FIVE-DAY THEOLOGY COURSE

ACTS

The Spirit of God in Mission

TAUGHT BY

Lec SK. KIERU

Chapter 10: Paul's Second Missionary Journey (Part 1)

Background of Paul's second missionary journey, pastoral visits, Paul's missionary strategy, to the regions beyond, opposition and deliverance

Day 1: Understanding Acts and Preparing for Pentecost · Day 2: The Spirit-Empowered Church in Jerusalem and Beyond · Day 3: The Gentile Mission and Paul's Missionary Expansion · Day 4: Paul's Missionary Journeys, Jerusalem and Rome

Day 5: Final examination (2026-10-09)

Based on Acts: The Spirit of God in Mission by Denzil R. Miller. Africa's Hope, 2017.

CHAPTER 10 · UNIT 4 · DAY 3

Paul's Second Missionary Journey (Part 1)

Background of Paul's second missionary journey, pastoral visits, Paul's missionary strategy, to the regions beyond, opposition and deliverance

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Source: Acts: The Spirit of God in Mission - Denzil R. Miller (Based on Chapter 10)

Chapter purpose. This chapter examines the first half of Paul's second missionary journey, the most extensive of his three journeys: the dispute over John Mark, the pastoral visits in Galatia, the Spirit's guidance into Europe, and the planting of the church in Philippi.

Chapter 9 ended with the Gentile question settled. Gentiles did not have to first become converts to Judaism before they could become Christians, so the door was now opened for uncontested outreach to the nations. This chapter examines how that outreach continued with Paul's second missionary journey.

Bible reading: Acts 15:36-16:40

Before beginning this chapter, read Acts 15:36-16:40. Each part of the lesson also has its own short reading from within that passage.

Learning Objectives

• Explain the disagreement over John Mark, why Paul and Barnabas parted company, and the two ministries God kept going as a result.

• Describe how the Holy Spirit, as the Superintendent of the Harvest, kept the missionaries from Asia and Bithynia and guided them to Macedonia.

• Identify the first Christian convert in Europe and explain why Luke tells her story.

• Explain how Paul and Silas' praying and singing in the Philippian prison served as a witness, and what followed it.

• State the instructions Paul gave the Philippian jailer on how to be saved, and the evidence of the Spirit's work in him.

Before This Lesson, Read Your Bible

Acts 15:36-16:40

The book also sets a short reading before each part of the lesson: review Acts 15:36-39; read Acts 15:39-16:5; Acts 16:6-10; Acts 16:11-15; Acts 16:16-18; Acts 16:19-28; Acts 16:29-34; Acts 16:35-40.

The Big Idea

Like his first missionary journey, Paul's second journey began with a move of the Holy Spirit.

Introduction to the Second Journey

• The Gentile question had at last been settled. Gentiles did not have to first become converts to Judaism before they could become Christians.

• The door was now opened for uncontested outreach to the nations.

• Paul's second missionary journey is the most extensive of his three journeys.

• During this journey, after revisiting the churches in Galatia, Paul and his missionary team were directed by the Spirit to venture westward into Europe.

• There they planted churches in the provinces of Macedonia and Achaia (Greece).

• After a brief stopover in Ephesus, they returned to Antioch where their journey began.

The Story: Paul's Second Journey Begins (Acts 15:36-39)

After a long stay in Antioch, Paul proposed to Barnabas that they visit all of the places where they had preached the gospel during their first missionary journey to see how the believers were faring. Barnabas wanted to take John Mark with them again.

Paul, however, was strongly opposed to the idea, noting that during their first journey Mark had deserted the work and returned home. Their disagreement became so heated that Paul and Barnabas parted company and went their separate ways.

Commentary on Acts 15:36-39

• Paul's second journey began with controversy. This time the controversy was not between Paul and the Judaizers but between Paul and his close missionary associate and friend, Barnabas.

• Paul felt that because of John Mark's unreliability, he should not accompany them on their upcoming journey. Barnabas, however, thought that the younger man deserved a second chance.

• The controversy became so intense that the missionaries separated, with Barnabas revisiting the work on Cyprus and Paul journeying northward through Syria and Cilicia into Galatia and eventually into western Europe.

• This controversy candidly reveals the humanity of these early Christian missionaries.

• It also shows how God provided for two different and important ministries to continue: (1) the ministry of strengthening newly established churches and (2) the apostolic ministry of planting new churches where none yet existed.

15:36 Let us go back and visit the brothers

• This statement shows Paul and Barnabas' pastoral concern for the churches they had planted in Cyprus and southern Galatia.

• Their purpose in returning was to find out how the churches were getting along, encourage the believers, and strengthen the churches.

• It was Paul's desire to see every church he planted emerge as a Spirit-empowered missional church, one that could extend itself into the surrounding region.

15:39 They parted company

• After a heated debate over John Mark, Paul and Barnabas went their separate ways.

• It is significant that neither man left the work, but both continued as active missionaries.

• It seems that even after their disagreement, Paul and Barnabas came to a strategic agreement about who would go where.

The Story: Galatia, Pastoral Visits (Acts 15:39-16:5)

Barnabas sailed with Mark to Cyprus. Paul chose Silas as his missionary partner and, commended by the brothers, traveled northward by land into Syria and Cilicia. As Paul and Silas traveled, they took time to strengthen the churches in these regions.

Passing through Cilicia, they went to Derbe in southern Galatia and then on to Lystra. There they met a well-respected young man named Timothy, whose mother was a Jewish believer and whose father was Greek.

Since Paul wanted Timothy to join their missionary team, he circumcised him, so that Timothy's presence would not bring offense to the Jews living in the area. This was an example of an action taken not because the Bible required it but simply to help create unity between the culturally different Jewish and Gentile Christians.

As the missionaries moved from place to place, they read the letter from the Jerusalem Council containing the apostles' decisions and orders concerning the Gentile believers (15:23-29). Because of their visits, the churches were strengthened in the faith and grew in numbers daily.

Commentary on Acts 15:40-16:5

• Paul's first order of business during his second missionary journey was to return to the churches he and Barnabas had planted in southern Galatia during their first journey.

• His purpose was pastoral, to encourage the believers and strengthen the emerging churches. He took Silas with him.

15:40 Paul chose Silas

• Silas, along with Judas Barsabbas, had come to Antioch from Jerusalem with Paul and Barnabas to deliver the decree from the Jerusalem Council concerning Gentile believers.

• Judging from his name, Silas was probably a Hellenized Jew, a Jew who lived in the Greek culture.

• He was also a prophet and former leader of the church in Jerusalem (15:22, 32).

• After delivering the decree, he remained in Antioch and ministered in the church through his prophetic and teaching ministry (15:30-32).

• Paul referred to him in his epistles (2 Corinthians 1:19; 1 Thessalonians 1:1; 2 Thessalonians 1:1). Peter called him a "faithful brother" (1 Peter 5:12).

15:40 Commended by the brothers to the grace of the Lord

• As at the beginning of the first journey, the Antiochian church is again actively involved in sending the missionaries to the field (compare 13:3).

• Even though Paul had a divine call to the Gentiles (Acts 26:17-18; Galatians 2:2), and the clear direction of the Spirit (Acts 13:2-4), he did not proceed to the field on his own initiative.

• He went with the blessing and commendation of the church.

16:1 A disciple named Timothy

• Timothy had probably been converted during Paul's first missionary journey or at some later time through the evangelistic efforts of the church in Lystra.

• He became a faithful coworker with Paul. Paul called him his "true son in the faith" (1 Timothy 1:2).

16:3 He circumcised him because of the Jews

• Paul's requiring Timothy to be circumcised was not a compromise of his principles nor a violation of the Jerusalem Decree (Acts 15:23-29).

• It was rather an application of Paul's missionary strategy of becoming "all things to all men" in order to win as many as possible to Christ (1 Corinthians 9:19-23).

• The reality of cultural diversity required Paul to adapt to the many cultures he faced so that people of each cultural group could understand his message.

• Jesus did this when He came in the flesh (incarnate) so that we could understand God. Paul's actions, then, serve as an example of incarnational missionary ministry.

• Since Titus was a Gentile, Paul did not require him to be circumcised (compare Acts 15:1-2).

16:5 The churches were strengthened in the faith

• One important role of missionary ministry is to strengthen churches and believers in the faith.

• Jesus' command was not to make converts but disciples (Matthew 28:19).

• Paul would later write that the ministry of apostles (namely, himself) and prophets (for example, Silas), as well as evangelists, pastors, and teachers, was "to prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up" (Ephesians 4:12).

16:5 Grew daily in numbers

• Because Paul and Barnabas had intentionally planted Spirit-empowered missional churches, the churches continued to grow in strength and number.

• In his letter to the Ephesians, Paul wrote that a healthy, well-trained church "grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work" (4:16).

The Story: The Spirit Guides the Missionaries (Acts 16:6-10)

Leaving Lystra, Paul and his missionary colleagues traveled to the northwest through Galatia into Phrygia. They intended to go west into Asia Minor (and possibly Ephesus) but were kept from going there by the Holy Spirit.

Arriving at the border of Mysia, they decided to venture further north into Bithynia on the Black Sea, but the Spirit of Jesus would not allow them to go that way either. As a result, they decided to travel westward through Mysia until they arrived in Troas on the Aegean coast. There they were joined by Luke.

In Troas Paul had a vision in the night in which he saw a Macedonian man standing and entreating him, "Come over to Macedonia and help us." The missionaries concluded that God wanted them to preach the gospel in Macedonia. At once, they prepared to leave for that region.

Commentary on Acts 16:6-10

• As with his first missionary journey, Paul's second journey began with a move of the Holy Spirit.

• Luke strategically places such a move of the Spirit near the beginning of each of Paul's missionary journeys. He does this so that the reader will know that

everything done during these journeys was done in the power of the Spirit (Acts 13:1-4; 16:6-10; 19:1-7; see Table 8.1).

• Although this is the only mention of the Spirit's active role during Paul's second journey, we know by statements he made in his epistles that he ministered in the Spirit's power in Macedonia and Achaia (1 Corinthians 2:4; 2 Corinthians 12:12; 1 Thessalonians 1:5).

16:6-7 Kept by the Holy Spirit... The Spirit of Jesus would not allow them

• The Holy Spirit again acts as the Superintendent of the Harvest.

• By keeping the missionaries from entering Asia and Bithynia, He was directing them to the specific fields He had prepared for them.

• The title "Spirit of Jesus" is another name for the Holy Spirit. He is the One whom Christ sent in His place (John 15:26; 16:7; Acts 2:33) and who reveals the things of Christ to us (John 16:15).

• Peter calls the Holy Spirit the Spirit of Christ (1 Peter 1:11-12), and Paul calls Him the Spirit of Jesus Christ (Philippians 1:19).

16:9 A vision of a man of Macedonia

• The Spirit directed Paul's missionary team into Europe through a vision.

• According to Luke's teaching in Acts, visions are one way that God actively guides Christ's messengers (Acts 9:10-12; 10:9-16; 16:9-10; 18:9-10; 23:11; 26:19).

• Other ways include speaking directly to their hearts by His Spirit (10:19-20; 11:12; 15:28; 20:22), providential circumstances (8:1-4), angelic appearances (5:19-20; 8:26; 10:3-7; 12:7-15; 27:23-24), and prophetic speech (2:17-18; 11:28-30; 13:1-2; 15:32; 20:23; 21:10-11).

16:10 We got ready at once to leave

• When the Spirit directed, the missionaries responded quickly and decisively.

• By this and other "we" references, we know that Luke joined Paul's missionary team in Macedonia and accompanied Paul as far as Philippi, where he remained behind.

The Story: Philippi, The Gospel Goes to Europe (Acts 16:11-15)

Paul and his band of missionaries (Silas, Timothy, and Luke) sailed from Troas to Macedonia. They arrived at the Roman colony of Philippi, the leading city of the district.

One Sabbath day, the missionaries went down to the river and found a group of Jewish women who had gathered for prayer. They sat down and began to speak to the women.

While they spoke, the Lord opened the heart of a woman named Lydia, a seller of purple cloth who came from Thyatira and who was a God-fearer. She accepted the gospel, and she and the members of her household were baptized. After this, she persuaded the missionaries to lodge at her home, saying, "If you consider me a believer in the Lord, come and stay at my house."

Commentary on Acts 16:11-15

• Because there seems to have been no synagogue in Philippi, Paul and Silas went down to the river to seek out Jews.

• When there was no synagogue in a place, the Jews would often meet by the riverside, since it provided a convenient place to find water for their rituals.

16:13 Began to speak to the women

• Lydia, a woman, was the first Christian convert in Europe.

• By telling her story, Luke again demonstrates his concern for women.

• Because women can be empowered by the Holy Spirit, they can be full participants in the mission of God (compare Acts 1:8, 14; 2:17-18).

16:14 The Lord opened her heart

• The Holy Spirit works to open people's hearts to the gospel.

• A combination of the power of the gospel (Romans 1:16) and the power of the Spirit (Acts 1:8) is needed to effectively lead people to Christ.

• God opens people's hearts; however, they must individually respond to the gospel in faith and repentance.

The Story: A Slave Girl Is Delivered (Acts 16:16-18)

One day in Philippi, as the missionaries were on their way to a prayer meeting, they met a slave girl who was possessed by a spirit of divination. Her owners used her fortune-telling abilities to earn a lot of money for themselves.

Day after day the girl followed the missionaries, shouting, "These men are servants of the Most High God, who are telling you the way to be saved."

Finally, Paul became so troubled that he turned to her and commanded the spirit to come out of her in the name of Jesus. Immediately the spirit left her, and she was set free.

Commentary on Acts 16:16-18

• The story of the deliverance of the Philippian slave girl is yet another example of how Paul and the other ministers in Acts ministered in the power of the Holy Spirit.

• Through the manifestation of spiritual gifts, Paul brought deliverance to a demon-possessed slave girl.

16:18 Paul became so troubled

• Though the slave girl was speaking the truth, the source and motivation of her message was demonic.

• Her activity may have been a demonically-inspired tactic, aimed at undermining the ministry of Paul and Silas in Philippi.

• Through the gift of discerning of spirits, Paul identified the source of her inspiration, and through the gift of miraculous powers and with the name of Jesus, he drove out the demon (see 1 Corinthians 12:10).

16:18 In the name of Jesus Christ I command you to come out of her!

• Jesus drove out demons by the finger (or Spirit) of God (Luke 11:20; compare Matthew 12:28).

• Today, believers are given this same power when they are baptized in the Holy Spirit.

• Those who faithfully follow Jesus and obey His commands have also been given

the right to use His name in combating evil and advancing His kingdom in the earth (Mark 16:17; John 14:12-14; 16:23-24; Acts 3:6, 16; 4:10, 30; 1 Corinthians 5:4).

• To use the name of Jesus is to act under His authority.

The Story: Opposition and Deliverance (Acts 16:19-28)

The owners of the slave girl became angry at Paul because they could no longer use the girl to make money. They seized Paul and Silas and dragged them before the authorities in the city's marketplace. There, they accused the missionaries of causing confusion among the people by advocating practices contrary to Roman law.

The gathered crowd joined in the attack against Paul and Silas. The magistrates then ordered Paul and Silas to be stripped, flogged, and cast into prison, where they were placed in the inner cell with their feet fastened in stocks.

That night around the midnight hour as the other prisoners listened, Paul and Silas began singing hymns to God. Suddenly a great earthquake shook the foundations of the prison, the prison doors flew open, and the chains fell from all the prisoners.

Waking up, the jailer saw what had happened and started to kill himself, believing that all of the prisoners had escaped. Seeing this, Paul shouted, "Don't harm yourself! We are all here!"

Commentary on Acts 16:19-28

• Even in the severest trials, the apostles stayed close to God and focused on their work.

• As a result, their hearts were filled with joy, and they became powerful witnesses to those around them.

16:25 About midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God

• The church experienced constant opposition and persecution.

• In spite of this, as the gospel advanced, the missionaries remained full of the Holy Spirit and joy (Acts 13:52; Romans 14:17; Galatians 5:22; Colossians 1:11;

1 Thessalonians 1:6; Hebrews 1:9).

• In their joy they prayed and sang hymns to God.

16:25 The other prisoners were listening

• The apostles' Spirit-inspired praying and singing resulted in witness.

• This is a major theme in Acts: the infilling of the Spirit empowers Christians to be effective witnesses to the lost (compare Acts 1:8).

• The other prisoners must have been very impressed when they heard Paul and Silas, who had been falsely accused, beaten, and thrown into prison, joyfully praising God.

16:26 Suddenly... a violent earthquake

• The violent earthquake is yet another powerful theophany in Acts.

• The word "suddenly" reminds us of the outpouring of the Spirit at Pentecost (2:1), and the earthquake reminds us of the shaking at the second Jerusalem outpouring (4:31). Both speak of the power and work of the Spirit.

• Characteristically, this move of the Spirit followed a time of prayer and praise (compare Luke 24:53; Acts 1:14; 4:31).

The Story: The Jailer's Household Is Saved (Acts 16:29-34)

The jailer fell trembling before Paul and Silas. He implored them, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" They answered, "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved, you and your household."

The apostles then shared the gospel with him and his family. Afterward, the jailer took them and washed their wounds, and he and his family were baptized in water. He then took the apostles to his house and prepared a meal for them. He and his family were filled with joy.

Commentary on Acts 16:29-34

• At the heart of Paul's ministry was the message of salvation.

• When the Philippian jailer inquired about how to be saved, Paul and Silas were ready with an answer. They told him that salvation comes through faith in Christ.

16:30 What must I do to be saved?

• This is the most important question in the Bible.

• All are lost; therefore, all must be saved (Romans 3:23-24). This salvation was provided through Christ's atoning work on the cross.

• The primary mission of the church is to proclaim the message of salvation to all nations (Mark 16:15-16; Luke 24:46-47).

16:31 Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved

• People are saved through faith in Christ.

• Two essential elements of true saving faith are repentance toward God and faith toward the Lord Jesus (Matthew 21:32; Mark 1:15; Acts 19:4; 20:21; Hebrews 6:1).

• Repentance toward God involves acknowledging one's sins, asking forgiveness, and turning from sin to walk in newness of life.

• Faith toward the Lord Jesus involves believing in His death and resurrection, inviting Him into one's life as Lord and Savior, and trusting Him alone for salvation (compare Romans 10:9-10).

16:32 They spoke the word of the Lord

• The phrase "word of the Lord" occurs nine times in Acts. In each instance it indicates the preaching of the gospel (8:25; 13:48-49; 15:35-36; 16:32; 19:10, 20).

• The only other place in the New Testament where the phrase is used is in 1 Peter 1:25, where the context indicates the same.

16:33 Immediately he and all his family were baptized

• Although water baptism is not a requirement for salvation, Luke presents it as the new believer's first step of obedience.

• According to Peter, it is "the pledge of a good conscience toward God" (1 Peter 3:21).

• In Acts water baptism occurs immediately after one has been born again (Acts 2:41; 8:12, 36-39; 9:18; 10:47-48; 16:15, 33; 18:8).

16:34 Filled with joy

• The joy the apostles demonstrated by singing to God at midnight now filled the heart of the jailer.

• This newfound joy was an evidence that he had been born of the Spirit, and possibly even filled with the Spirit, on this occasion.

The Story: Apologies and Departure (Acts 16:35-40)

The next morning the city officials sent orders to the jailer to release Paul and Silas, telling them that they could go in peace. Paul, however, refused, saying, "They beat us publicly without a trial, even though we are Roman citizens, and threw us into prison. And now do they want to get rid of us quietly? No! Let them come themselves and escort us out."

The magistrates were distressed, realizing that they had mistreated Roman citizens. They therefore came in person to apologize to Paul and Silas and ask them to leave the city. After this, the missionaries went to the house of Lydia and encouraged the brothers there. They then left for Thessalonica.

Commentary on Acts 16:35-40

• In demanding an apology from the magistrates, Paul's concern was not to preserve his own dignity or status.

• His concern was for the safety and blessing of the new church in Philippi. So he used his Roman citizenship as a means of ensuring fair treatment of Christians in the city.

16:37 Let them come themselves and escort us out

• Paul wanted to leave Philippi with a good name.

• He did this so that the work of the church would not be hindered, and so that it could carry out its work without unnecessary interference.

• For this reason, he demanded that the city officials come and apologize before he left Philippi.

16:40 They met with the brothers and encouraged them

• Paul and Silas were not only concerned with getting people saved, as important as that work is.

• Their concern went further: to the establishment of a strong indigenous church.

• So they gathered the brothers together to encourage them in the work of the Lord before departing for Thessalonica.

Figure 10.1: Paul's Second Missionary Journey

Figure 10.1. The route of Paul's second missionary journey, as named in this chapter. It is the most extensive of his three journeys.

• Antioch: Paul chose Silas and, commended by the brothers to the grace of the Lord, set out by land.

• Syria and Cilicia: Paul and Silas traveled northward by land and took time to strengthen the churches in these regions.

• Derbe: In southern Galatia, one of the churches planted on the first journey.

• Lystra: Here they met Timothy, whose mother was a Jewish believer and whose father was Greek.

• Phrygia: They traveled northwest through Galatia into Phrygia, intending to go west into Asia Minor.

• Mysia: Kept by the Holy Spirit from Asia, and the Spirit of Jesus would not allow them to go north into Bithynia.

• Troas: On the Aegean coast. Luke joined them, and Paul saw the vision of the man of Macedonia.

• Philippi: The Roman colony and leading city of the district of Macedonia, where the gospel came to Europe.

• Thessalonica: After the apologies of the magistrates, the missionaries left Philippi for Thessalonica.

• Achaia (Greece): The second European province in which the team planted churches on this journey.

• Ephesus: A brief stopover on the way home.

• Antioch: They returned to Antioch where their journey began.

Conclusion

• During Paul's second missionary journey, he and his companions were led by the

Spirit to enter Europe and preach the gospel for the first time there.

• His ministry in Europe began in Philippi in eastern Macedonia.

• There, Paul and Silas established a strong indigenous missional church.

• He would later write a letter to this church and tell its members how he thanked God for them and how he carried them in his heart.

• They became partners with him in the gospel by helping to support his missionary work (Philippians 1:3-7).

Important Terms

Spirit-empowered missional church. A church that is filled with the Spirit and reaches out beyond itself into the region around it.

Hellenized Jew. A Jew who lived in the Greek culture.

Jerusalem Decree. The letter from the Jerusalem Council containing the apostles' decisions and orders concerning the Gentile believers.

Incarnational missionary ministry. Ministry that identifies very closely with the people being reached, as Jesus did when He came in the flesh.

Superintendent of the Harvest. The Holy Spirit as the one who directs the missionaries to the fields He has prepared for them.

Spirit of Jesus. Another name for the Holy Spirit.

God-fearer. A Gentile who has accepted God and the teachings of Judaism but who has not been circumcised.

Indigenous church. A church that is able to support itself, govern itself, and extend itself.

Key People

• Paul: Leads the second missionary journey, the most extensive of his three journeys.

• Barnabas: Paul's close missionary associate and friend. After the disagreement over John Mark he revisited the work on Cyprus.

• John Mark: Deserted the work on the first journey. Barnabas thought the younger

man deserved a second chance. In later years Paul requested that Mark join him in the work (2 Timothy 4:11).

• Silas: Paul's missionary partner, probably a Hellenized Jew, a prophet and former leader of the church in Jerusalem. Peter called him a "faithful brother" (1 Peter 5:12).

• Timothy: A well-respected young man of Lystra, his mother a Jewish believer and his father Greek. Paul called him his "true son in the faith" (1 Timothy 1:2).

• Luke: Joined the team at Troas and accompanied Paul as far as Philippi, where he remained behind.

• Lydia: A seller of purple cloth from Thyatira and a God-fearer. The first Christian convert in Europe.

• The slave girl: Possessed by a spirit of divination and used by her owners for profit. Paul commanded the spirit to come out of her in the name of Jesus.

• The Philippian jailer: Asked, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" He and his family believed, were baptized, and were filled with joy.

Key Places

• Antioch: The sending church, where the journey began and ended.

• Syria and Cilicia: Regions Paul and Silas passed through, strengthening the churches.

• Derbe and Lystra: Churches in southern Galatia revisited on this journey. Timothy joined the team at Lystra.

• Phrygia: Reached by traveling northwest through Galatia.

• Asia: The team intended to go west into Asia Minor (and possibly Ephesus) but were kept from going there by the Holy Spirit.

• Bithynia: On the Black Sea. The Spirit of Jesus would not allow them to go that way.

• Troas: On the Aegean coast. Luke joined the team here and Paul received the Macedonian vision.

• Macedonia: The region the Spirit directed them to through the vision of the Macedonian man.

• Philippi: A Roman colony and the leading city of the district. Where the gospel first entered Europe.

Key Event

In Troas Paul has a vision in the night of a Macedonian man entreating him, "Come over to Macedonia and help us," and the missionaries at once prepare to leave for that region.

The Holy Spirit had kept them from Asia, and the Spirit of Jesus would not allow them into Bithynia. By closing those doors He was directing them to the specific fields He had prepared for them. The Spirit directed Paul's missionary team into Europe through a vision.

Key Verse

"Come over to Macedonia and help us."

Acts 16:9

Remember This

• Like his first missionary journey, Paul's second journey began with a move of the Holy Spirit.

• Paul desired to plant Spirit-empowered missional churches.

• Paul went with the blessing and commendation of the church.

• The apostles' joy now filled the heart of the jailer.

Life Application: When Colleagues Disagree

• Missionaries and other gospel workers are human, and sometimes disagreements arise between colleagues. Unfortunately, on occasion, these disagreements can be sharp.

• At such times we should not be tempted to abandon the work that God has given us.

• We must be mature enough to come to strategic agreements about how each will continue in the work, even if we may at times have to work separately.

• God is able to use people who honestly disagree with one another if they keep their attitudes pure and kind.

• If we remain kindhearted and mature in our attitudes, then in time even greater unity and agreement can come. Such was the case with Paul and Barnabas.

• In later years Paul requested that Mark join him in the work (2 Timothy 4:11; compare Colossians 4:10; Philemon 24). Mark even went on to write one of the four Gospels in the New Testament.

Life Application: Pastoral Oversight After Planting

• Our work is not completed when the church planting campaign ends. We have the ongoing responsibility of giving pastoral oversight to the new work.

• Our goals must be to ensure that the new church is filled with the Spirit, strong in the Word, and focused on the mission of God.

• Our methods should include fellowship, prayer, teaching, and godly counsel.

Life Application: Expect the Spirit to Guide

• We should seek and expect the Holy Spirit to guide us when we are actively engaged in the Lord's work.

• This guidance may come in various ways, including dreams, visions, angelic appearances, and providential circumstances.

• The most common way God leads us is by speaking directly to our hearts by His Spirit.

• To experience such guidance, it is essential that we be prayerful and remain full of the Holy Spirit.

• What the Lord speaks to us by His Spirit will always be in harmony with His written Word, the Bible.

Life Application: Release Women in Gospel Work

• Throughout the history of the church, women have played a prominent role.

• Women were the first to proclaim the resurrection of Jesus (Matthew 28:5-8; Luke 24:9-10; John 20:16-18).

• They were present at Pentecost when the Spirit was poured out (Acts 1:14), and the first convert in Europe was a woman (16:14).

• We should never treat women as second-class citizens in the kingdom of God.

• We should release them and encourage them to be full participants in gospel work.

Life Application: Learn to Operate in the Gifts

• We as Christ's ministers should be filled with the Spirit, and we should learn to operate in the gifts of the Holy Spirit.

• Had Paul not been able to do this, his and Silas' ministry in Philippi would have been much less effective, and the slave girl would have remained in bondage.

• The Bible commands us to be filled with the Spirit (Acts 1:4-5; Ephesians 5:18). It also commands us to earnestly seek after spiritual gifts (1 Corinthians 12:31; 14:1).

• Those who ignore these commands can never be the effective ministers of the gospel that God intends for them to be.

Life Application: Joy in Trying Circumstances

• Joy during trying circumstances is an evidence of one's being full of the Spirit.

• Our being filled with the Spirit should be evidenced by more than speaking in tongues.

• As we abide in Christ, walk in the Spirit, and obey the Lord's commands, our lives will be filled with the joy of the Lord.

• Such joyful lives will be a witness to those who observe us, and, as a result, they will be encouraged to turn to Christ.

Life Application: Always Be Ready With the Answer

• Every Christian should at all times be prepared to answer the question, "What must I do to be saved?"

• It is the responsibility of pastors and other church leaders to train everyone in the church how to lead others to Christ.

Life Application: Leave Well

• It is important how a missionary or Christian worker begins a work. It is also important how he or she departs the same work.

• Our departure must never result in weakening the church.

• Every pastor or church planter should ensure that the church is strong enough to carry on the work or that the church is left in able hands.

• He or she should also leave with a good name so that the work will not be hindered.

Textbook Review and Application

• 1. How did the Holy Spirit again work as the Superintendent of the Harvest in guiding Paul's missionary band to Macedonia and then into Europe? How might this apply to ministry today?

• 2. Who was the first Christian convert in Europe? Is it significant that she was a woman?

• 3. How did Paul and Silas' singing in the prison at night serve as a witness to the other prisoners? What other kinds of witness are present in this story? What was the result?

• 4. What instructions did Paul give to the Philippian jailer on how to be saved? What indication do we have of the Spirit's working in the jailer's heart?

• 5. What is the significance of Paul's comments to the officials of Philippi regarding their treatment of Barnabas and Paul? What purpose was served by Paul's statement that he and Barnabas were Roman citizens? See Acts 22:24-26 also for more information on this issue.

Quick Review

1. Why did Paul and Barnabas part company?

Answer: Because of a heated disagreement over taking John Mark, who had deserted the work during the first journey.

2. Whom did Paul choose as his missionary partner, and who joined the team at Lystra?

Answer: Paul chose Silas. Timothy joined the team at Lystra.

3. Which two regions did the Spirit keep the missionaries from entering?

Answer: Asia and Bithynia.

4. How did the Spirit direct the team into Europe?

Answer: Through a vision at Troas of a man of Macedonia saying, "Come over to Macedonia and help us."

5. Who was the first Christian convert in Europe?

Answer: Lydia, a seller of purple cloth from Thyatira and a God-fearer.

Chapter Summary

Like his first missionary journey, Paul's second journey began with a move of the Holy Spirit.

• Paul and Barnabas parted company over John Mark, and God used the separation to keep two ministries going: strengthening established churches and planting new ones.

• The Holy Spirit kept the team out of Asia and Bithynia, then directed them into Europe through the vision of the man of Macedonia.

• In Philippi Lydia became the first Christian convert in Europe, a slave girl was delivered, and the jailer and his household were saved and baptized.

Seek and expect the Holy Spirit to guide you in the Lord's work, and plant churches that are strong, indigenous, and missional before you leave them.

ONE-SENTENCE MEMORY

The Holy Spirit kept Paul's team out of Asia and Bithynia so He could send them to Macedonia, and the gospel entered Europe at Philippi.