Acts 16:16). This girl was a fortune-teller. The only fortune-teller we should ever visit, is the bank-teller at the window. This girl was telling people, ***“These men are servants of the Most High God, who proclaim to us the way of salvation (Acts 16:16-17).***
- B. We don’t need the devil doing marketing for us! She was doing this in order to manipulate people to follow her and to cash in on God. Not a good idea when you have Holy Spirit-filled people ministering. Paul finally had enough. ***“Paul, greatly annoyed, turned and said to the spirit, ‘I command you in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her.’ And he came out that very hour.”*** (acts 16:18).

IV. PAUL AND SILAS IMPRISONED

- A. Sometimes you get punished for doing God’s work. Paul and Silas got thrown in prison for casting a spirit of divination out of the young girl. Her managers were angry that they had lost their means to make money. Paul and Silas decided to take this opportunity to just praise the Lord (Acts 16:25-31). Good things happen when you choose to praise Jesus in spite of your difficulties!
²⁵ But at midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the prisoners were listening to them. ²⁶ Suddenly there was a great earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison were shaken; and immediately all the doors were opened and everyone’s chains were loosed. ²⁷ And the keeper of the prison, awaking from sleep and seeing the prison doors open, supposing the prisoners had fled, drew his sword and was about to kill himself. ²⁸ But Paul called with a loud voice, saying, “Do yourself no harm, for we are all here.” ²⁹ Then he called for a light, ran in, and fell down trembling before Paul and Silas. ³⁰ And he brought them out and said, “Sirs, what must I do to be saved?” ³¹ So they said, “Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you will be saved, you and your household.”
- A. ***“You and your household” (Acts 16:31)*** suggests that God works in family units (Ex. 12:3 – one lamb per household). When you turn to receive Christ, there is a promise that our family members will come to Christ as well, although each must respond individually. Hold on to that promise and believe for them!